

Dark Watchet

This fly is somewhat oddly named: “watchet” is an obsolete word meaning “light blue.” The name is literally “dark light blue”. It's intended to be an imitation of an English upwing (we would say mayfly) known as the iron blue (*Baetis niger*.) In spite of the fact that the iron blue doesn't exist in North America, it's still a good generic representation of any number of dark mayflies. It's worked especially well for me in spring creeks this past year.



- Hook: Size 16 Mustad R50 or equivalent
Thread: Orange silk
Body: Orange and purple silk, twisted together, lightly dubbed with mole
Hackle: Dark gray feather from the throat of a jackdaw (substitute dark dun hen hackle)

Tying sequence:

Wax the orange silk, and start one eye-width behind the eye. Tie in the hackle by the tip, with the stem extending over the eye, cupped up. Take a few wrap back, and tie in the purple silk. (I like to keep it on a separate bobbin.) Wrap the orange thread back (over the purple) to a point where the thread is hanging midway between the point and the barb. Touch dub the orange with mole. Bring the two bobbins together, adjusting the purple so that it has the same amount of thread out as the orange. Pinch the two threads together, and spin the bobbins. (Essentially, you're making a two part dubbing loop.) Release the pinch, which will spin the threads together. Tighten more if needed. Wrap the body to where the hackle is tied in and dis-engage the purple. You could either cut it off here, or take in front of the hackle and tie with a single half hitch. (I find that this helps prevent a dangling bit of thread.) Move the orange silk in front of the hackle. Pull the hackle back and wind it forward. Tie it down and whip finish.