

Matt's Golden Stone Nymph

Fly tier Matt Minch, of Gardiner, MT, designed this simple golden stonefly nymph as an update of the famous nymphs by the late Charles Brooks, of West Yellowstone, MT. This fly follows the "In-the-Round" theory of fly design, meaning it looks identical all the way around. Natural insects can usually maintain their up-and-down orientation in the water column no matter how turbulent the flows. Since flies tumble, Minch believes his stonefly more accurately represents natural insects than standard patterns that don't look the same when they tumble. Trout in Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho agree. I'm never without some of these flies in my box, whether I'm fishing or guiding.

Matt's Golden Stone works well throughout the summer, though it is most effective just before and during the Golden Stonefly emergences that begin in mid-June on most Rocky Mountain rivers. In smaller sizes, it can represent Yellow Sally stoneflies or even large caddis larvae, while tying it in different colors (black is most popular) represents other stonefly species. The fly is best fished on a traditional upstream dead drift, especially in rough-and-tumble stretches of river. The fly can also be given an occasional twitch or stripped like a streamer, since its marabou tail and broad, thick hackle create a lot of movement.

Tying Matt's Golden Stones is straightforward. The only problem many people encounter is finding decent chicken marabou (chickabou) for the tail. If you do have trouble finding chickabou, just use traditional marabou marked with a black permanent marker.

PATTERN

Hook: #8-12 3X long nymph hook

Head: gold brass or tungsten bead

Thread: 6/0 brown

Tail: golden brown Chickabou feather

Abdomen: golden olive flash chenille

Thorax: antique gold squirrel or hare's ear dubbing

Hackle: brown-dyed grizzly saddle hackle palmered through thorax

