



Orange Partridge Variation



In 1496 or thereabouts, Dame Juliana Berners, a nun and the Prioress at the Sopwell Nunnery near St. Albans, England wrote one of the earliest known books on fly fishing called: “A Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle.”

In Dame Berners’ book, a soft hackled fly now known as a Partridge & Orange (also as an Orange Partridge) was described and is often accepted as one of the first documented soft hackled trout flies known.

The most generally accepted dressing for this fly is the use of a silk thread and a brown-barred partridge hackle, but variations of this dressing can be made and successfully used in trout fishing waters.

Also, in many of the modern books and articles written on tying soft hackled dressings, there’s an opinion that the hackle windings should be slim and sparse, sometimes with only a dozen or so hackle barbules showing. But, in reviewing pictures of flies tied in the 18 th and 19 th centuries, the hackles tend to be noticeably longer and heavily wrapped than tiers tend to do today. In the flies shown below, I used 3 hackle turns of the brown-barred feathers from a Hungarian Partridge.

Additionally, there’s also a difference in opinion as to what silk is used and whether this dressing should be tied with Pearsall’s #6a (Gold) silk thread or Pearsall’s #19 (Hot Orange). My personal preference is to use Pearsall’s #6a silk for this dressing and to use the #19 silk when tying a Grouse & Orange dressing.

Hook:Daiichi #1550 – Size 12 – 14 wet fly hook
Body:Pearsall Gossamer 6a – (Gold) Silk
Thorax:Hare’s Ear or Peacock Herl (Optional)
Ribbing:Gold wire or tinsel (optional)
Hackle:Brown Partridge Feather (from back of bird)