

MICHIGAN STONE/PAUL YOUNG STONE

Tied by: Joe Sattler

MATERIALS:

Hook: *Size 16 Dry Fly*

Dubbing: *Pale Yellow or Green Beaver*

Hackle: *Grizzly (Fore and Aft)*

Wing: *Deer or Elk Hair*



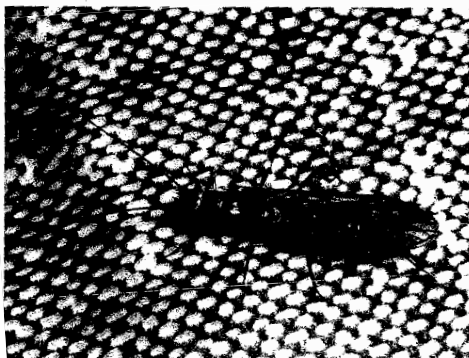
H I S T O R Y

The Michigan Stone

If it were possible to catalog all the dry fly patterns in use in the United States today the total number would stagger the imagination. In addition to the countless standard patterns which originated in this country there are still a number in common use which came from England, where the dry fly was born. Then there are the many local patterns tailored to fit specific needs in certain areas but seldom well known beyond the boundaries of their origins.

Most dry fly patterns are aimed at representing mayflies, although limited attention has been accorded the caddis, and a long overdue recognition of midges and the terrestrial insects has been under way. The lowly stonefly seems to be the unglamorous, poor cousin of the insect world, at least in the eyes of many dry fly anglers. Exceptions are a few large western patterns like the Sofa Pillow, which represent the huge stoneflies known in the West as Salmon Flies. True, there are a few Yellow Sally patterns around, both wet and dry, but most of them allude to the little stoneflies in color only, holding more closely to the mayfly in form.

Yellow Sally is the common name of the little yellow stonefly, *Isoperla bilineata* (and other related species). The name originated in the British Isles, where separate species of *Isoperla* are abundant. Also included among the Yellow Sallys are smaller stoneflies with a distinct greenish cast which belong to the genera *Alloperla* and *Chloroperla*. Typical of stoneflies, the Yellow Sally



Isoperla bilineata

nymph crawls out of the water and emergence of the adult takes place on rocks, logs or any convenient air-exposed object. Emergence offers little opportunity for a rise of trout except on windy days, when a few adults may be blown onto the water. Following emergence these shy creatures hide under rocks at streamside, on the shaded side of tree trunks, or in foliage where they are well camouflaged. However, when the females are ready to lay their eggs they appear over the water in great numbers and it is at this time that their value to the dry fly fisherman becomes evident.

Anglers who ply the rock-bottomed streams of Pennsylvania's Northern Tier counties are familiar with the ovipositing swarms of Yellow Sallys which appear over the riffles on warm June and July evenings. She's a pretty insect, graceful and unhurried in flight, and when she dips down to the water to lay her eggs she is equally attractive to the trout.

The Michigan Stone is a dry fly pattern originated by the late Paul Young, famed rod builder and fly dresser from Detroit. We first learned of the pattern some years ago while fishing the Au Sable River with Mr. Young and his wife, Martha. We were so impressed by its effectiveness when *Isoperla* was over the water that we brought it back to try on Pennsylvania waters. Here it has proved a valuable fly, not only during the flights of Yellow Sally but as a general attractor fly as well. Recently while in England my wife, Marion, had a rare opportunity to fish some of the famed British chalk streams and there she found the brown trout just as receptive to the Michigan Stone as they are at home.

The original pattern was tied, as it is now, with hackles fore and aft to eliminate the need for tail support. The wings, tied flat over the body to represent the wing posture of the natural, were made from the fine-textured hair of the dik-dik, the tiny African antelope. However, dik-dik hair is difficult to come by these days, as is the hair of its closest substitute, the Asiatic mouse deer, so in tying the Michigan Stone shown in the photographs we are going to use the speckled tips of the thinnest natural deer body hair for wings. Since the pattern covers several species included in the Yellow Sally group it's good practice to tie it in sizes #16 and #18, some with yellow bodies and others with chartreuse. Another variation, to represent the greenish *Alloperla*, is tied in size #20 with chartreuse body and yellowish-olive hackles.

TYING THE MICHIGAN STONE

1. Clamp a fine wire, size #16 hook in the vise and tie in fine yellow tying thread at bend. Select a grizzly hackle of good quality, with barbules no longer than twice the hook gap. Strip away the webby lower portion and bind hackle to hook at bend. Position hackle at right angle to hook with edge of hackle facing tyer and with glossy side facing eye of hook. Then bend hackle root forward and bind with three turns.

2. Attach hackle pliers to hackle tip and wind forward in close turns. Bind down tip of hackle with two turns and half-hitch. Trim off excess hackle tip.

3. Wax 2 or 3 inches of the thread next to the hook and apply a moderately thin dubbing of yellow or chartreuse-dyed kapok (or rabbit fur) by rolling it around thread with fingers.

4. Wind dubbing forward to form body, allowing ample space in front for wings and hackle. Body should not be tapered.

5. Clip a small bunch (thickness of a kitchen match) of fine-textured deer body hair from hide. Pull out short hairs and even up the tips. Lay hair flat over body with tips extending slightly beyond bend and bind hair in front of body with several turns. Half-hitch. Trim off excess butts to a bevel, as shown.

6. Select another grizzly hackle with slightly shorter barbules than the first. Tie in as in photograph 1, over wing butts, but this time with dull side facing eye. Then attach hackle pliers and wind hackle as in photograph 2.

7. After the wound hackle is tied off and the excess tips trimmed, build a neat head with thread and whip finish. Apply a drop of head lacquer to head.

8. Michigan Stones: *Isoperla* version above; *Alloperla* variation below.

