

Black Klinky Thing

Rob Denson introduces the river fly he uses to search stillwaters



Hook Size 10 to 16 Kamasan B100
Rib Fine pearl Mylar or Mirage
Body Black seal fur **Thorax** Black seal fur
Wing post White or grey poly yarn
Hackle Dun/blue dun or grizzle cock
Thread Black

TYING TIPS

- Quality of hackle is nowhere near as important as barb length of hackle, which should be about the same as the distance from the eye to the hookpoint. Three or four turns will be enough for a top-quality hackle with a high-density barb count. Up to six turns may be needed for hackles with a lower barb count.
- It's important to remember that the hackle floats the fly, not the post, which is only there to wrap the hackle around. On that basis, use anything that will do the job. Cheap poly yarn is just fine. I like to tie my posts on the slim side, and crop them short, but others like to use them as a sighting aid, and leave them longer, and even use different colours for different lighting situations.
- **Tying off the hackle can be tricky. Watch videos on YouTube and pick the method that suits you best.**



ROB DENSON

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I HAVEN'T THE FOGGIEST NOTION where this one came from, so apologies in advance if anyone thinks I've pinched their creation. The reality is that this exact fly, and slight variations, will be in every self-respecting dry-fly angler's box. It's been in my armoury for such a long time that, I kid you not, when I whisper "black Klinky thing" it jumps out and ties itself to my leader. It has been catching fish for me from Chew to Orkney to the rivers of Iceland for a quarter of a century and is showing no signs of slowing down.

It's 35 years, give or take a year, since Hans Van Klinken unleashed his masterpiece on an unsuspecting world. It wasn't the first parachute dry-fly on a curved hook, but it was the one that made the world fly-fishing fraternity think again about the style and fishing of dry-flies and emergers in general. Yes, people tied and fished dry-flies before, but the Klinkhåmer was a seismic shift. There was just something special about The Klink that captured the imagination, not to mention prodigious quantities of trout and grayling worldwide. The Klinkhåmer Special - to give its full and proper title - was perfect for big Scandinavian streams like Norway's Glomma, where Hans' creation first touched down and duped a fish. The Glomma was just the start, though. The ensuing years have seen every Tom, Dick and Harry copy and adapt the Klink.

Whether any deserve to be called a Klink is debatable - there is only one Klinkhåmer Special, which has a particular and correct tying - but like it or not, for better or worse, any parachute emerger on a curved hook these days is deemed a Klink.

I've called this month's fly the Black Klinky Thing. For starters, the vast majority of its work is done on stillwaters (although, as you might imagine, it does cross over to streams rather well and bagged me my best-ever wild brown trout, 5lb-plus, from Iceland's Minnivallalaekur river in 2003) and it's a much smaller, lighter, sparser fly than the original.

It's an obvious choice when black gnats, hawthorns or indeed anything black is on the water but also works well as a safe, searching pattern. Most of my dry-fly fishing on stillwaters is done with three, sometimes two, or occasionally one fly (when there's no breeze, to aid turnover) but not being the most streamlined, Klinks have a tendency to spin and need to be checked every dozen casts or so. For this reason, I'll only ever have one on a cast at a time. On most days I suspect the colour matters much more to us than the fish. The fly is sold to them largely by virtue of the attitude of the body hanging just below the film, the air bubbles trapped in the seal fur with the pearl rib further suggesting gases, and the leggy, dimpling patterns in the film caused by the parachute hackle. It's all far too much for most fish to resist. **T&S**