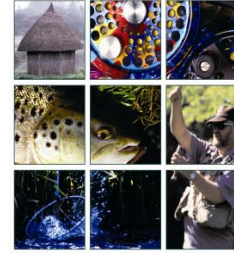


MAY FISHING ADVICE



TACTICS

Mayfly madness. Duffer's fortnight. Call it what you will but May is one of the most spectacular months of the year to visit the chalkstreams when the *Ephemera danica* or Mayfly hatches drift across the river like gun smoke.

It is best to divide the month into three distinct portions: the first is in early May when there will be the Hawthorn hatch. The third is later in the month when the Mayfly is on. The second, and the trickiest, is that period between the two.

The Hawthorn hatch will have started in April, so the trout will be familiar with them right through the first week of May and even take them when there is no hatch. For the first few days of the Mayfly hatch be prepared for trout to be curious but suspicious of these unfamiliar flies. Sometimes a little 'twitch' will do the trick.



Mayfly

In that week or more that runs up to the Mayfly don't get fooled into thinking the trout are just hanging around in anticipation – believe me after a long winter they are hungry for the right offering. Mayfly nymphs are an obvious contender, plus Iron Blue that like to hatch on cold, blustery days with Black Gnats in various sizes and guises the default pattern.

WEATHER

It takes some really bad weather to stop the Mayfly hatch, so don't be discouraged if the weather is foul. The Mayfly hatch is triggered by seasonal light intensity rather than localised weather. Expect to see the bulk of the hatch from mid afternoon in the early weeks of the hatch, spreading across the entire day in later weeks.

TACKLE TIPS

Mayfly patterns are heavy, bulky and wind resistant. Getting them to 'turn over', especially in wind can be difficult so use a 5lb tippet as a very minimum.



HATCHES

These are the four main groups to be found on the chalkstreams during May:

Mayfly

There are three species (danica, vulgata and lineata) but treat them as one. All are so large you cannot mistake them for anything else!

Nymph	Walkers Mayfly Nymph	size 12
Dun	Thomas's Mayfly	8-10
	French Partridge	10-12
	Grey Wulff	8-10
Spinner	Spent Mayfly	10



Thomas's Mayfly

Iron Blue

Good for May, September and October. Likes to hatch on cold, wet, blustery days.

Iron Blue	16
Lunn's Particular	16
Pheasant Tail Nymph	16



Iron Blue

Hawthorn & Black Gnat

Two closely related terrestrial species. Hawthorn at the start of the month, Black Gnats good for the whole month and summer.

Hawthorn	12-14
Black Gnat	16-18



Black Gnat

Shrimp

These are the commonest creatures that trout eat; if you see a trout turn on their sides and 'wriggle' along they are dislodging shrimps from the gravel bed.

Green or Pink shrimp	12-14
Sawyer's Killer Bug	14



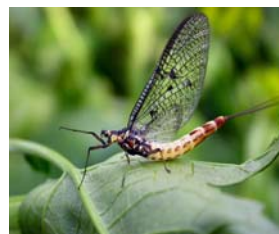
Green shrimp



Black Gnat



Iron Blue



Mayfly



Spent Mayfly