



Blasts from the past

Buzz Light Ear

Flies buzzing in your ears can be annoying to you but to the trout it's the dinner bell. **Stevie Munn** shares some more old favourite buzzer patterns.

At the time of writing this piece I had been asked to dress some flies for a regular customer. He wanted some simple but effective buzzer patterns. When he put in his order he said: "Send me three dozen buzzers and make sure it's the ones that you – expletive deleted – use!" So I've decided to share with you some of these. All three of these patterns are ones that I've used over the years with an excellent success rate. They are not as old or as famous as many of the prodigious flies that I've mentioned in this series, but I have been fishing with these simple trout flies ever since I was a teen on many loughs and stillwaters and they work amazingly well.

There are thousands of buzzer patterns, many of them very good. The modern ones seem to all be super slim, they are all about profile. I still use these three as in different sizes they will pick up a lot of fish when fishing stillwaters. So what is a buzzer? Well, it's the angler's term for the pupa of the midge that is called the Chironomid midge and it comes in many colours and sizes. Chironomids form a most important part of the diet of almost all lough and stillwater trout and so should be a major fishing technique with any stillwater angler.

feeding on the natural. My preferred method is to fish a team of three with largest buzzer on the point with two more on droppers spaced about four feet apart. If there is enough breeze, allow the flies to drift and your fly line to curve in a nice arc in the breeze, then start retrieving slowly so that you are just maintaining connection. I will retrieve with a very slow figure-of-eight and the occasional little pull and pause. This is to raise the patterns up and down again and sometimes this movement can also induce a take. The team of three ensures that you are also offering your buzzers at several depths. Longer and shorter leaders and different fly lines can also help with this.

Another buzzer tactic to use if the fish are feeding higher in the water is to replace the point fly with a floating pattern. This is called fishing the washing line technique. When doing this let your line drift but again try to stay in contact or use a very slow retrieve. When the trout can be seen feeding near the top of the water it's a very good way to fish your buzzers near the surface, and can be deadly. If you have not fished these flies please try them. They will work right though the season but especially during the summer months. I hope you do well on them. Very tight lines and happy angling!

FACT FILE

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In its natural state the midge can be taken by the trout in four different forms: the larva which is called the bloodworm, the pupa, the emerger and the adult. To be a really successful angler you will need to be able to recognize when the fish are feeding on what form and be able to imitate the natural accurately. In saying that, the biggest percentage of buzzer fishing is imitating the pupa stage of the Chironomid as it rises and falls in the water column and becomes very vulnerable to trout.

Fishing the buzzer is mostly about finding the depth that the trout are



The Apple Green Midge makes an appearance on our stillwaters and lakes, but also slow parts of rivers, during the day and evening normally from around late May until August. It is very evident and easily recognized with its pale wings and bright, insect green body. It is very wide spread throughout Ireland and the British Isles. In fact, it's rare to find a trout in

APPLE GREEN BUZZER

Hook: Partridge K14ST or similar buzzer/grub hook size 12-16

Rib: Fine silver or gold wire

Body: Apple green goose herl

Thorax: Light hare's mask fur or similar light grey dubbing

Thorax cover: Apple green goose herl

Hackle: Light blue dun, cream or badger

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still waters that has not been feeding on these Chironomid in the summer months. I've seen huge numbers of this buzzer on Lough Sheelin and also massive numbers on a few of my local stillwaters. Trout simply love this insect. This unpretentious pattern is a very good fish catcher and I like fishing it on the dropper.



What can I say about the Black Buzzer? It's perhaps the most commonly used stillwater fly in Europe or maybe even the world. In one form or another it takes thousands of trout and it's perhaps one to try first when fishing this way. A very good fly from early to late season, dress it in many sizes. It's possibly the most useful stillwater fly in your box. A little note that I should mention when dressing flies with herl type bodies: use a wire rib

BLACK HERL BUZZER

Hook: Partridge K14ST or similar buzzer grub hook size 8-16

Tail: White Atron cut very short

Rib: Silver, red or gold tinsel or wire

Body: Black pheasant tail or black goose herl

Thorax: Peacock herl

Thorax cover: Black pheasant tail or black goose herl

Wing buds: Jungle cock or orange or yellow goose biots

Breathers: White Antron.

and wind it in the opposite direction that you have wound the herl. Many fly dressers will tell you not to do this, but I find that it makes the herl-bodied flies far more durable. Dressed this way they normally stand up to far more punishment. I remember a saying I heard from Sam Mills when he was asked what colour fly to use. His reply: "Any colour as long as it black!" Very wise words.



This fly is my basic all-round buzzer pattern. I normally fish it on the point as I like fishing herl-bodied buzzers above it as these seem to sink slower, but that said it can work on any position on the cast. Dress this fly in various sizes, it won't let you down. It's an extremely good representation of the large Grey Boy buzzers that hatch in the summer. When imitating this buzzer I've had success

QUILL BUZZER

Hook: Partridge K14ST or similar buzzer/grub hook size 8-16

Rib: Oval gold tinsel or wire

Body: Stripped peacock quill well marked (varnish clear or two coats of Superglue)

Thorax: Light hare's mask fur or similar light grey dubbing

Thorax cover: Grey quill or light pheasant tail or pearly tinsel

Wing Buds: Jungle cock or orange goose biots

Breathers: White Antron

dressing it on ordinary wet fly hooks as big as size 8. I sometimes add to the back or tail of the fly a small grizzle hackle to represent the shuck and I also at times add CDC dressed in a shuttlecock style to imitate the emerger. These flies can be extremely deadly on all stillwater and loughs at times. If you're an avid stillwater fisher they really are a must-have pattern for your fly box.