



# HOW TO TIE A **ROYAL COACHMAN DRY FLY**

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PART OF THE  
*AHEIA "O.W.L. SERIES"*

**OUTDOOR WILDLIFE LEARNING**

*MODULE #6*





# How To Tie A Royal Coachman Dry Fly



The Royal Coachman fly is the world's most recognized fly pattern. It was first tied in 1830 by an Englishman named Tom Bosworth, who was a fly fisherman and a fly tier, as well as a coachman for the British monarchy, thus the fly's name.

The Royal Coachman is a proven 'fish-catching' pattern, which now comes in a variety of different designs, including dry fly, wet fly and streamers. Various materials can also be used, for example the wings can be hair, feathers or manmade materials. It does not imitate a particular insect as such but is an 'Attractor' pattern in that it will attract fish due to its shape and colouring.

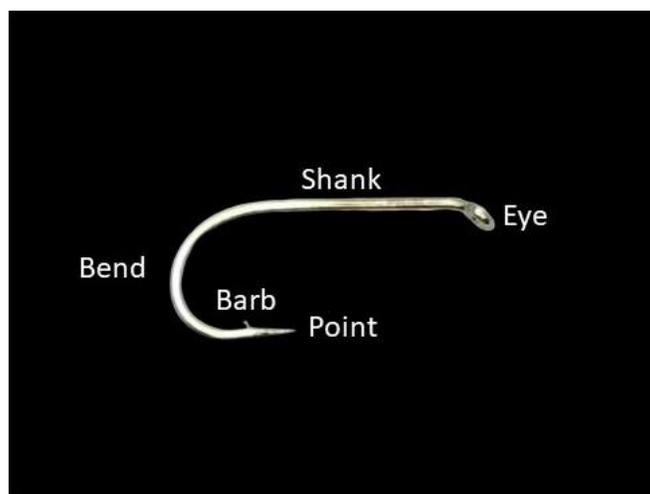


A Royal Coachman fly has a similar shape to this mayfly, which fish eat!



This workbook and accompanying video are designed to teach the step-by-step instructions on how you can tie your own Royal Coachman dry fly. When tying the Royal Coachmen, many of the basic fly-tying techniques are covered (e.g. tail, body, hackle (legs) and wings) so, with practise, a new fly tier will soon be able to begin tying other more advanced patterns.

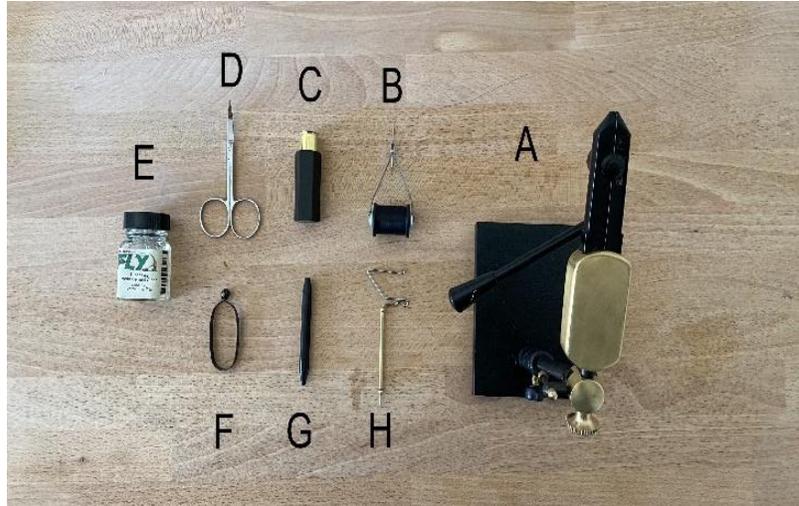
### Parts of a Hook



## Tools and Materials

### Tools

- A. Fly tying vice
- B. Bobbin (shown with spool of thread inserted)
- C. Hair stacker
- D. Pointed scissors
- E. Head cement
- F. Hackle pliers
- G. Half hitch tool
- H. Whip finish tool



### Materials

- A. Dry fly hooks. Size 8 – 16 (beginners start with larger size 8 or 10 hooks)
- B. Black thread 6/0 Uni
- C. Red floss
- D. White calf tail
- E. Golden Pheasant orange and black neck feathers
- F. Brown cape with feathers for hackle
- G. Peacock herl



## Royal Coachman Tying Steps

**1.** Place hook in the vice with the vice clamped onto the bend of the hook. Be sure the hook shank lies horizontally. If you are right-handed the hook will point to the right (opposite if left-handed).



**2.** With the thread fed through bobbin tool, begin wrapping thread just behind the eye of hook and work backwards down the shank.



**3.** Stop at the halfway point on the shank.



**4.** Now, wind the thread back towards the eye of the hook and stop at the 3/4 point along the shank.

This is where the 'wings' of the fly will now be tied on.



**5.** With scissors, clip a clump of white hair from the calf tail. Place the hair, clipped side up, in the hair stacker and tap on desktop. This will align all the hairs, so they are even.

Carefully remove the hair clump from the stacker and pinch between your fingers. Face the uncut ends towards the eye of the hook. The wings should be about the total length of the shaft of the hook.

While holding the hairs firmly between your fingertips, bring the thread up between your fingers and wrap around the clump of hair and the hook several times to secure against the hook shank.



**6.** Wrap several more times, working towards the bend in the hook, being sure wings securely held in place on the hook.

Trim off excess hair with scissors at a slight angle.



**7.** Now, continue to wrap the thread to the rear of the hook (towards the bend).

The white wings should look as pictured to right.



**8.** We are now ready to tie in the tail!  
From the Golden Pheasant neck feathers trim of a clump of the orange and black coloured barbs.

At the beginning of the bend in the hook, tie in the feathers so they project to the back of the fly, past the hook bend.  
The tail should be about as long as the shank length.

Trim off any excess feather extending towards the eye of the hook direction.



**9.** The next step is tying in the body section.

Take two peacock herl strands and tie them at the same point the tail was tied in.

Tie the peacock herl tip end first, trimming off the shorter pieces once secured.



**10.** Wrap the thread forward (towards the eye) about 1/3 of the way towards where the wing is tied in.



**11.** Place a drop of head cement on this first 1/3 section to help 'glue' everything in place.



**12.** Grab both peacock earl strands and wrap around the shank. Wrap each turn just in front of the turn before until you reach the point where the thread is.



**13.** Tie off the peacock earl here and trim away excess.



**14.** Tie in a 3- or 4-inch piece of red floss just in front of the peacock earl 1/3 section just finished.

Trim excess.



**15.** Wrap thread forward another 1/3 length.

Wrap floss forward to that point and tie off.

Trim off excess floss.



**16.** Tie in another two strands of peacock herl.

Wrap thread forward the remaining third until it is just behind the wings.

Apply another drop of head cement.



**17.** Wrap the peacock herl forward and tie off.

Trim excess.

The body section is now complete.



**18.** The wings of the fly should point upwards. To achieve this, wrap the thread to just in front of the wing and, while holding wings back, wrap several wraps of thread just in front of the wing until the wings point straight up when released.



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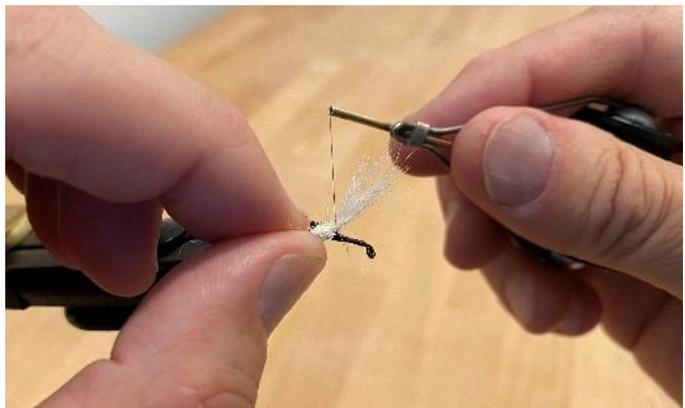
**19.** Wings in proper position.



**20.** The wing material can now be divided into two separate 'wings'.

To do this, separate the wing material into two equal clumps. With the thread, wrap a series of 'X' patterns (when viewed from above) between the wings and around the shank. Several wraps with the thread will separate the wings to resemble those of a flying insect.

Wrap thread to behind the wings, stopping at the peacock herl body section.



**21.** The next step is to tie in the 'legs' of the fly.

Take two hackle feathers from the brown cape.

The base of these feathers has a short section of downy fuzz. Strip away this fuzzy section with your fingers, which will leave only the central quill of the feather.



**22.** Tie in these striped quill sections onto the shank of the hook just behind the wings.

Trim off excess stripped quill section. There should now be two feathers extending behind the wings.



**23.** Wrap the thread forward past the wings to just a bit behind the eye of the hook.

Grab the tips of the brown hackle feathers with hackle pliers and wrap a couple of turns behind the wings and a couple of turns in front of the wings.



**24.** When the thread is reached, tie off the hackle feathers and trim away excess.



**25.** The fly should now look like this. The brown hackle fibers represent the legs of the insect when viewed by a fish underwater. The hackle feathers also help the fly float on the water surface.



**26.** Make a number of wraps of thread just behind the eye of the hook, building up what is the head of the insect.



**27.** The fly is now finished except for tying the final knot before we trim the thread away. This can be done with a simple knot using a half hitch tool (good for beginners) or a whip finish tool, which is a better knot, but harder to master. There are many online resources showing how to complete these knots and the video with this workbook shows how to do both.



**28.** Once the knot is tied and the thread is cut, apply a drop of head cement to the head which will further 'glue' everything together.



**29.** The Royal Coachman is now complete!

Note: Using a barbless hook causes less damage to a fish. The barb can be removed by flattening with a pair of needle nose pliers or filing down.



**Fly tying is an enjoyable and creative hobby that can be done anywhere and anytime of year. There is nothing quite like the thrill of catching a fish on a fly you have created yourself and the Royal Coachman can be quite successful on Alberta's lakes and streams. We hope you can get out and enjoy Alberta's great outdoors and catch a fish on your very own Royal Coachman!**



If you are interested in learning more about fishing techniques and equipment, fish identification, Alberta fishing regulations, ethics and safety while fishing and even how to prepare your catch please check out our online Alberta Fishing Education Certification Program at [www.AHEIA.com](http://www.AHEIA.com).



# ALBERTA FISHING EDUCATION PROGRAM

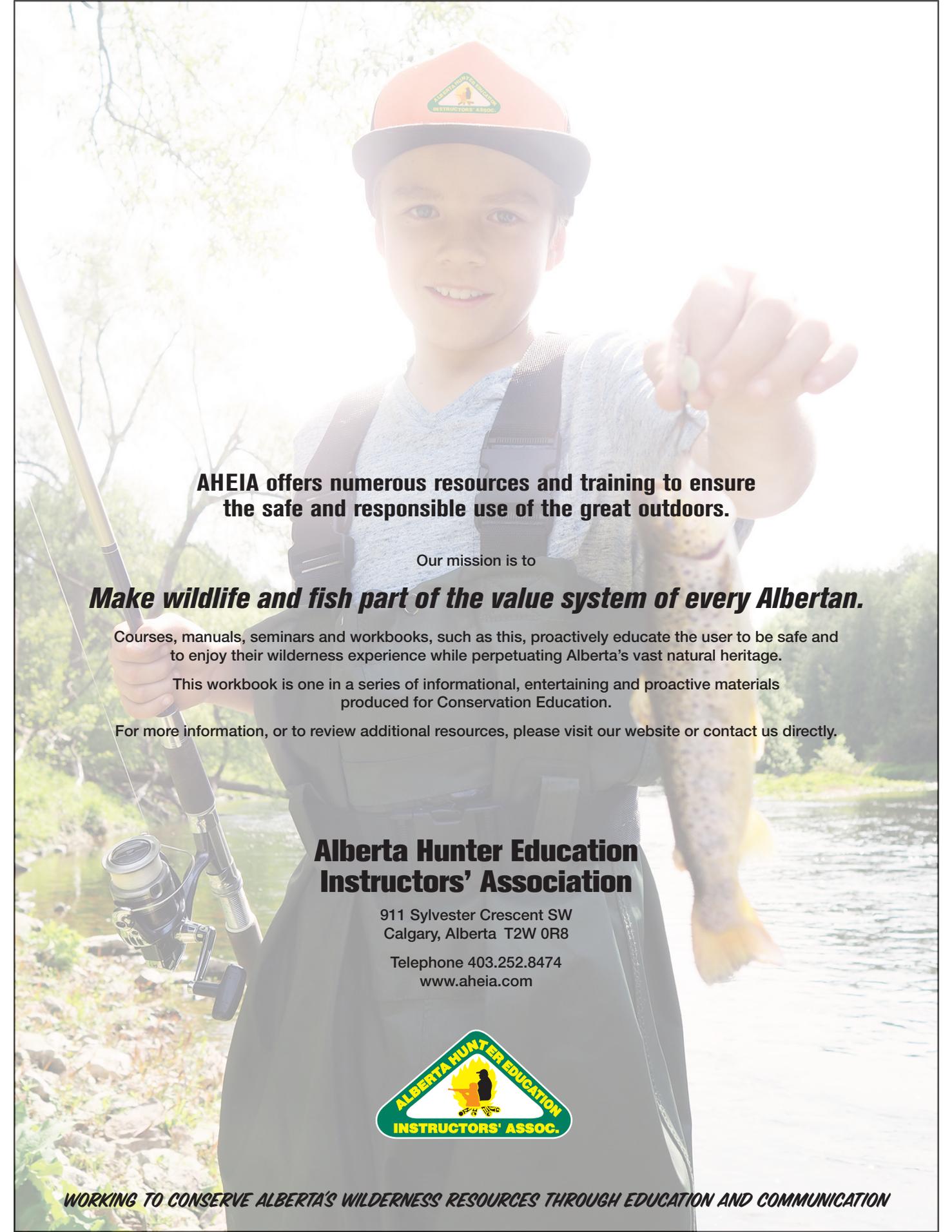
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