

BUG BASICS

Whether you're trying to figure out what insects will entice fish to bite or how to keep them from biting you, here's the latest buzz on bugs. BY LISA DENSMORE BALLARD

MATCHING THE HATCH. **Notice what's floating by to determine the right fly.**

The scenario is all too common and puzzling. You can see the fish. You cast just above them. Your fly drifts past their noses, but no bite. Must be the wrong fly... or maybe not.

"Fish tend to eat things they recognize as food," says Tom Rosenbauer, marketing manager for Orvis Rod & Tackle and the author of more than 20 books on fly fishing, including *The Orvis Guide to Hatch Strategies: Successful Fly Fishing for Trout Without Always Matching the Hatch* (Rizzoli, 2017). "Everything else is simply debris to them."

Rosenbauer preaches five principals to entice trout to take your fly when they are feeding on the surface of the water:

1. Simplify the entomology.

According to Rosenbauer, you only need to identify four key bugs: mayfly, stonefly, caddisfly, and midge. No matter what water you're on, if the fish are rising, at least one of these are likely hatching.

2. Don't assume the type of fly is incorrect. "Trout are opportunists," says Rosenbauer. "If they're not taking a fly, something else might be wrong, like your presentation or the size of the fly."

3. Size is more important than color. Rosenbauer points to recent research findings that trout see color in rough shades, not exact hues. He believes size matters more than color when it comes to matching a hatch.



4. When in doubt, use a Parachute Adams.

There's a reason Parachute Adams is the most popular dry fly in the world. It catches fish. "It just plain works universally, in any water, when fish are rising — and sometimes where they're not," says Rosenbauer.

5. Or use an emerger. "Trout select toward easier prey," explains Rosenbauer. "Trout know instinctively that emergers — flies in mid-hatch, half in and half out of the water — can't fly away. Helplessness trumps size. That's why trout will select small olive flies, which take longer to get out of their shucks than large mayflies."

The most important consideration, says Rosenbauer, is that the drift of the fly happens naturally, without drag.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Parachute Adams doesn't mimic a specific insect (though it most closely resembles a mayfly). It is a variation of the Adams fly, which was developed in 1922 by Leonard Halladay and named for his friend Judge Charles Adams.

