Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum
Topic: : Morning Hatch??
Re: Morning Hatch??
Author: : pcray1231
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URL:

Mayflies have many life stages.

1. Nymph - depending on species/family, these can be clingers, crawlers, swimmers, or burrowers, in various sizes. Which type they are determines what part of streams they inhabit, and their habits. When ready to hatch, they all have different "practices" as well. Some transform to adults (duns) on the bottom and "fly" through the water to the surface. Some swim to the surface as nymphs and emerge from the shuck on top of the water. Some swim to shore or on rocks, and emerge there.

2. Dun - The initial adult is called a dun, due to the grayish blue color that is common in the wings. They float on the surface for a bit to dry their wings and then take to the air. How long they float on the surface depends on species, weather, amount of current, etc. The duns then fly to trees and sit under leaves for a while. How long depends on species and weather. Before....

3. Spinner - the duns again molt, this time into a spinner. The body coloration is different than the duns, and the wings are generally transparant. This is the mating stage. The spinners of a species coordinate their flights and all go at once, forming swarms above the stream (often over riffles). This is when they do the "mayfly" dance, and mate. At the conclusion, they all die. How the eggs are laid again varies with species, but in generalities all the bugs fall "spent" on the water, with wings flared straight out. "Spinner falls" are often very exciting, but sometimes short lived events, as masses of dead bugs are easy pickins and the fish really go nuts.

"Dry fly" is a catch-all term for any fly that floats. In mayflies, it includes emergers, duns, spinners, etc. We even sometimes float a nymph pattern! And of course there are "dry" imitations for caddis and stonefly species as well, not to mention terrestrials (ants, beetles, hoppers, etc.).

Timing is highly variable depending on species. "Typical" timing for many mayflies of May/June would be afternoon/evening emergence and a spinner fall right at dusk, sometimes after dark. There are exceptions. The Baetis variety of BWO's, for instance, of March hatch around midday or early afternoon. Tricos (July-September) hatch overnight and the spinner fall is in the morning. In June, some blue quills hatch in the morning and have spinner falls in morning/early afternoon. That's just a few examples. Also, weather conditions can vastly alter hatches and spinner falls, so that they happen at times when they're not "supposed" to.