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Subject: : Hatch and Entomology Forum

Topic: : Dance Flies

Dance Flies

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One of my favorite patterns when the water's thin and the fish are working something steady but invisible:

Years ago I was astream in low water, late summer conditions. The fish were working steadily but nothing was visible coming off. I had been reading Schwiebert's article on a bug the English chalk stream guys called a smut, *Hilara*, and noticed those tiny black insects buzzing just above the water's surface. I finally managed to land a trout and used an ayemidge to see what it had been eating. It was full of those tiny black bugs!!

Back at the motel, I tied up some in size 28's and have been a believer ever since. I can catch those gentle "dimplers" who fin their noses at conventional mayfly and caddis patterns, sometimes almost at will.

The pattern is simple. Size 26 or 28, fashion an ant-shaped body with black thread. Put 2 turns of high quality black hackle at the throat, trim it flat top and bottom,, and top with a tiny black or grizzly hackle tip laid flat on top of the back, jassid-style. Fish it in the film, downstream to sippers on a long, fine, 7 or 8X tippet that you've treated with leader sink. Work into position slow and easy and take your time.

If that don't work in high summer-skinny water, little else will!!