

Articulated Pheasant Tail



By Beth Jappay

This past year I read the book *Game Changer* by Blane Chocklett, where he discussed a platform he developed for a multi-articulated streamer. He has since developed a micro platform for large insects. I have been intrigued by the idea of attracting fish with a nymph with a more natural movement, and this spring I started experimenting with an articulated nymph for the *Callibaetis* hatch. Below is my most recent version, which has been out-fishing my standard pheasant tail and bead-head pheasant tail by a factor of 2-3, likely due to its more natural movement in the water. This pattern can be tied without a bead as well. I have tried substituting a dry fly hook for the tail shank (and later cutting off the bend and tip) but concluded the articulation did not move as well. I have chosen Mallard flank barbules for the tail in the expectation that it will encourage it to wiggle.

Materials List

Hook: Daiichi 1120, size #16

Bead: 2.5 mm brass, brown

Tail shank: Fish Skull Articulated Micro-Spine, Tail

Thread: Veevus 10/0, brown

Tail: Mallard flank barbules, brown and moderately curved

Rib: UTC Ultra wire, XS, copper



Abdomen: Pheasant tail

Wing Case: Black goose or turkey biot

Thorax: Peacock herl

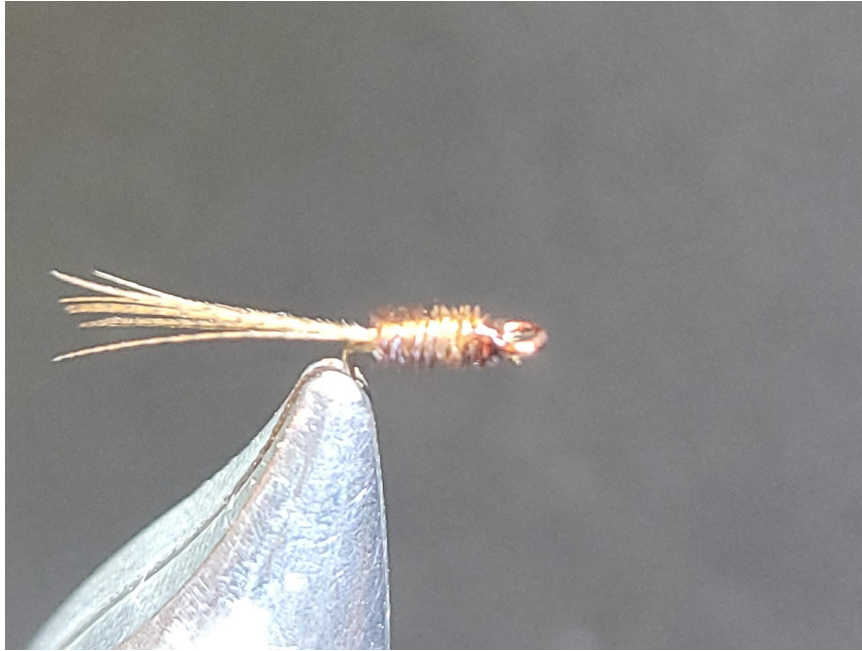
Misc: 4x tippet, Gorilla Glue, brown and black Sharpie pens, Loon Thick UV resin



Start by placing the tail shank in the vise, then lay down a base of thread. Select a Mallard flank feather with a moderate curve, and snip off 5-7 barbles, keeping the tips approximately the same length. Adjust the tail to be 1.5 - 2x the length of the shank and secure.



Attach the Ultrawire on the near-side of the shank, then 3 fibers of pheasant tail on the far side. Slightly coat the thread base with Gorilla Glue for durability (optional).



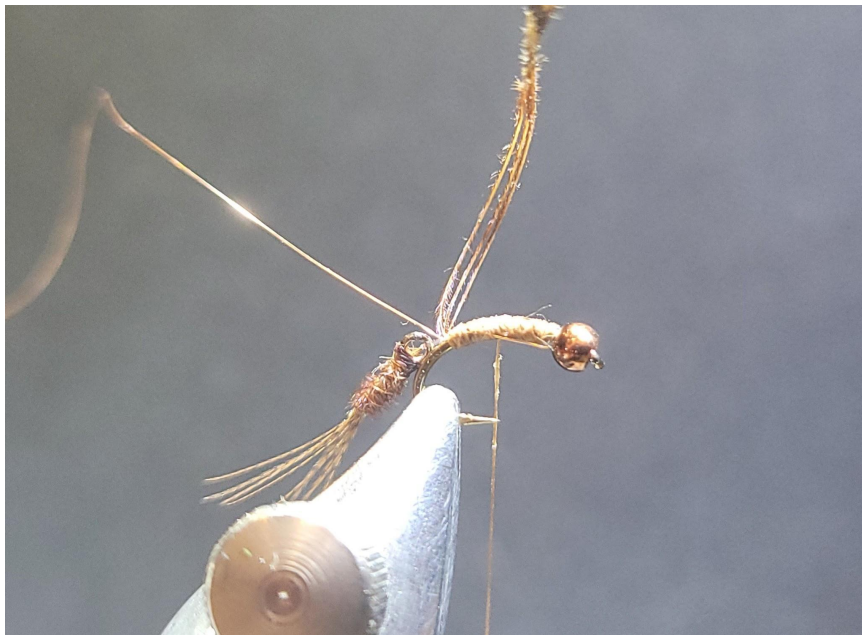
Wrap the pheasant tail fibers forward, then secure; next counter-wrap the wire and secure. Whip finish and cement the head. Remove from vise, then snip off the shank's right-angle nub with wire-cutters. Color the eye with a brown Sharpie and set aside.



Slide the bead on the curved hook, then place the hook in the vise. After laying down a thread base, attach the tippet right behind the bead and (keeping it on top of the hook) secure with thread wraps part-way past the bend of the hook as indicated by the barb (this keeps the tail from flipping in front).



Slide the eye of the tail shank onto the tippet, then secure the free end of the tippet at the beginning of the thread with 2 thread wraps. Adjust the tippet length until the eye of the tail shank is as close as possible without inhibiting movement. Wrap the thread forward, still keeping the tippet on the top of the hook, then trim the tippet to right behind the bead.



Attach the wire on the near side, and the trimmed ends of 3 pheasant tail fibers on the far end. Wrap the thread back to where the tippet emerges, careful not to impinge on the movement of the articulation. Bring the thread forward half-way to the bead. Use a small amount of glue on the posterior half of the threads, then wrap the pheasant tail fibers forward to the thread, then secure and trim. Counter wrap the

wire to the same point, then secure and trim.



Attach the narrow end of the biot right behind the bead, then wrap back to the pheasant tail fibers. Create a small dubbing loop. Attach 2-3 fibers of peacock herl behind the bead, and wrap back as well. Bring the thread forward behind the eye.



[Create a peacock rope](#) with the dubbing loop and peacock herl, then wrap it forward and secure.



Pull the biot forward and secure. Whip finish and trim the thread. Use a black Sharpie to color the thread just in front of the biot, then coat the biot and blackened thread in UV resin and cure to create the wing case and reinforce the head.

I fish this pattern with my Midge Tip line, about 5-9' from the tip of the line. It can be slowly trolled, or retrieved by short strips or a hand-twist of slow to medium speed.

