

Quill Bodied Soft Hackle

Stripped peacock quills have been around for about as long as tyers have been wrapping feathers to hooks. There are countless methods for stripping peacock eye shafts, bleaching, coloring, and processing; All of which usually are time consuming and often yield less than ideal results. Recently, though, Polish Quills have made our lives so much easier. They are pre-stripped and dyed a variety of very true colors, are much more pliable than the ones I strip, and are very convenient to use. So why tie with stripped quills? They make easy, beautifully segmented, thin bodies on any fly style. I use them on nymphs, perdigons, dries, and now soft hackles.

Materials

- Hook: Firehole 609 #14-18
- Thread: 12/0 Veevus same color as body
- Body: Polish Quills in your favorite color – I like olive, golden olive, orange, and brown
- Cement: Solarez Bone Dry UV Cure or thin head cement
- Thorax: Peacock dubbing
- Hackle: Partridge feather

Tying Steps

1. Secure hook in vise, and start thread 2-3 eye-lengths back from hook eye. Advance thread to hook bend making very smooth, even wraps. Build a slim, tapered underbody of thread avoiding any lumps, bumps, or otherwise offending defects. End with thread at rear of fly.
2. Select your stripped quill and trim off the little unstripped end. Tie in at rear of body so that the black stripe is toward the hook bend. Advance thread to the thorax.
3. Making touching or slightly overlapping turns, wrap the quill to the thorax and secure with a few thread wraps. Trim excess and make a two or three turn whip finish.
4. Apply your favorite UV cure coating and torch it, or apply a couple of coats of head cement and let each one dry well.
5. Dub a thin thorax of peacock dubbing (or use your favorite fur dubbing).
6. Prepare and tie in an appropriately-sized partridge feather by the tip. Make 1 ½ to 2 turns of hackle and secure with a few thread wraps. Trim excess, form a nice neat head with thread wraps, whip-finish, and trim thread.

I fish these in traditional wet fly style – up and across current letting them swing in the current until it is below me, then stripping it back before casting again. I also will use this as a dropper behind a Crackleback and fish it the same way, or as a dropper behind a bead-head nymph for fishing deep. As with any soft hackle, you really cannot fish it wrong. The UV cure coating makes the body very durable and even adds a 3-D effect to the body.

