



Favourite Flies

GWYNETH MOONEY



LADIES
INTERNATIONAL
CHAMPION
**GWYNETH
MOONEY** SHARES
HER FAVOURITE
PATTERNS
FOR STOCKS
RESERVOIR.

I have always fished and, like many anglers, started with coarse fishing. As a girl I also enjoyed our annual family holiday to spin for salmon on the River Annan. More recently I have turned to fly fishing and have been fly fishing competitively since 2016. I am proud to now have three caps with the England Ladies loch-style team. We have great fun together and learn lots from each other as well.

I am based in Lancashire and my home water is Stocks Reservoir, an upland reservoir on the edge of the Pennines, fed by the River Hodder. Besides a population of resident brown trout, fishery manager Ben Dobson keeps it well stocked with strong browns and rainbows. In spring the fish are often found feeding in the margins when the water levels rise to cover food-holding grasses. During the summer it can produce fantastic dry fly action when terrestrial insects such as beetles,

ants and daddies are blown onto the water from the surrounding farmland. Fishing on Stocks is rarely easy, but providing you get the method right, great sport can be had both from the bank and boats.

Besides my passion for loch-style fishing, I love catching fish using flies that I have tied myself and find that fly tying is itself an absorbing hobby. I am a member of the Fly Dressers' Guild and have had success in the Guild fly tying competitions.

So here I share four flies that are proven fish-catchers for me on Stocks. They also catch well on stillwaters across the UK. All are tied on barbless hooks. I prefer barbless for several reasons: they are essential when fishing catch and release; they are safer and quicker to unhook (for me and my boat partner!); they give good hook up rates; and, most importantly, providing you keep line tension, they hold the fish well.

See you on the water!



GOLD ARSED CAT BOOBY

This is my barbless version of the Fario fly. It has a special place in my heart after being responsible for my first “double” from Stocks. The 10lb rainbow engulfed my point fly as it landed three feet from the Two Trees bank. Make sure the eyes are symmetrical to avoid spinning up your leader.

Hook: Fulling Mill Heavyweight, size 10
Thread: Veevus 14/0, white
Eyes: 4mm white booby cord
Tail and Wing: White marabou
Butt: 15mm Funky Fly Tying Bonded Blob fritz, metallic gold
Body: 15mm Funky Fly Tying UV Neon Hackle Fritz, fl. yellow



MIDAS

A great, all-round robust dry fly that fish take confidently because it sits in the surface film. The black marking bands on the reversed pheasant tail fibres make neat tips to the stubby wings. Really scruff up the legs and fur with Velcro and apply floatant to the top only. I often fish a team of three Midas flies five feet apart.

Hook: Fulling Mill Grab Gape, size 10 or 12 **Thread:** Black UTC 70
Body and Thorax: Seal's fur mix: fiery brown with a little red, ginger and hot orange
Rib: Nylon, 5lb **Legs:** Knotted pheasant centre tail fibres, natural
Hackle: Greenwell hen **Head:** Lite-Brite, gold



RED HOLO DIAWL BACH

A popular nymph which is best tied short and slim. Here the fluorescent head gives a hot spot. This fly is used across the UK and did well for me at the 2019 Draycote Ladies International. I fished it under the bung to take eight fish and win the Brown Bowl as International Champion.

Hook: Fulling Mill Grab Gape, size 10 or 12
Thread: Black UTC 70
Body: Pheasant herl
Rib: Red holographic tinsel, fine
Tail and Throat Hackle: Red cock fibres
Head: Glo-Brite No.4



SEDGEHOG HOPPER

A great all-round fly for browns and rainbows. Stocks Reservoir fish take this bushy variant as a hawthorn fly or even a daddy longlegs and will come up 'blind' at the Dam for a juicy mouthful, especially if it is twitched. Fish it as the point fly six foot away from a Midas or Bob's Bits on the dropper.

Hook: Fulling Mill Grab Gape, size 10
Thread: Black UTC 70
Body: Black /claret seal's fur mix
Legs: Knotted pheasant tail fibres, black
Wing: Deerhair, natural
Thorax and Overwing: As body with a touch of added UV Glister

