About the author

Aleksy Pawluczuk is a designer, sculptor, and photographer based in Kraków, Poland. He has run his own design, screen print, prepress, and advertising studios since 1982, designing books, posters, logos, corporate identity, fashion, and more. Since 1990, he has taught computer-aided design and print industry workflows in Kraków at the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts, the oldest university-level art school in Poland. A CorelDRAW® user since 1989, Aleksy now teaches classes and gives presentations on Corel® software in Poland and other countries.
Anatomy of a Salmon Fly

The only thing that can take me away from my computer and CorelDRAW is fly-fishing, my favorite hobby. The possibility of communing with wild nature and challenging a demanding opponent, as well as letting my eyes have some rest from the computer screen, is enticing. Every ambitious fly-fisher’s point of honor is to catch a fish with a self-made bait that imitates insects or other creatures that are food for trout, grayling, or salmon.

Fly-tying, which is my other hobby, is often compared to an art. The beginnings of fly-fishing and fly-tying are dated to approximately the 15th century BC.

Classical salmon fly patterns are extremely complicated, and the materials used to prepare them are often expensive and difficult to obtain. They might be anything from exotic bird feathers to the fur of protected animals. That is why I sometimes experiment with creating new patterns by using modern materials, like plastics, which can completely substitute for the above-mentioned fur and feathers.

Preparing dry flies for salmon or steelhead, especially the “full-dress” type of flies, is really time-consuming and requires wide knowledge as well as patience and experience. That is why from time to time I use my computer to design a new pattern and I ask my friend Adam Sikora, a world-renowned fly-tier and fly-fisher, to make it.

CorelDRAW is perfect for this kind of task—tools like the Blend tool, the Contour tool, and the Artistic media tool, as well as the incredibly intuitive and easy-to-use curve editing, make it possible to design a new “killer pattern” with just a few clicks of the mouse, which is truly enjoyable and satisfying. Although you can use bitmap-editing software like Corel® Painter® or Corel PHOTO-PAINT®, CorelDRAW gives you an additional level of freedom when you create different color-tone versions or reuse previously created elements. Sometimes, I prepare draft sketches in Corel Painter and then create the final design in CorelDRAW. It is best to use a Wacom® tablet to make drawing more comfortable.

In this tutorial, I will use only built-in tools, not custom brushes or strokes. Nevertheless, the final effect is realistic and imitates the natural materials used for flies (Figure 1).

Creating the hook

We’ll begin by making the hook. (At this point, you can also set your units of measurement — I use millimeters. To change the units to millimeters, click Layout > Page setup, and choose “millimeters” from the Units list box.)

Using the 3-point curve tool, draw a line that connects the hook’s point (barb) and the eye. Drag to the left to draw the initial shape of the hook (Figure 3).

Modify the curve to the desired shape by using the Shape tool (Figures 4 and 5). Double-click at the eye end to add a node, and then convert the node to cusp. Convert the shorter piece of curve to a line, and drag upward to make the “eye” of the hook.
An easy way to edit the width of the curve is to open the Outline pen dialog box by double-clicking the Outline icon (F12) on the status bar, and change the width and shape of the outline in proportion to the thickness of the hook wire. Set the line caps to round ends (click the second Line caps button). When you have finished editing the outline (Figure 6), convert it to an object (from the menu bar, click Object ▶ Convert outline to object, or press Ctrl + Shift + Q).
To make the barb at the bottom end of the hook, select the end nodes with the **Shape** tool, and change the rounded tip to lines. Add a node and adjust it to shape the tip (Figure 7).

![Figure 7: Making the tip of the hook]

Change the color of the hook to black (Figure 8).

![Figure 8: Changing the color]

Using the **Contour** tool, pick the edge of the hook, and drag inside to create an inside contour (Figure 9).
On the property bar, set the contour steps and contour offset to achieve the desired result (Figure 10).

Set the fill color to **Navy blue** to create the impression of wire thickness and light reflections (Figure 11). Add orange to get a bronze feel.

Creating the Chenille body

Now we can move on to make the body of the fly. Use the **Rectangle tool** to draw a small rectangle on the top, straight part of the hook. Position the rectangle so that its center is vertically aligned with the center of the hook (Figure 12). Click the rectangle with the **Pick tool** to get the rotation handles. Holding down the **Ctrl** key, drag the top center handle to the right to skew the rectangle by 15 degrees. Then, use the **Shape tool** to round the corners.
Fill the rectangle with red. In the next step, we will try to imitate a Chenille body by using the Roughen brush tool \( \times \) (Figure 13). (It is also possible to use the Distort tool \( \square \).) On the property bar, set the nib size of the Roughen brush tool to 4 mm and the frequency to 10, and then move the cursor around the edge of the object.

Select the resulting object, and press Ctrl + D to duplicate it. Move the duplicated object to the right end of the hook, so that the two objects are positioned at the opposite ends of the fly body (Figure 14). Select the Blend tool \( \square \), and then click one end of the body and drag all the way to the other end. Increase or decrease the blend steps on the property bar \( \text{28} \) to obtain the desired density.

Next, click the Path properties button \( \square \) on the property bar, and select New path. Select the edge of the hook as the new path. Click Object \( \uparrow \) Break blend group apart. After you separate the objects, align them so that they follow the slight curve of the hook’s body (the center of each object should be vertically aligned with the center of the hook). Select the object at one end of the body, and rotate it 15 degrees to make it perpendicular to the body of the hook. Repeat this process with the object at the other end (Figure 15).
Now we can start making gold tinsel ribbing. Create a slightly C-shaped curve (Figure 16). Open the Transformation docker (from the menu bar, click Window  Dockers  Transformations  Position, or press Alt + F7). In the docker, set the horizontal (x) distance to 4 mm, type 1 in the Copies box, and click Apply. Select both curves, and click Object  Join Curves. In the Join Curves docker, choose Chamfer from the list box, and set the gap tolerance to 4 mm. In the Object Properties docker (Window  Dockers  Object Properties), click the Fill button, and then click the Fountain Fill button. From the Fill picker, choose a suitable fill preset, such as one of these presets, and then click the Apply button in the pop-up window that appears. The Rotate value should be 90 degrees. You can fine-tune the colors in your fill by clicking the Interactive fill tool and dragging colors from the color palette in the document window onto the object’s interactive vector handles.

In the Transformation docker, set the x distance to 8 mm, type 1 in the Copies box, and click Apply. Click the object to get the rotation handles, and skew the object approximately 20 degrees (the width of the object). In the Edit fill dialog box (F11), set the fountain fill angle to 90 degrees.

Duplicate the object. Position the original object at one end of the hook, and move the duplicate to the other end. Then, use the Blend tool, as you did before, to make a blend group along the path between the two objects (Figure 17).
Use the same method to create a golden tip. Then, if necessary, change the preset in the **Fountain fill** dialog box to create a silver tag. Now the hook is finished (Figure 18).

![Figure 18: The finished hook](image)

**Creating the feathers**

From the toolbox, choose the **Artistic media tool**. Click the **Brush** button on the property bar, choose **Splatter** from the **Category** list box, and choose this brush from the **Brushstroke** list box. Draw arc-shaped tail feathers, and use the **Shape** tool to edit their shape, as you would with ordinary curves (Figure 19). Repeat the steps for each feather, and finally, apply the desired color by clicking a color palette swatch.

![Figure 19: Shaping the feathers](image)

In a similar way, make the feathers for the butt, throat, and wings (Figure 20).
To make the feathers for the topping, draw a 0.2 mm-thick curve from the head to the end of the tail. Duplicate the curve, and reshape the duplicate (Figure 21).

Use the Blend tool to create a blend, and change the outline color to Deep yellow to imitate strands from a Golden Pheasant crest (Figure 22). If you are planning on resizing the fly, remember to enable the Scale with object check box in the Outline pen dialog box or the Outline section of the Object Properties docker (Window ▶ Dockers ▶ Object properties).
Figure 22: Applying color to the topping

Use a similar technique to make the feathers for the cheek and shoulder. First, create the outer shape curves, and then make a blend. Duplicate the compound object without moving it, and change the outline color. Click Object ▶ Break blend group apart (Ctrl + K), and then ungroup the objects (Ctrl + U) and immediately combine them (Ctrl + L) to make a multiple subpath curve. From the toolbox, select the Eraser tool, set the desired thickness, and erase part of the curve from the upper object to simulate real feather patterns (Figures 23 and 24).

Figure 23: Erasing parts of the top object to create a realistic feather pattern
Adding the final touches

Finally, draw the outer shape for the head, and fill it with black. Add a thin white shape, and use the Blend tool again to blend the white and simulate light reflection (Figures 25 and 26).
To make a more lifelike fly, you can add an interactive drop shadow (Figure 27).

The salmon fly presented here is simplified, compared with the classical patterns, but I hope it is a good starting point to create your own dream design. Enjoy using CorelDRAW X7!