

This month I've decided to give you three salmon patterns as I'm sure some of you may now be thinking about tackling your first Irish spring salmon of the year. That said, some of you may already have been lucky enough to have already landed one. If so I'm envious and well done. This time of year I like to escape to a salmon river and so I try to get to somewhere like the Drowes in March or April. Although it can, like all salmon rivers in Ireland, be a hard place to tempt a fish at times, when you do it makes it all worthwhile as there is something truly magical about a spring salmon or as they are called, a springer. When you land one it will certainly put a spring in your step as you I'm sure like me will be filled with pure elation.

The three flies I list here are all patterns that have worked for me and

many others. I suggest you dress a few. These patterns not only work in the spring, but are handy to have in your box right through the salmon fishing year. You will see that two are dressed in the Irish Shrimp style, although their origins lie in two much older flies which are very famous Scottish classic patterns. As for hooks, shrimp flies can be dressed on singles, trebles or doubles, although I know anglers who will argue what hooks they should best be dressed on and all of their arguments will sound convincing. All I can say is I have taken fish on all three types of hooks, but singles are normally used on loughs, although in these times of catch and release I am starting to see them appear more and more on rivers, where trebles and doubles would have been the norm.

Tight lines!



FACT FILE

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Blasts from the past

Three for the Springer

As his thoughts turn to salmon, **Stevie Munn**, digs out three old favourites that have often done the business for him.



This Thunder and Lightning is a great fly in all conditions and times of year but can be a great choice for spring and late season fishing. There are many variants on the original, but the fly I have listed has been tied in the Irish Shrimp style. The dressing has evolved from one of the classic Scottish salmon flies which is now over 150 years old. It was first tied in the late 1800s by Scottish fly dresser James Wright, who also created many great salmon

THE THUNDER AND LIGHTNING SHRIMP

Hook: Size 8-14 single, treble or double	Mid Butt: Black ostrich
Tag: Flat or oval gold tinsel	Mid Hackle: Hot orange cock
Tail: Golden pheasant yellow breast feather	Front Body: Black floss, seal's fur or Litebrite
Rear Body: Black floss, seal's fur or Litebrite	Rib: Oval gold tinsel
Rib: Oval gold tinsel	Cheeks: Jungle cock
	Front Hackle: Hot orange cock with a blue jay or sub throat
	Head: Black or red

and trout flies including the Black Doctor and the Silver Doctor. The colour combination of black, orange, and gold has proved effective on salmon rivers all over the world. The old Thunder and Lightning was once known as the Great Storm Fly. It received this name because it is exceptionally successful on rivers that are naturally dark, on rising water or where a spate is running off and the water is that dull brown colour.



This dressing is well known for salmon in rivers like the Drowes, but has also proved to be a very good dollaghan fly for me later in the year on the Lough Neagh rivers. I like flies for salmon and dollaghan with silver in them and always have some silver bodied patters in my fly box. I also must admit I like flies that are simple to dress. Less time tying at the vice

THE LADY ETHNA

Hook: Size 8-12 single, double or treble
Butt: Fluorescent green silk
Tail: Strands of pearl Twinkle
Rib: Silver wire
Body: Flat silver tinsel
Hackle: Grey mallard or pochard duck with a badger hackle in front dressed long
Head: Red

means more time actually fishing and also you don't swear just as much when you lose a fly up an overhanging tree. The Lady Ethna is a popular fly in Ireland on many spate rivers. It's very good for fresh fish. It's a simple yet deadly pattern, great for low water salmon fishing, anytime during late spring and summer.



The Green Highlander Shrimp is a variant of a traditional classic pattern The Green Highlander. Like the Thunder and Lightning above, it's dressed here utilising the Irish shrimp style with the colours of the hugely successful old Scottish traditional. It was originally called The Highlander by Francis, who first dressed it in the 1800s, but there was no green in his Highlander. The Green Highlander is listed in Kelson's book. Also

THE GREEN HIGHLANDER SHRIMP

Hook: Size 8-14 single, treble or double	Mid Hackle: Green highlander cock
Tag: Flat or oval silver tinsel	Front Body: Green floss, seal's fur or Litebrite
Tail: Golden pheasant red breast feather	Rib: Oval gold tinsel
Rear Body: Yellow floss	Cheeks: Jungle cock
Rib: Oval silver tinsel	Front Hackle: Yellow cock
	Head: Black or red

the olive green mohair of Francis developed into the green seal's fur in Major Grant's pattern in 1860. The modern Green Highlander Shrimp works well in many rivers in Ireland, but has a very good reputation in the Galway area. It seems to work best in clear water and fresh running fish. I have had lough run browns on this pattern, which has worked for me on a size 12 in Ireland.