

## Ross Special – A Nova Scotia Atlantic Salmon Wet Fly



Nip Ross of Sydney, Nova Scotia designed the Ross Special for fishing the Margaree River. Fly tier Joe Aucoin from nearby New Waterford tied Nip's flies for him. Their project was a success, word spread, and this Nova Scotia innovation quickly became a standard. I recall the 1970s when Nip was a regular at the St. Mary's River's Ford Pool, sitting in a river punt fishing while accompanied by his dog.

The Ross Special was illustrated in a June 1948 Fortune magazine article "Atlantic Salmon". It is still popular on Canadian rivers, especially Nova Scotia's gorgeous Margaree River. It is most effective in the cold waters of autumn, when a salmon's fashion taste switches to bright fall colors. Then, shades of red, yellow and orange can often trigger some very heavy action!

Shown below are 2 dressings, the original and a contemporary one, with photo, that uses modern materials to advantage.

### Ross Special (original dressing)

- Thread: Black
- Hook: Black salmon hook such as Mustad 36890 sizes 1 - 10
- Tag: Oval silver tinsel
- Tail: Golden pheasant crest
- Rib: Oval silver tinsel
- Body: Red Wool, dressed fairly full
- Wing: Pine Squirrel
- Hackle: Yellow hackle tied as a collar & pulled down
- Cheeks: Jungle Cock
- Head: Black Thread, varnished

**Ross Special** (a contemporary dressing)

Thread: White 8/0 UniThread

Hook: Partridge Bartleet Supreme salmon hook sizes 1 - 10

Tag: Extra fine oval silver tinsel & golden yellow floss

Tail: Two golden pheasant crests

Rib: Oval silver tinsel, medium or large depending on hook size

Body: Red Antron yarn

Hackle: Bright yellow hen hackle folded backward

Wing: Pine Squirrel over 4 strands orange Krystal Flash

Cheeks: Jungle Cock (optional)

Head: Black 8/0 UniThread finished with 2 coats Angler's Corner Glossy Head  
Cement