

## What's in a Name?

We're all entomologists, sort of. Since childhood we have been fascinated with insects, collecting and admiring them, often learning their names. Simple names at first like bug, beetle, or fly. Later it became a June Bug, Lady Beetle, or House Fly. Over time we acquired quite a knowledge of insects including Mayflies and Caddisflies and other insects, which we would later discover, fish were fond of eating. When we first took up fly fishing, I think most of us were content to fish with a Woolly Worm, Adams, Coachman or something that simply was popular and seemed to work. As we became more hooked on fly fishing (experienced) we became aware that there was a group of fly fishers who spoke of their flies by names that were completely foreign to us. I think many of us, I know I did, made a conscious effort to avoid learning those names. Well, you know the story, now we are trying to "match the hatch," and to do so, we need to know what the hatch is. Now many of us are, at the least, amateur angler-entomologists.

Insects have two types of names, one scientific name and one (often more than one) common name. The scientific name consists of two words based on *Genus* and *species* (Latin). This is a common language used by taxonomists around the world. The genus name is a noun while the species name is an adjective. It describes a characteristic of the insect (like *Drunella grandis*). Both are written in italics or underlined. Common names are based on local vernacular resulting in many and varied names and nicknames which naturally lead to lots of misunderstandings. Some names are written in the adjectival form which is a form of the scientific name used as common name: for example, an insect in the Order Plecoptera may be referred to as Plecopteran. That's how we get Chironomid for an insect in the Family Chironomidae.

So, with that in mind we have: entomo, which loosely in Latin (actually Greek) means insect (note the sect, or "sections"), or one whose body is cut into segments. And: logy, meaning the study of. Therefore, we have the study of insects, which have head, thorax and abdomen sections.

Most of our insects now have Latin and/or more or less Americanized Latin names. For example: *Callibaetis* is often pronounced --Caley-bait-iss or Cal-uh-BAIT-is. Here's some more: *Pseudocloeon* (Sue-doe-clo-ee-on), *Ephemerella* (Ef-fem-er-ell-uh), *Drunella* (Dry-nell-uh), *Heptageniide* (Hep-tuh-gene-ee-dee), *Rhithrogena* (Rye-throw-gene-uh), *Diptera* (DIHP-tuhr-uh), *Trico* (TREE-co), and so on. OK, *Enough nonsenseus*, I guess we could just call them *Littlus bugus*. Maybe that's why some people just call them BWO or PMD.

If you're ever on a stream or lake and the fishing is really slow and you're looking for something interesting to do and you hear someone talking about the lack of a hatch and he says "bay-tus," just loudly correct him in front of his fishing buddies and say it's "bee-tiss." You'll probably then have something to do all right - at least until you've put some distance between the two of you. Seems like insect names are a constant source of amusement for some and frustration for others. Problem is, we Americans try to say Latin words with an English pronunciation. There is a guide to Latin pronunciation, if one can remember it.

Now, back to the genus *Baetis* (variously referred to as beet-us, bait-us, bay-tiss, etc.) which is properly pronounced bee-tiss. It's in the Family Baetidae (Bee-tee-dee). See, I told you we have trouble with this Latin. Some of its common names are: Baetis, Bluewing Olive, Baetid, and BWO.

So, the point is, we'll find different pronunciations, some good, some bad and some ugly, but they're all ok with us. We understand.

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