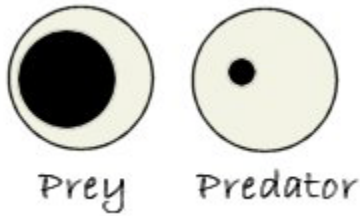


Fishing Lure Making & Design - Eye Spots



(a.k.a "eyespot"). The eye spot is considered one of the single most effective triggers on a lure.

Research has shown that virtually all predator/prey relationships involve some sort of exchange of eye responses (such as making or avoiding eye contact) that sets the social order among species. Over time, the predator and prey species learn to interpret the intentions of each other by monitoring these physiological eye responses and reacting to them accordingly. For instance, a predator fish's pupils will typically get extremely small at the moment of attack while the target prey species' pupils will get very large at the same instant. Knowing that the predator fish expects its prey's pupils to rapidly dilate during the attack helps us, as luremakers, to design fishing lures that mimic this behavior and thus provide better strike triggers for the fish we are targeting. Likewise, knowing that a very small pupil is an aggressive sign that a fish is about to strike tells us we should avoid making eye spots with very small pupils because that could actually scare our target fish away!

In addition to the pupil sizes, the position of the eye in relation to the axis of the body also helps the predator anticipate the direction that the prey fish will go when it flees. Predator fish will watch the eyes of their prey and then gauge their angle of attack based on the direction the eye is facing and the level of dilation of the pupil. When the pupil gets big, it signals that the prey fish is about to flee, and the predator fish will attack at an angle that intercepts the prey fish. When you're designing lures, the pupil should always be facing in the direction of the line tie so the predator fish can anticipate the forward movement of your lure as you retrieve it and make contact with the hook during the strike.

Fishing Lure Making Tips for Eye Spots

- The pupil should be large on your lures in comparison to the overall eye (see "Prey" image above)
- If you're making an eye with only one color (a single dot), the eye spot should be darker than the lure's surrounding body color
- The pupil should always face in the direction that the lure travels during retrieve (on typical lures, it should face the line tie)
- The eye boundaries should be crisp and well contrasted against the lure's body color

Painting Clean Eye Spots on Lures

There are many different techniques for adding eyes to fishing lures, including stickers, stencils, brushes, and countless other techniques. Without dismissing the value of these other approaches, my personal favorite is the common "nail dropping" technique. With this technique, you literally "drop" a small dot of paint from the flat end of a nail onto the lure's surface and allow it to spread out into a perfect circle and dry. During this process, you must take care to prevent the nail from actually touching the lure...the only thing that should touch the lure is the paint! Use different size nail heads to create eye spots of different diameters and allow the paint to dry between drops.

