

TOP FISHING SECRETS

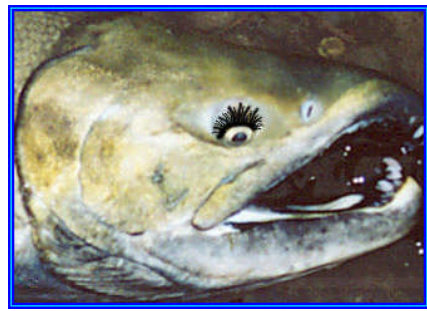
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Blinking Fish?

The two constituents of pressure that put fish off the bite when it comes to “sight” and the inability to blink is water clarity and barometric pressure

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This might seem like a goofy photograph to you with the illustration of some “eyelashes” on this fish but it drives home a point almost instantly. I showed this image to Kim Koch of Amato Publications. She laughed and said “this is about how fish can’t blink...right?”



See, that’s it. Fish cannot blink and do have a need to filter out light so how do they do it? There is a wealth of clues that many anglers forget about until they recall the favorite haunts of most species of fish. They like to find cover from boats, bushes, banks, drop-offs, and deep holds. All of them allow fish to filter out light that is essentially blinding to them. Did you know that it’s one of the main reasons fish gravitate to the surface as waters run turbid? Cloudy water makes it easier for them to stand bright light even during overcast days when it’s raining. The funniest thing about rain, turbid water, and rising levels of water is that most of the time fishermen call it quits until the sun comes out. Ironically, it’s one of the best times to go fishing since pressures that fish feel from clearer conditions aren’t there. I’ve fished waters that had zero visibility, flooded banks, with rain pounding me and still ended up fishing in “buckets” of fish absolutely alone! Yup, it’s true. Fish don’t blink but when you have a full understanding of their physiology it doesn’t matter. Hiding fish can be found anytime of the day or night when you know what to look for and when to look. “Pretty cool looking fish though...right?”

There isn’t a fish in the ocean or one that swims the cool fresh clean water of inland rivers and lakes that has a set of eyelashes or eyelids...so do they blink? No, of course they don’t but they do take steps to alleviate pressure of intense sunlight by swimming deeper where light is filtered making it easier for them to see. What does that mean for fishermen attempting to entice them to bite the end of the line? Well, they can assume that fish looking to get away from glaring light is mostly done so during bright sunny days. If there is any cover in the area fish will seek it out rather than dive deeper, where less oxygen is found. Given fish options, anglers can accurately assume where holding fish will be at any given time of the day on this one simple little pressure that all fish experience. It is a single gateway into the way fish live that gets them on the hook for those fishermen who “know” fish and their environment. The idea of eye-lidless fish attempting to escape bright light is nothing new; however, depend on the fact that most anglers don’t think about it until their hooks come up empty. Most of the time fishermen move to another area or go home believing that luck was bad and that fishing will be better some other time...and it’s just not so. Boats, banks, drop-offs, boulders, brush, pilings, and fallen logs all offer cover that fish will gravitate to anytime there is a need for it. The two constituents of pressure that put fish off the bite when it comes to “sight” and the inability to blink is water clarity and barometric pressure; the

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brighter it is the more pressure there is on fish, which will put them off the bite. Take away all these simple pressures and fish will focus on the one thing we all want them to...biting. Just recall a simple rule: when the sun comes out fish hide, when the sun hides fish come out. This simple bit of information will increase the amount of fish on the end of the line.

Fish really don't blink but they do respond in predictable ways to filter out light. The first time you see how fish will seek cover during bright days and then come out during overcast days might convince you to reevaluate fishing day priorities. It has for me and believe it when I say that some of the best fishing trips I've ever had were during times when inundation was so intense that rivers flooded and warnings went out over the radio. *walk to an area safe to land the catch.*