

Using Otter Eggs in Lakes and Still Waters

When fishing in still waters, I utilize several methods different than fishing in rivers and streams. First and foremost, I tie my **Otter Eggs** up differently **without the trailing veil**. Since there is **no moving water**, a natural egg does not "Milk" as it does in flowing waters. First tie up your **Otter Egg** up the same as if to fish a river with the Milking Veil. **You still have to pull the "Milking Veil" over the egg and compress the egg to the hook shank and then tie the veil off at the eye of the hook**. Then **trim off all the excess veil** by clipping it short at the eye of the hook and **leaving no veil to trail on or over the fly**. This method of pulling the veil over the **Otter Egg** and then pulling down on the veil compressing the egg on to the shank, will keep the egg tied securely onto the hook shank.

Fishing with **Otter Eggs** in a lake is done by either **letting the egg rest, without movement, on the bottom**, or by just suspending it from an indicator at a depth **at or near the bottom** of the area you are fishing. It is a slow and patient method needed to use **Otter Eggs** in these situations. Often, I will use two flies, one an egg and another a small midge or leech pattern suspended below a float indicator. Wind will move the float across the lake so you do get movement of the **Otter Egg** in this manner, but usually slowly. I use very little weight, such as one or two BB size split shot if I fish in 5 to 10 feet of depth. **I only use floating lines** and add lead core sections if I want to fish deep areas.

Quite often an excellent method in shallow water areas is to actually **sight fish for trout**. In the spring (rainbows, lake trout and cutthroats) and fall spawning months (brown and brook trout plus kokanee salmon) these trout will accumulate in "pods" of 3 to 10 fish cruising off and along the shorelines. They usually look for gravel or sandy, rocky areas to spawn and in these areas I fish by foot wading into several feet of water watching for these active moving "pods" of trout. Always moving, these pods will come back and forth several times in an hour. In these situations I only use the weight of the hook to sink the **Otter Egg** and I carefully watch the egg(s) lying on the bottom as a "pod" will swim by. I use two different eggs in two different colors and sizes. I can actually see trout "dipping down" and taking the egg off the bottom, much like a bone fish tailing in an ocean shallow. You can use an indicator if you wish, but in these shallow fishing areas, I rely on my eye sight to see the trout take the egg. In Colorado, at lakes such as Antero, Spinney, Delaney Lakes, and in Wyoming at the Laramie Lake areas (Twin Buttes, Alsop, Hattie, Leazenby Lakes) I use this method along the shore lines to take spawning trout in both the spring and fall months. If the water is over 3 feet deep and eye sight is a problem, then I will use an indicator to detect a strike, but again no weight on my leader, letting only the hook weight sink the fly. On most of these lakes my mono leader is a 8# (3X) tip, adding an 8# to 5# (4X to 5X) tippet to each of my flies. In Wyoming I go a bit heavier due to the larger size of some of their trout! Many of my good fishing buddies from the Loveland-Fort Collins areas, all members of the **Colorado Hookers** private Facebook club group, took some very large fish using **Otter Eggs** this spring of 2015 on these same Wyoming Lake areas.

Another method you can utilize is to slightly move the egg(s) or leech pattern **slowly** along the bottom , either with or without an indicator, using a **short section of lead core line** attached to the end of the fly line above the leader in a loop to loop configuration.

With this method, I am using a floating line with a 7 to 12 foot leader but with the lead core section at the end of my fly line to submerge the leader and fly. By varying the length of lead core section I can customize the depth of water I am fishing. I have lead core sections pre-made up, with 1 -1/2 inch loops at each end, in at least **6 different lengths** which can vary the rate of sinking of the leader. I carry small sections of 4, 6, 12, 16, 20 and 24 inch lengths of lead core sections which allow for different sink rates. With two loops at each end, which are whip finished at the end of each loop with tying thread and then lacquered, I can easily switch lead core lengths out in a few minutes to customize the sink rate of my leader. I have found that I can fish from 6 to 20 feet of water with this system without having to go to a full sink tip type of fly line. This allows a system for me to quickly change sink rates without having to have several reels of different sink tip lines and reel spools available and the chore of having several rods and reels for that type of system with sink tip lines. When sitting in a float tube I can change a lead core section out within several minutes to customize the depth of sink rate that I need. I also use a "count" system to control the depth of sinking needed. Starting with a 10 count, I will vary my count up to a full 35 seconds to get the depth I need without snagging bottom and weed growth **before I start my fly line retrieve**. As you fish the same lake in the same areas you will quickly learn the "count" you need to get the depth to the fish and the bottom areas you are fishing. My retrieve using this system is **very, very slow**; only a few inches at a time.

Another system I utilize is the **use of small micro swivels at end of my tapered leaders**. I now buy only normal mono tapered leaders at the fraction of the cost of the much more expensive fluorocarbon leaders, when fishing both lakes, rivers and streams. This accomplishes several goals; it reduces the cost of leaders to a less expensive mono leader (at about \$2); the addition of the small micro swivel (size 22 and size 24- from FishUSA.com) allows the placement of a split shot above the swivel and prevents the shot from moving below that point on the leader (these small micro swivels are **very strong** and I use them even when steel heading having **landing fish in the 10# to 17# category without ever having a swivel break or fail**). It allows you to quickly tie on a new tippet to the swivel without having to tie a blood knot at the end of the leader each time. Or, using my **Otter's Pegging Box**, I pre tie these tippets , eggs, and swivels up the night before, saving me valuable time on the river or lake the next day. From the end of the micro swivel, I do tie a **fluorocarbon tippet(s)** to my flies(from 18 to 24 inches long). This way **I am only using a short fluorocarbon tippet instead of purchasing the entire fluorocarbon tapered leader (at \$7 to \$9 each)**. I have found **absolutely no difference with this method in taking even the most elusive finicky trout versus using an entire leader of fluorocarbon**. I now use this system in both lakes and on rivers that I fish. I hope these pointers are helpful to all when fishing **Otter Eggs** in your favorite lake fishing areas!!!