



"Soft Embryo Egg"™ PEGGING METHODS Blue River Designs, LLC

Big buck taken by Travis DeBoer
(www.guerillaguideservice.com)
on a "Pegged" Otter Embryo egg,
Clearwater River

For the past year **"The Otter"** has been experimenting with several different options to find a simple but effective way to "peg" our **Otter's Soft Eggs**. After numerous trials for both trout and steelhead in lakes and rivers in the Pacific Northwest, the Rocky Mountain areas and the East, along with helpful hints from customers and experts like Zach Foreman-AZ and Jon Kestner-MI, we came up with a **simple method** that uses a small glass bead that is inserted **inside the egg**. This is similar to the method used to tie the **"Otter's Soft Embryo Egg"™** fly on a hook! This is the **Primary Pegging Method**. The **Alternate Pegging Method** uses the same small glass bead but it is placed **outside, against and below, the egg**. Both methods are **simple and effective**, producing an egg pattern that so closely resembles, **in both sight and touch**, a real egg, **with an internal colored embryo**, on the bottom of a lake or drifting along in a river.

Pegging hard beads is not a new concept and in recent years has progressed from the Alaskan Rivers down to the lower 48 and now worldwide. Hard beads are an effective system under most circumstances, **but they also have drawbacks**.

We conclude that our new **Otter's "Soft Embryo Egg"™ Pegging Methods** have obvious advantages over the hard bead systems, such as:

- **Soft egg material-like a real egg**-keeps fish holding on much **longer for better hookup rates**. This one advantage is the most substantial reason to use our system!
- Using small glass beads in various red and orange colors, you have an **"Otter's Soft Embryo Egg"™- a realistic looking egg** with an embryo **inside the egg-no** hard bead does that! Mix and match egg and glass bead colors to match your actual eggs in your local river!

- **Superior color ranges (17)**, and size ranges (**4 mm, 6 mm, 3 x 6 mm clusters, 8 mm and 10 mm**) to "Peg" than the hard beads.
- More **natural color translucency, similar to real eggs**, with our **Otter's** soft egg selections.
- Our egg material **actually floats without a hook-it gives an excellent drift** with just the hook weight and does not sink like a rock, **unnaturally**, as some hard beads do.
- **No need to cut your leader to change egg colors**. Just take the egg off over the hook and add a new egg in a new color right over the hook without having to cut your leader.
- You can "peg" **Otter's** eggs without having to know **how to tie flies on a hook!**
- We usually hook from **4 to 6 fish per egg** before having to replace an egg. **Minimal cost** for excellent results with good durability!
- Our **soft eggs do not chip or break** after hitting rocks on the stream bottom as hard beads do.
- You can **"Pre-string"** leaders and Otter's eggs with hooks **prior** to going on the river to save time when you need new leaders with pegged eggs! Have them ready in advance!
- No need to **stay up all night to "paint" hard beads** since we have 17 killer color combinations, including 3 with fine silver flash and one with fine red flash!
- **Simple way to store** our eggs and small beads is with threaders and on safety pins attached to your vest-no more spilled boxes of hard beads!

The Otter's recommended sizes of eggs, beads and knitting needles are found on our web site under "Tying Tips" and on the "Embryo Egg Chart"©. It lists the range of egg sizes, bead sizes and the correct diameter sock knitting needle needed to pre-drill the center of your egg prior to putting a bead inside the egg either for "pegging" or for tying the Otter's "Soft Embryo Egg"© fly. Step by step photos outline each of the methods and are easy to follow.

Primary Pegging Method:

Use this method for low clear water on rivers and lakes where fish are super sensitive to your egg patterns with visible hooks. This method works great with a spinning rod or fly rod if you are not back casting with long casts causing high loop velocities on your back cast. It works best when short casts are made or roll casting upstream the same as you would when Czech or regular nymphing.

Instructions for the Primary Pegging Method

1. Mount a small glass bead onto your leader by taking either one or two complete leader wraps through the center of the bead. Either do this by hand, or use the typical fly tying threaders to mount beads onto. **Using threaders is the easiest way** to carry your beads and to thread them onto your leader, especially on cold and wet or windy days.
2. Tie on your hook and then impale an **Otter's egg** through the center of the egg with your barb and continue to push the egg over the shank and eye onto your leader. The hole made in the center of the egg by the hook usually allows the bead enough clearance to be pushed inside the egg. However, for more consistency, especially for hooks with smaller wire diameters or smaller eyes, it is best to pre-drill your eggs at home prior to going out onto the water.
3. Move the small glass bead about 2 inches above your hook and then take a small needle, bodkin, or safety pin (easiest way) and push the bead into the center hole in the egg. If you need to re-position the egg, simply squeeze it firmly and slide it up or down on your leader.

Notes to Remember:

- It is easier to move the bead along the leader, up or down, with only one complete wrap around it; however, if you want to "lock" your bead tightly on the leader, **use two complete wraps**.
- Prior to moving the wrapped bead up or down the leader, feed leader through the bead to **form a larger loop** and gently move the bead while keeping the loop large. This prevents kinking of the leader which will happen if you keep the leader tight around the bead with no slack prior to moving it. Then you can mount your egg after the bead has been properly positioned.
- After a false strike and hook set your egg may slide off the bead, especially after numerous times of having to re-position the egg over the bead. If this is happening, you may have to replace the egg. When doing so, try using a smaller needle for that size bead so it fits tighter on the next trip out.

Bead Size versus Otter Egg Sizes

Bead Size:	6/0	8/0	9/0	10/0	11/0	13/0	14/0
Egg Size:	10 mm	8 mm	8 mm	6 mm	6 mm	4 mm	4 mm

Keep larger glass beads, 6/0 and 8/0 for 8 and 10 mm eggs, on a large blanket pin with 2" pins for the beads. Note spare safety pin to use to push beads into your egg center while on the river. You can also attach this large safety pin to your vest for easy access while on the river.

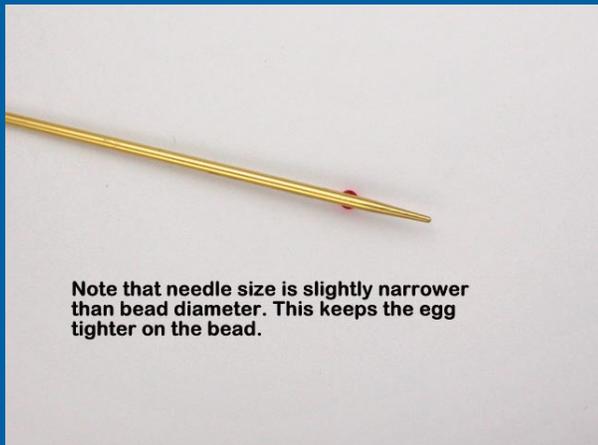


Otter's modified "Pegging" box of eggs, threaders, hooks all in one handy box.

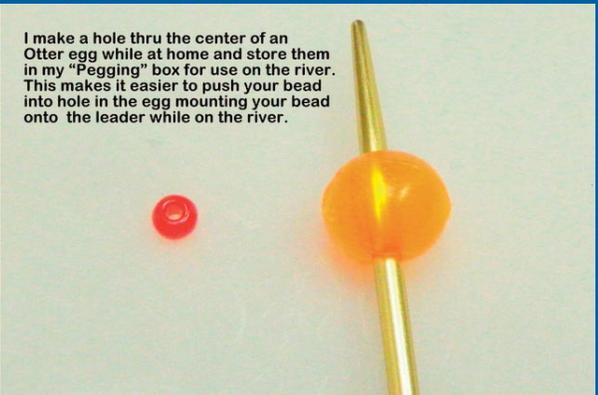
- Replacing the **Otter's egg** will depend on how many times you slide the egg over the bead. You may find that after you reposition the eggs several times the hole in the egg becomes larger, eventually causing the egg to fail and rupture. Replacing an egg is easy and does not require cutting the leader. Just thread a new egg over your hook. I normally hook 4 to 6 fish on an **Otter's egg** prior to replacing it.
- **The Otter** recommends you experiment with different colored eggs and different colored beads. Results will vary and you can create some great color combinations.
- Use the lighter colors of clear eggs for your "**Otter's Soft Embryo Egg**"[®] riggings, but great color combinations can also be achieved with the opaque color ranges of Kiwi Opaque, Dead Egg White, and the Apricot Opaque eggs. These can represent various stages of different colors of dead eggs, **which change color over time**, while in the river. When fish key onto these dead eggs, our colors listed above can be deadly. I use a dark red bead on the Apricot Opaque color, but use a **dark orange opaque bead** for the other two colors of eggs. **Most of the natural dead eggs you will see on the river will all have an orange embryo inside, not red**, so using that color bead makes for a deadly, realistic combination.
- **The Otter** has experienced much better hooking rates when using one hook size larger than a regular tied Otter's egg pattern. Instead of a #8 hook on an 8 mm egg tied fly pattern, try a # 6 hook.

When fish strike, **they will mouth the soft egg and hang on, thinking it's the real thing**. This will move the egg down to the hook as you set up on the strike. After releasing your fish, simply move the egg back up the leader and onto your small glass bead.





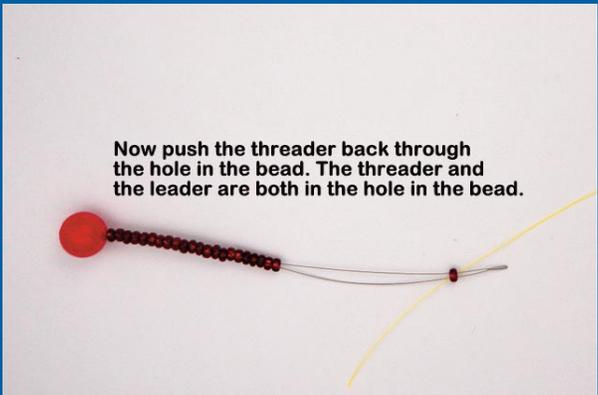
Note that needle size is slightly narrower than bead diameter. This keeps the egg tighter on the bead.



I make a hole thru the center of an Otter egg while at home and store them in my "Pegging" box for use on the river. This makes it easier to push your bead into hole in the egg mounting your bead onto the leader while on the river.



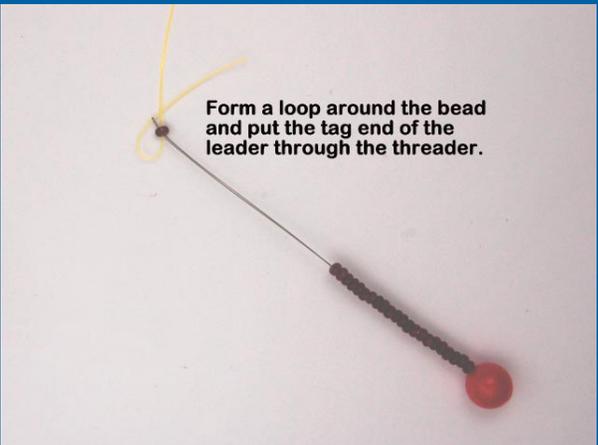
After pulling only the tag end of your leader out of the center of the bead, your bead will be on your single strand of leader.



Now push the threader back through the hole in the bead. The threader and the leader are both in the hole in the bead.



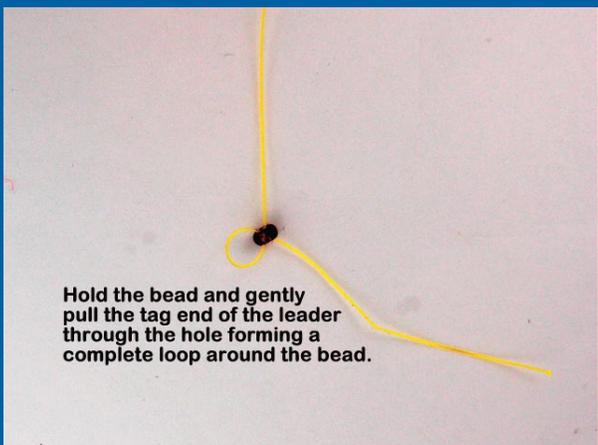
Place tag end of your leader through a standard threader pre-loaded with beads.



Form a loop around the bead and put the tag end of the leader through the threader.

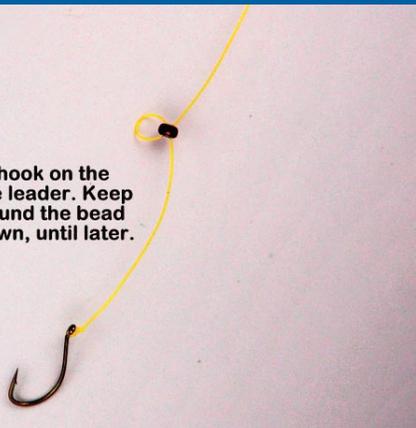


Pull one bead off onto your leader forming two strands of leader inside the center of the bead.

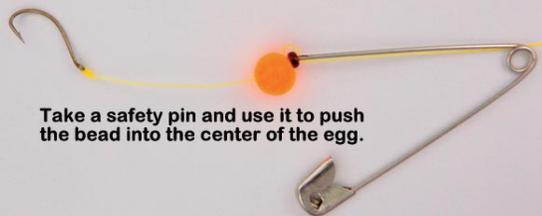


Hold the bead and gently pull the tag end of the leader through the hole forming a complete loop around the bead.

Now tie your hook on the tag end of the leader. Keep your loop around the bead loose, as shown, until later.



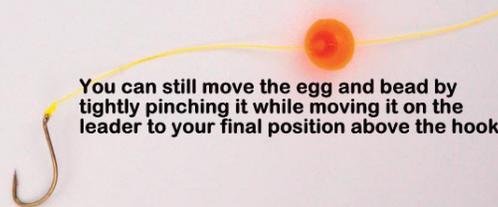
Take a safety pin and use it to push the bead into the center of the egg.



Thread your Otter egg onto the hook thru the pre-drilled hole in the center of the egg that you made back home where it was warm!



You can still move the egg and bead by tightly pinching it while moving it on the leader to your final position above the hook.

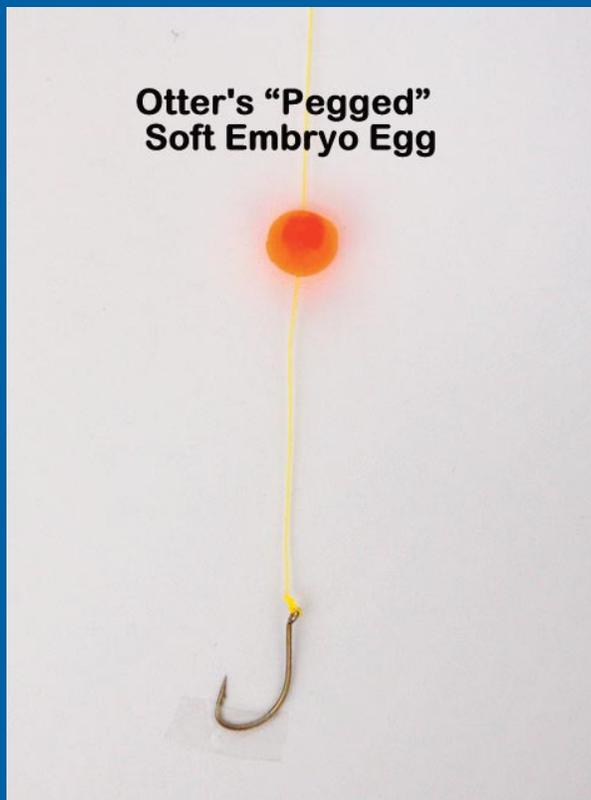


Push the egg over the shank and eye onto your leader.



**Otter's "Pegged"
Soft Embryo Egg**

Push the egg up to the bead, which should be placed 2" from the hook.



Alternate Pegging Method:

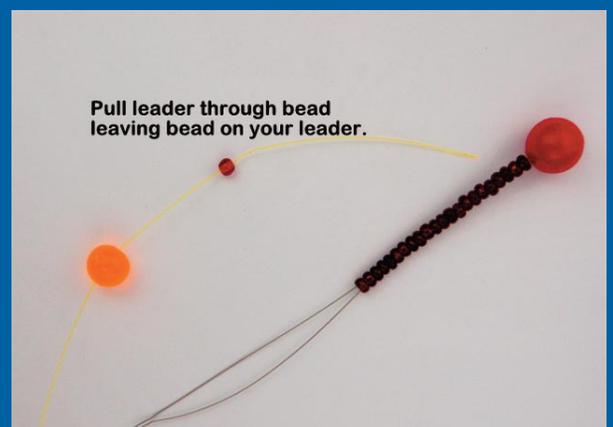
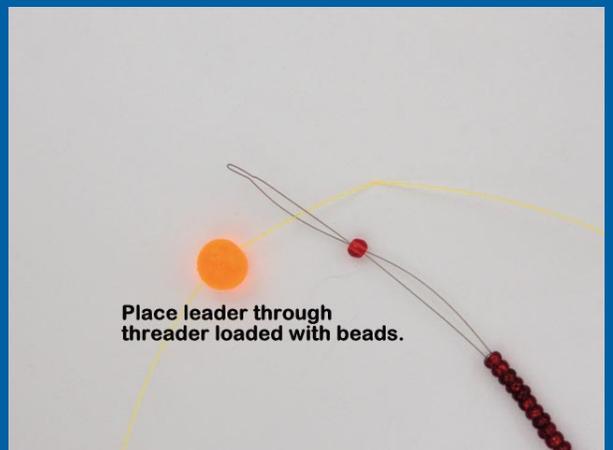
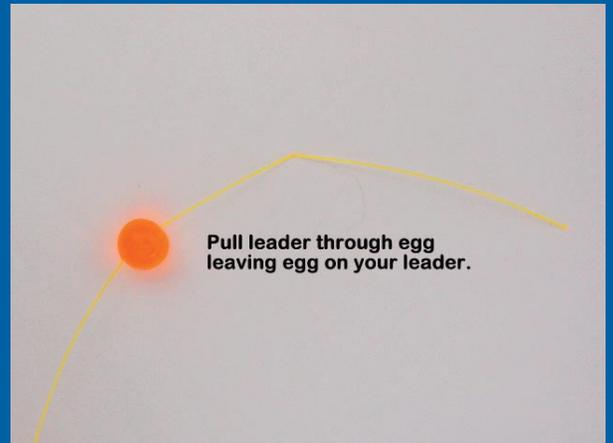
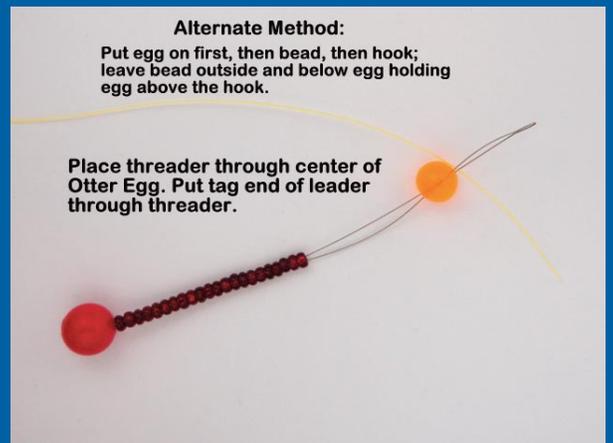
Use this method when making longer fly rod casts when your loop on the back cast causes higher line velocities. When this happens, the **Otter's egg** can slip off the bead at those high velocities.

To overcome this problem, place a small glass bead on the leader under the **Otter's egg**, and **do not insert** the bead inside the egg or drill a larger hole in the egg. With the egg up tight against the bead, the egg cannot pass over the bead and slide down to the hook.

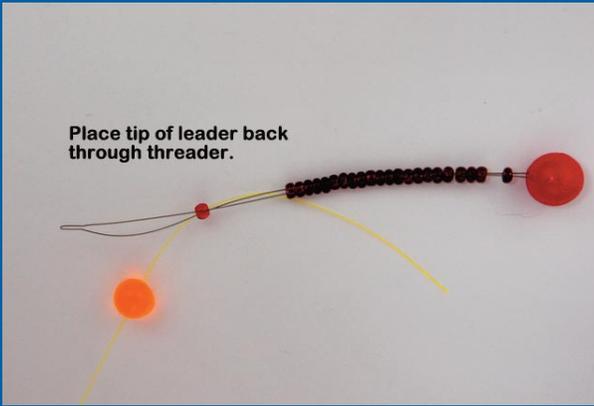
The Otter uses this system in fast and high water conditions or in very rocky uneven bottom areas when numerous false strikes cause reactions to set the hook. This system is deadly, but not as realistic looking as placing the bead inside the egg forming an **internal embryo**.

Instructions for the Alternate Pegging Method

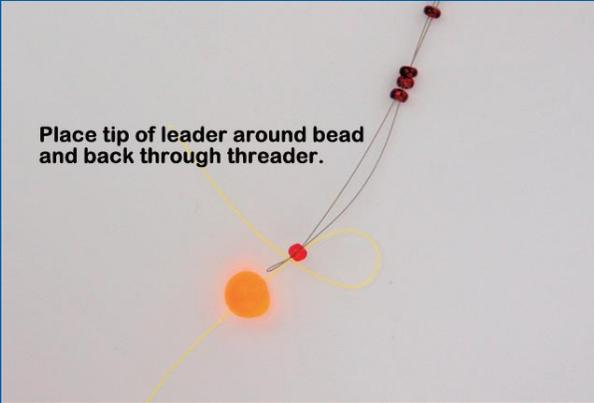
1. Take a threader and push it through the center of the egg. Using a small threader makes a very small diameter hole through the egg about the diameter of your leader. Pull your leader through the threader and then pull the egg onto the leader.
2. Take your threader loaded with beads and place the leader back through the threader and pull a bead off onto your leader. Push your threader again through the center of the bead, pull the leader through the threader and now you have a full loop around the bead, the same as in the **Primary Pegging Method**.
3. Tie on your hook, and slide the bead to 2" above the hook. Now move your egg down the leader tightly against the bead. As in the **Primary Pegging Method**, you can make two wraps around the bead to hold it even tighter on your leader if you wish.



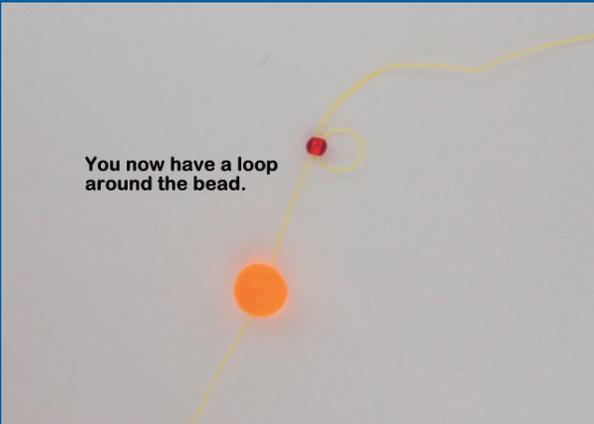
Place tip of leader back through threader.



Place tip of leader around bead and back through threader.



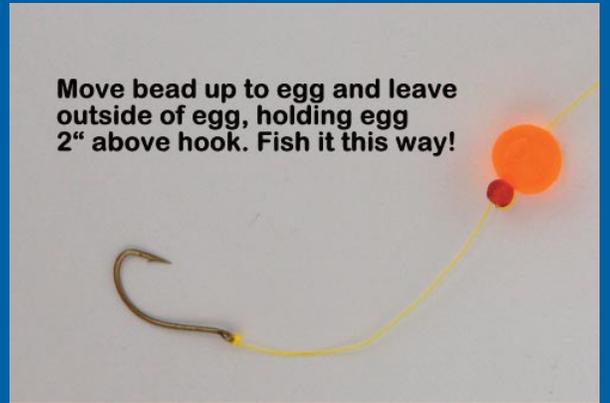
You now have a loop around the bead.



Now tie your hook onto the leader.



Move bead up to egg and leave outside of egg 2" above hook. Fish it this way!

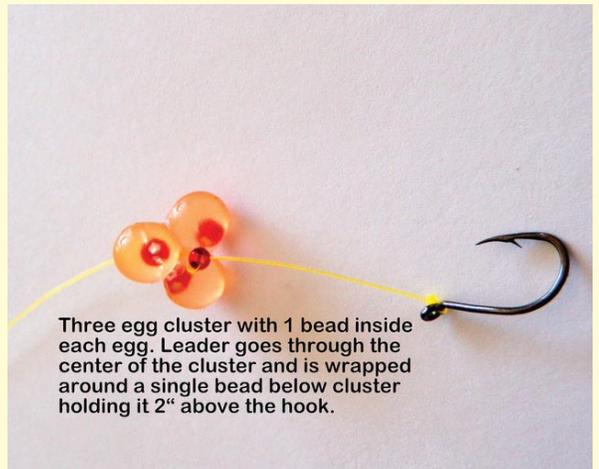


Instructions for Pegging a Three Egg Cluster

1. Pre-drill each egg with the sock knitting needle and insert a bead into each of the three eggs.
2. Place a small amount of super glue into each end of each drilled hole to seal the beads inside the eggs.
3. Thread your 3 egg cluster through the center and between the 3 egg mass, **perpendicular to the plane of the 3 eggs**.
4. Place the glass bead on your leader; place it below the cluster and about 2" above the hook.

The attached step by step photos show the **Alternate Pegging Method**.

That's it — **simple, quick, and so effective with an Otter's Soft Embryo egg** that so closely resembles, **in both sight and touch**, a real egg, with an included embryo, in the river or lake. Both systems work well so give them a try!



Three egg cluster with 1 bead inside each egg. Leader goes through the center of the cluster and is wrapped around a single bead below cluster holding it 2" above the hook.