Subject: : Beginner Forum
Topic: : Tips for hooking fish
Re: Tips for hooking fish
Author: : mikesl
Date: : 2013/5/27 23:12:26
URL:

Just to add something..

I too have been noticing the same beginners issues with low hookup percentages on dries.

I usually fish a small suburban class A with wild browns, and am getting pretty decent at catching fish, but when using certain dries, get a lot of big takes that don't connect.

So i tried some of the things mentioned in this thread, and did some experimentation with some eager redbreast sunfish and chubs in the creek near my house.

One thing that i didn't see mentioned anywhere is the tying of the fly itself.

I have had a lot of missed strikes on:
elk hair caddis, griffiths gnat, stimulator type things for sunfish

I have had good hookup success rates with
Klinkhammer, deer hair caddis, ausable wulff, parachute adams.

Also, I am a mechanical engineer, so I look at things a certain way.... it occurred to me that the (commercial / online bought) flies i was using had a lot of stiff hackle fibers "covering" up easy access to the hook point. (forgive me if that's not the right term) - but the elf hair caddis and the griffiths gnat should illustrate the point.

This was made pretty clear to me when i tired to slip a pre-made clinch knot loop for a dropper over the point of a EH caddis hook... the body bristles were acting like a weed-gard for a bass lure.

and of course my good-hookup ratio flies all lack the "bristles" and have nice fully protruding hook points

Anyway, back to the experimental subject sunfish... I was tossing a foam caddis in a size 16, getting instant takes, but no hookups.

I tweaked the hook to a 15 degree offset- little help. I openened the gap a little but - not much help - hooked but lost a fish this way.

Then i trimmed the hackle fibers on the bottom fo the fly in front of the hook gap with my nippers (to about half their original length, and voila.... close to 100 percent hookup rate thereafter.
Even connected with a 3" chub with this modification.

~~So, technique may still have a lot to do with it, but I found that too long / too stiff "bristles" on the bottom of the~~ fly can either
a) make the fly easier to spit out
b) prevent the hook from finding fish parts on the hookset

In any case, i will be looking at this carefully when fishing purchased "bushy" flies going forward, and make sure all flies have hook points that are not blocked by fly bristles.

hope this helps some.