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Fishin' for Facts: Glow-in-the-dark Poop

Highlights

Glow-in-the-dark poop? It sounds more like a practical joke than an incredible survival technique. What if you lived in the dark and didn't have arms or legs or eyes -- how would you find food? **Advertise!** Deep-sea bacteria have come up with two ways to survive in the dark oceans.

First, they attach to fecal pellets...the waste...you know... poop. Second, they glow. Glowing poop?

How can this be a good idea? Bacteria eat the semi-digested food inside a fish's gut. The trick for the bacteria is getting inside the fish. Many deep-sea animals eat waste snowing down from above. By attaching to it and glowing, the bacteria advertise the location of the poop. The fish happily eats the waste and the bacteria get inside the fish. It really does pay to advertise.



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False Advertising

Advertising like the glowing bacteria is such a good idea the some angler fish have copied it. The angler wiggles its lure, which looks like the glow-in-the-dark" poop, in front of its mouth. A hungry fish swims up for a bite of glowing dinner, but becomes dinner for the angler fish instead.

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