

Field Dogs: How To Protect Their Eyes

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Gun dogs, especially those running in weeds, grass and brush all day, usually suffer eye irritations. Scratched tissues in and around the eyes or dust in their eyes is not uncommon and can cause redness, excessive tears and matter. The eyes then start to itch or burn. Many dogs respond by scratching at their faces or rubbing them on the ground or carpet, leading to further discomfort and even injury.

To minimize the risk of eye injury, we always pre-treat our hunting dogs' eyes with [Terramycin Antibiotic Ophthalmic Ointment](#) before going into the field. This product has a soothing and cleansing base that forms a protective coating over the eyes to decrease the potential effects of foreign material such as dust or plant fibers. And because it contains the antibiotic Terramycin, it also kills bacteria that can lead to infections.

To apply, pull the upper eyelid back and place a small quantity - probably no more than a 1/8" piece from the tube - on the white or pink portion of the eyeball on the underside of the lid. Don't touch the tube itself to the eye. When the ointment warms to body temperature it will spread out and form a thin protective coating over the surfaces of the eye. If you are out in the field for a long time, you may need to repeat this every 4 hours. If the dog's eyes seem irritated after hunting, reapplication may be necessary.

Photo from the book, "Just Setters."

