

Vane Stain vanes — clear Bi-Deltas and Shark's Tooth vanes with marker kits that allow custom color schemes.

At a glance, Firenock's Aerovane I appears much the same as a Bi-Delta, but its designer is quick to point out a highly-engineered, molded cross-section closely resembling an owl feather. This allows the vane to impart a faster spin rate while significantly reducing flight noise. The Aerovane II is a bit more involved. One side of the vane features a dual-density texture (rougher front than rear), thicker forward and extra-thin trailing edges and base air-channeling groove. The opposite side has a textured surface marked by a polished recess shaped like a mini feather (a feature that causes air to "stick" to the polished surface and induce pressure). This space-age design increases arrow spin by 500 percent compared to conventional vanes; so much, in fact, its designer claims you can drop two spine deflections (use a 400 spined arrow instead of a 300, for instance) and still retain perfect broadhead flight. They are most effective when fletched straight.

Similarly, NAP's revolutionary 2-, 3.125- and 4-inch QuikSpin ST optimizes arrow spin and accuracy even when fletched straight. A grooved surface opposed by a smooth face sporting a "kicker lip" (think spoiler) increases arrow spin up to 300 percent compared to conventional plastic vanes and 100 percent more than natural feathers. The newer, 2-inch Twister is a more affordable version of the Speed Hunter, with

grooved sides but no kicker lip, offering slightly lower spin rates. Both are made of durable plastic with a wide base that bonds instantly and can be fletched straight, right offset or right helical.

For the camouflage obsessed, Bohning and Flex-Fletch offer vanes to help arrows better blend in demanding situations like spring turkey hunting. Bohning's Realtree Hardwoods Blazer and Killer vanes were the first exclusively licensed camouflage vanes on the market. Flex-Fletch's new Phantom-cloaked vanes are offered in all of that company's hunting models. For the shooter who prefers the natural approach, Gateway's Tre-Camo feathers are offered in eight exclusive camo colors (Tre Blue, Red, Green, Brown, Yellow, Orange, Denim and Purple).

## Parting Shots

Choosing the perfect fletching is a matter of balancing what's most important to the way you bowhunt, the weather most often encountered and even your budget. This is a balancing act that depends largely on broadhead style, equipment choices and personal preferences.

The traditional archer shooting off the shelf, of course, is limited to feathers and feathers alone. For everyone else, picking the perfect fletching starts by examining your chosen broadhead style — mechanical versus fixed-blade and aggressive or traditional cut-on-contact heads versus smaller mini heads. The mechanical or mini head



Trueflight Feathers' Brights are imitation barred feathers striped in shocking color combinations for those who are looking for added aesthetics. They also aid archers by making arrows stand out better in flight, or after a missed shot.



The shorter length, higher profile fletching trend has spawned a plethora of products, including, left to right: the original Blazer (Tiger Stripe), Arizona Archery's Max Hunter, Duravanes' Fusion, VaneTec's HP, Flex-Fletch's Flash, Gateway Feathers' Rayzr; and high-tech vanes with engineering to increase arrow spin rates in flight, including New Archery Products' QuikSpin ST Speed Hunter and Firenock's Aerovane II.

## Get Fletched

**Arizona Archery Enterprises**  
www.arizonaarchery.com  
(928) 772-9887

**Bohning Archery**  
www.bohning.com  
(231) 229-4247

**Extreme Archery Products**  
www.extremearchery.com  
(606) 928-9447

**Firenock**  
www.firenock.com  
(815) 780-1695

**Flex-Fletch Products**  
www.flexfletch.com  
(800) 626-3844

**Gateway Feathers**  
www.gatewayfeathers.com  
(520) 805-0863

**New Archery Products**  
www.newarchery.com  
(800) 323-1279

**Norway Industries/Duravanes**  
www.duravanes.com  
(800) 778-4755

**NuFletch Archery**  
www.nufletch.com  
(877) 353-8244

**VaneTec**  
(866) 428-9067  
www.vmaxvanes.com

junkie gets away with much smaller fletchings than the standard, fixed-blade user. Broadheads chosen for dangerous game might even call for 5-inch fletchings — which certainly isn't against the rules — though "turbo-spin" specialty vanes are another option to keep aggressive broadheads flying true.

Decisions also hinge on prevailing atmospheric conditions, as it makes little sense to use natural feathers when it's raining or otherwise wet out.

Plastic vanes, meanwhile, are prone to unforgiving stiffness when temperatures dip well below freezing. For instance, that kind of cold can cause vanes laid on your lap while on stand to curl and take a set, steering launched arrows askew.