

LURES

The word *artificial* means something created by human art or effort, not by nature. That is an accurate description of artificial fishing lures which are made from such things as hair, feathers, plastic, lead, stainless steel, and wood.

Lures are designed and shaped to catch various types and sizes of fishes at different depths. There are lures that dance, dive, flutter, splutter, crawl, jump, rattle, and imitate a variety of other swimming actions and disturbances that cause fish to strike.

There are thousands of lures of all different shapes and sizes but most can be grouped into a few basic categories.

SPOONS

One of the most popular and efficient type of lures ever created is the spoon, so called because the first one was made from a silver tablespoon by Julio Buel who accidentally dropped a silver tablespoon overboard while eating lunch on his boat. Buel, a teenager at the time, was fishing for lake trout in Vermont. As he watched the spoon flutter down ward through the clear water, a large lake trout suddenly appeared and bit the spoon.

Buel rowed ashore and got another spoon, cut the handle off, drilled a hole at the head of the spoon and soldered a hook on the concave side. Thus the birth of the fishing spoon.

Spoons are popular because they are easy to use and are particularly attractive to predator fish. They are made from stainless steel, chromed or gold colored plated brass, or painted steel. Painted steel models work in saltwater but rust easily, so they are recommended for freshwater use only.



The spoon attracts fish because of its action. It flutters and flashes as it goes through the water. The two most popular colors for local saltwater fishing are silver and gold.

A good rule of thumb is the darker the day the darker the lure, thus on bright shiny days, silver is the choice and on darker days, gold should be tried. For freshwater, the most popular colors are silver, gold, and black.

Trolling spoons

Trolling spoons are a single hook lure not made in a standard size range because each manufacturer creates their own sizes, so when selecting a spoon, choose the lure according to the hook size needed to catch the target fish.

Hook sizes in the 1/0 to 3/0 range will handle most of the fish caught in the harbor, canals, and rivers. The hook size is usually printed on the lure or lure container.

Trolling spoons normally come with a swivel attached on a split ring. If the lure only has a split ring, add a swivel. That should not, however, replace the ball bearing swivel that needs to be used between the standing line and the leader.

A proper trolling speed is 3 to 5 miles an hour above the movement of the water. Lures should be trolled 50 to 100 feet behind the boat. The size of the spoon, line, and rod and reel need to be matched to the targeted fish.

While a rule of thumb is the bigger the spoon the bigger the fish, that does not mean large fish will not hit small spoons.

In Charlotte County spoons can be trolled along canal sides, river and creek banks, channels, around structures like reefs, docks, and markers, and parallel to shorelines.

Casting spoons

One of the most popular casting spoons in Charlotte County is the Johnson Sprite, either silver or gold, in weights from 1/8 to 3/4 ounces. Many anglers consider this type of spoon to be one of the most effective lures for redfish. It works well near mangroves, and if a fisherman doesn't get one caught in the trees once in a while, then the spoon isn't being fished correctly because most fish stay close to cover.

A casting spoon can have either a treble hook or single one. The treble hook spoon can be bare or bought with hair or other material added as attractors.

The weedless spoon is also an excellent lure for salt-