

ORGANIZE LURES BY SPEED?



THE DILEMA

Spring is a good time to be thinking about organizing our lures. Many fishermen just throw their lures into a tacklebox and let fate decide what, how, and where to use them when they get on the water. If we have been fishing a number of years, we likely have accumulated a vast assortment of lures, which makes it even more difficult to select lures to use. At that point, many fishermen group lures by type such as crankbaits, spinnerbaits, jigs, bladebaits, etc. in boxes. Those of us who have done that still have numerous boxes of lures that we put in the boat. We often feel that we need to bring them all along “just in case”.

THE BASICS

It seems that there should be a better way to organize and simplify our lure selection and presentation. Enter: Buck Perry. Mr. Perry stated in his material that we must consider lures as **tools** used to **control** our presentation, and that the two most important controls are **depth** and **speed**. That is the basic foundation of Spoonplugging knowledge. He said: “All fishing successes and all fishing failures must be answered in terms of depth and speed”, indicating the high importance he placed on those 2 controls. By examining lures as tools, we can better visualize what lures **do**, rather than what they look like.

THE SPOONPLUG

The Spoonplug was designed as a tool to control both depth and speed at the same time. It is the most versatile lure made today, with the 7 sizes allowing one to control 80% of most depths and speeds needed for casting and trolling. Both casting and trolling are necessary to thoroughly check out a structure for fish. Mr. Perry would often go fishing with just a paper bag or tin can for a tackle box, Spoonplugs, and a few jump lures. Before I mock him for that, I would need to catch as many fish as he did! Maybe I could learn from that and organize my lures to cover that 20% of fishing where other lures are needed.

OTHER LURES

There are infinitely more choices of other lures than in the past. The Spoonplug can handle lure speeds from about 2-10mph and depths from 2- 25 feet, but other lures are needed, especially seasonally and in the slower speed ranges. Lure organization and selection has always been a challenge for me (other than Spoonplugs), and that came to a head when I put out all my lures on a table this Spring (see picture). There was no way I was going to get all that in my boat! For only 20% of my fishing?

SPEED

I decided to try and organize my lures according to the **speed** at which they are best worked. Speed is usually measured in miles-per-hour, in the case of most other lures, 0 to 2 mph. **Depth**, can be covered by using different sizes and weights of a given lure design. Speed can be critical to triggering strikes, and minor changes in it can make a big difference. Spring and late fall are the seasons when effective speeds are usually slower. With summer and warmer water, many fishermen continue to fish slowly, when faster speeds are more effective.

MY PLAN

Because casting and trolling are the 2 ways lures are presented and they are both necessary for thorough fishing, I made categories for each. For speeds, I wanted something simple like slow, medium, and fast. This makes 6 categories and 6 boxes or trays of lures to have in the boat. For casting, Spoonplugs are fast. Most other crankbaits and jump baits are medium, and live bait, drop shot, swimbaits and small jigs are slow. Some lures could be put in 2 categories like jerkbaits where they could be constantly cranked (medium), or jerked and paused (slow). Suggestions for lures or presentations in each category are:

CASTING

Fast—Spoonplugs, Rattletraps, buzzbaits, bladebaits

Medium—bladebaits, jigs, tubes, spinnerbaits, spoons, chatterbaits, crankbaits, jerkbaits

Slow—(spinning rod) light jig, live bait, drop shot, swimbaits, Bee-spin, jerkbaits

Casting of fast and medium speed lures is best done with a baitcasting rod and reel. A great majority of casting lures are in the medium speed range. Duplication of the same speed in a given area with several different lures does not make sense. Considerably greater speeds can be attained on the troll than on the cast.

TROLLING

Fast—Spoonplugs

Medium—Rapalla, Tadpoly, jerkbait, 3-way rig

Slow—drifting with live bait or dropshot, vertical jigging with current or electric motor, backtrolling.

Trolling is used mostly to learn structure and locate fish. Slow trolling is not always an efficient use of time. Once fish are pinpointed, anchoring and casting works best. Have a marker ready to drop when trolling.

The lure or method suggestions given as examples here are ones I am familiar with. You likely will have others. Organization of your lures in this manner will help remind you to always use depth and speed as your primary controls. Planning ahead greatly reduces clutter in the boat!

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