

the depth, or can be allowed to sit on the surface and twitched. A stop and start technique is used by many fisherman. Keeping the rod tip low during a retrieve will allow the lure to work at its deepest and also gives the angler a long hook set. When trolling, a stiff rod is needed.

The most popular colors are red and white, chartreuse, and green back with white belly.

MirrOlure 52M Series: This is a classic lure. It is slow sinking and has a shape that resembles local bait fish. There is no built in action to this lure, thus it is up to the angler to impart motion. When moved slowly through the water it has no action, when twitched it darts. When casting, let it sink, then retrieve slowly with the rod tip down.

Because there is no inherent action in the lure design, it has little resistance when trolled, so lighter tackle can be used. It is very effective as a trolled lure.

Red and white, black back with white belly, green back with white belly, and chartreuse are favorite colors of local anglers.

Holographic Finishes Old school lures were painted or screened to add color. In the last 5 years lure manufactures have developed a lifelike holographic finish that gives their lures a 3-D look that makes them more attractive to fish. The Rapalla x-Wrap, the Yozuri Crystal Minnow and the Morro-Dine are all popular holographic finished lures in Charlotte Harbor.

Lure made with a molded lip float and dive. The rear hook's anchor strength is effected by the design of the lure. When trolling, that problem can be overcome by setting a light drag to avoid a severe shock when the fish hits.

Lewis Rat-L-Trap: This lure is very popular and comes in two saltwater model sizes, 1/2 ounce and 3/4 ounce. The Rat-L-Trap can be cast or trolled and is particularly popular during cooler weather

It will dive deep or can be vertically jigged because it sinks. All species will hit this lure. It makes a noise and also gives off vibrations through swimming action.

There are two methods of fishing the Rat-L-Trap that work effectively in both salt and freshwater. To use a yo-yo technique, let the lure sink to the bottom, then jerk upward, let it settle again, then jerk upward.

The Rat-L-Trap can also be bumped along the bottom using a slow retrieve. The shape of the lure lets the nose hit the bottom without the hooks hanging up too frequently.

Soft Plastics

The first soft plastic bait was probably a Mann's *jelly worm* made in the late 1960s and used for bass fishing. The theory in the fishing industry is the first plastic bait was inspired by a popular children's toy called the *Creepy Crawlers*. That toy used a heated plate to heat liquid plastic which the child then poured into a cold spider mold. The plastic hardened but was still wiggly when it cooled. An enterprising fisherman, it is thought, saw the toy and added a hook. Small soft plastic rats and mice followed not long afterwards for use by bass fishermen and a new era in fishing was born

Soft plastic baits made their appearance on the salt-water fishing scene in the 1970s with the introduction of the Bagley *Salty Dog* shrimp. By the early 1980s injection moulding had been perfected and soft plastic lures were made lifelike. The *Fire tails* were one of the first realistic soft plastics made with two color injection.

The Calcutta *Sunami* was one of the first realistic soft plastic baits with a hook molded in it.

Scented Baits

The first scented baits were salt impregnated or salt mixed with plastic. Later, garlic became the popular scented addition, then in the early 1990s Johnson/World Wide came out with biodegradable plastic baits made of mostly fish food. The D.O.A. company followed with a soft plastic bait with real shrimp impregnated in with the plastic.

Simple Strips of fabric like material impregnated with a scent were pioneered by Fish Bites who were the first to use enzymes from fish oil to make their baits attractive.

Realistic Scented Soft Plastic

Next came Gulp who introduced the enzyme from fish oil to a soft plastic injection molded bait. Baits shaped like baitfish, worms, shrimp or other lifelike creatures and then impregnated with a scent came onto the market in 2001. Today the most popular of the scented baits is the Berkley Gulp series. These baits are slippery to the touch and heavily scented. They will lose some of their scent after a period of fishing. Additionally, these baits dry to an almost rock-like hardness when exposed to the air for a long period of time. Don't ever leave these baits in contact with a poppin' cork in your tackle box. The cork will melt and make a mess.

Some anglers prefer to buy scented baits in a bulk container like the one shown below. The container is