

Thanks to their size and construction, Tattoo's Sea Spooks hold their ground well and maintain their action even in big, fall surf.

needs. Each urges anglers to practice, to learn how these lures work in various water conditions, how they respond to your rods and how you can work them so stripers will blast the sawdust out of them.

TATTOO'S SEA DOG

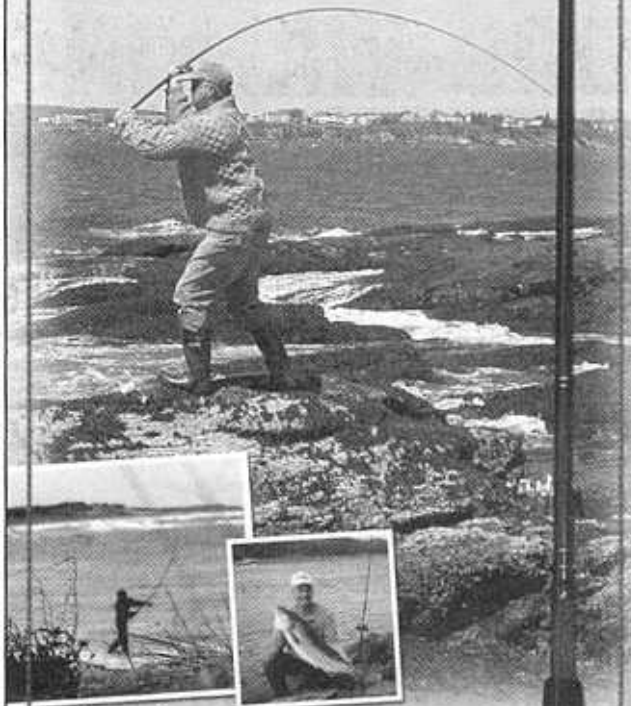
When Mike Dauphin from Tattoo's Tackle decided to fish saltwater more than 16 years ago, he already was a Zara Spook nut. In fact, they were the only plugs he had when he made his first cast into the brine. They worked, but larger fish pulled the hooks out of them. From there, Dauphin eventually decided to make his own, settling on the spook style of lure, factoring in the profile, size, weight and action in the water. After three years, the Sea Dog emerged, at 7 inches and 3 ounces. The response to the lure from fish has been phenomenal, as has the response by fishermen.

For the most productive action, Dauphin has some tips and advises fishermen to practice using it. First, he recommended working it slow—the slower the better. Second, work it with a zigzag retrieve to make this lure come alive. This is achieved by giving the rod short twitches on the retrieve. He said if fish are boiling on pencil poppers and not taking them, switch to the Sea Dog to spark a strike. And when the fish are boiling on his lure but not taking it, he will stop the retrieve, tighten the line and then twitch the lure once, twice, and fish usually come back around to smack it. The key is to imitate a wounded baitfish, and the plug has the large profile to represent a decent-sized baitfish.

According to Dauphin, this lure works great in the surf line, especially on an outgoing tide because of the current. He is able to hold the lure right in the surf against the current from the tide. This has been very productive for his fishing over the years. But an important factor in fishing this lure, as with the others, is to maintain contact with the lure at all times — meaning, keep a tight line to the lure. The Sea Dog even works under water, but again, the key is to keep in contact with the lure, twitch it to get the zigzag working and the fish will bite.

Wood preference for the Sea Dog is birch. Dauphin said that maple is too heavy and the pines and cedars are too light, lacking the necessary mass for big water. For attaching the lure to his line, he prefers the Breakaway snaps in 80-pound test. This gives the lure swing and does not require

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