



SPOOKS

by
**Capt. Ken
Cooper**



This is an article about fishing lures, not ghosts. Spooks are torpedo-shaped plugs designed for a “walk the dog” presentation. If you are serious about fishing for striped bass, bluefish, and a host of other gamefish species, spook-type lures should always be in your tackle box or surf bag.

There is nothing new or secret about spooks. Heddon has been making spook lures for at least fifty years. Current versions are constructed of durable plastic and come in several sizes and a variety of colors.

For Rhode Island waters, the **Super Spook** approximates a variety of medium-sized baitfish such as mullet, mackerel and menhaden (bunker or poggy). These lures are reasonably priced, and can be fished right out of the box; however, if you don’t want to lose that fish of a lifetime, I’d recommend upgrading the hooks and split rings.



Super Spook Topwater

Many creative local lure builders also sell spook-type lures.

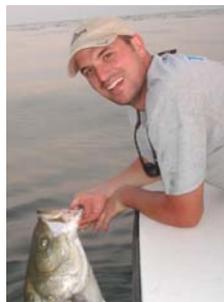


Tattoo spook

I have several made by **Tattoo** that are so beautiful that I am hesitant to fish them lest I lose one to a bluefish that races ahead of a cow striper to grab the plug.

Spooks work for tarpon

Some years ago, fellow RISAA member **Captain Ben DeMario** and I were fishing for tarpon in the Islamorada portion of the Florida Keys during April. We used what most tarpon fishermen would consider exceptionally light tackle: 7 foot St. Croix spin rods with Quantum Cabo 40 reels loaded with 20 pound test braided line.



Capt. Ben DeMario

We each hooked and landed tarpon in the 80 to 100 pound class on spook plugs. I used a Heddon Super Spook and Ben used a **Tattoo Sea Pup**. We seemed to be the only fishermen throwing spooks at tarpon, but we were certainly happy with the results.

The secret is out!

For several years, sharpie striper fishermen kept tight lips on the success they were having with a lure designed for muskie fishing.

The secret is now out, and you can buy the **Muskie Mania Doc** plugs at our local tackle shops. The Docs come in two sizes, the 9-inch standard and the 7-inch “**Baby Doc.**”

Current models are sold with suitable hardware (hooks and split rings) to handle large bass or blues. While the lures come in a variety of colors, I settled on bone, and the fish seem to like that color.



Muskie Mania Doc and Baby Doc

These plugs excel when stripers are keyed in on big bait, such as the foot-long squid of spring or adult bunker. Some moby stripers have been fooled by Doc plugs fished on the lower Connecticut River in May, the Watch Hill Reefs in June and around bunker pods in Narragansett Bay.

For schoolie stripers and smaller bluefish, I’ve come to love



Rebel Jumpin’ Minnow: Chrome

the **Rebel Jumpin’ Minnow**. It was designed a n d marketed as a fresh water lure,

but the larger version is a great bait for bass and blues. I’ve caught false albacore and even black sea bass on these plugs. Again, I strongly recommend upgrading hooks and split rings before fishing these lures. While the Jumpin’ Minnow comes in an array of colors, I like bone best, with silver/chrome a close second.

Regarding changing out the hardware on spook lures, I removed the treble hooks from all of mine and replaced them with single inline hooks by VMC or Gamakatsu. I also crushed the barbs on the inline hooks.

Working a spook-type lure is different from other plugs. The walk-the-dog side-to-side motion of the lure that induces predators to strike is not automatic; it must be imparted by the fisherman. There are some excellent YouTube videos demonstrating the technique, and I highly recommend watching and practicing.

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