

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mike Williams is a veteran saltwater angler and is widely known for his ability in catching big trout on Mirrolures. The Gulf Tide decided to interview Williams, who, uncharacteristic of most "old salts," was glad to divulge bits of "how to" information on use of the Mirrolure.

In upcoming issues, we hope to bring you myriad "how to" and "where to" information as our new 32-page format will allow.

GULF TIDE: Why do you specialize in Mirrolures; what sparked your interest in this particular bait?

WILLIAMS: In 1964, I ran into a man on the Quintana Jetties who was fishing a 52M28. We started talking, and he said, for big trout, there was no better plug made than the 52M28. I knew the man knew what he was doing, because I saw him catch fish all day. This gave me the confidence to throw Mirrolures and I've been throwing them ever since.

GULF TIDE: This numbering system that the company uses may seem confusing to the average reader. Would you mind explaining the differences between each plug, and, in general, what each is designed for?

WILLIAMS: O.K., for deep water work, the 52M series is good for water of a depth of four feet or more. The reason is because of the location of the tie in—where the line is tied on to the bait at the top. The 52M series runs deep. In the 51M series, the tie-in is on the nose. Therefore the bait runs shallower. This is an excellent lure for wintertime fishing, because you're usually fishing in water less than five foot deep.

GULF TIDE: What about series other than the 52 or 51M?

WILLIAMS: A lot of people prefer the 38M series, because it sinks slower. In the wintertime, the fish are sluggish and usually will hit a slower moving bait quicker than one that runs fast. You'll see a lot of the old pros throwing this bait when the water gets cold. When it (water temperature) hits 55, you want to move the bait as slow as you can move it, yet still keep it off bottom.

GULF TIDE: What about the

floaters—the F-series—if you will. When and where are they most effective?

WILLIAMS: Floaters are primarily used in select areas of the bay, and are primarily used for catching trout during the winter months. They can be used for catching trout, but for some reason, they are not used as much as the Mirrolure. These particular lures are effective on the lower bay, like the Laguna Madre—and also the Delcours Islands. Work them along the grass lines.

GULF TIDE: Why do you prefer Mirrolures over spoons and Touts?

WILLIAMS: Both spoons and Touts are excellent trout producers. But the reason I prefer the Mirrolure is because it produces bigger trout—especially during the winter months. Then, the trout are primarily feeding on small fish, and the Mirrolure comes closer to resembling a small imitation mullet-type bait than the Tout or the spoon.

GULF TIDE: What are the optimum tide conditions under which to use the Mirrolure?

WILLIAMS: From approximately April 15 until September 15, there are a lot of trout in the surf and a lot of people wading the surf. In the surf, I prefer an incoming tide—preferably four hours before the high. This will hold true around piers and around the jetties. But, if you're fishing around a pass, both an incoming and an outgoing tide will be productive. If you're working in a bay, both tides will produce. At any jetty, the gulf side will be good on an incoming and the channel side 99 percent of the time will produce on an outgoing.

GULF TIDE: What color of water do you prefer to use the Mirrolure in?

WILLIAMS: Clear green, and sandy-green water. Anything else than sandy-green water, in my opinion, you're wasting your time throwing any artificial.

GULF TIDE: How do you switch out colors according to water condition?

WILLIAMS: I prefer the bright colors in off-color water and the lighter colors in clear water.

GULF TIDE: You've already mentioned retrieve of the Mirrolure during the cold weather months, but what about times when the water is warm or relatively warm?

WILLIAMS: These times may vary on the Texas coast, depending on where you're fishing, but generally, from February 15 to May 15, you'll want to use a medium retrieve. Then, from May 15 to November 15, a fast retrieve is best. The trick, during any month, is to throw the lure as far as you can. That way, you're covering the most water possible. And, in my opinion, a trout, in most cases, will hit within the first 15 yards after the splashdown.

GULF TIDE: What times of the year are best for catching trophy trout?

WILLIAMS: For trophy trout—those in the nine to 11-pound class—the best time is from February 15 through April 1. For the trout in the eight to 10-pound class, I prefer the period between May 15 through June 20. For your five and six pound trout, November 15 through January 15 is best. However, there are a lot of wall hangers taken in the summer.

GULF TIDE: In your opinion, what type of tackle best suits the Mirrolure fisherman?

WILLIAMS: For all-around bay and surf fishing, you can't beat the Garcia 5000, 5500, and the smaller spinoffs of those reels. For a rod, I like the 7'6" Fenwick PLP 903 and the Shakespeare Wonderod of the same length rated for six to 15-pound test line. And line? If anybody's made anything better than 14-pound Stren, I haven't run across it.

GULF TIDE: Most of the time, a redfish won't hit a Mirrolure. Why is this?

WILLIAMS: At times redfish will hit Mirrolures—especially the floaters. But most of the redfish I've encountered prefer a spoon or a Tout. As far as why they prefer the spoon or the Tout, I have no idea.

GULF TIDE: What other kinds of fish will hit a Mirrolure often?

WILLIAMS: In the winter months, when you are working a Mirrolure very slow near the bottom, you'll

encounter a lot of flounder. I field tested a plug last year—the new hot-pink fluorescent Mirrolure (52MP), and I caught a tremendous amount of flounder on them all winter long—some in the three-to-five pound class. In the springtime when the jackfish move in, they seem to love Mirrolures...they'll hit them in a New York second. Spanish mackerel at times will hit a Mirrolure, but they seem to prefer spoon-type baits with a lot of flash. Horse mackerel (ladyfish) love Mirrolures. During the summer months, when offshore fishing is prime, the 72 and 82M series many times will work better on king mackerel than bait. These two plugs are also very effective anytime tarpon are encountered. As far as tarpon are concerned, I would stick to the 52M series for those in the 20-pound class and use the larger plugs for the big ones.

GULF TIDE: Let's ask a hypothetical question. If you were to catch a limit of trophy trout, how many would you keep?

WILLIAMS: I would keep about four, and keep on fishing—I love to catch 'em—and very gently would release any other fish I caught. The large fish are the spawners, and, in my opinion, sportsmen should refrain from keeping more than they can eat in two weeks.

GULF TIDE: Another hypothetical question. If an angler owned zip Mirrolures, and wanted to stock up on the top 10 producers, which 10, starting with the most effective, would you recommend?

WILLIAMS: Number one undoubtedly would be the 52M28. Then, I would choose the following lures—according to their effectiveness—in this order: 52M11; 52M SHP; 52M CHG; 52MP; 52M FG; 52M11 FGO; 51M; 52M 12FGO; and the 52 Gold-Clear.

GULF TIDE: It was very kind of you to reveal some of the finer points of "how to" in fishing the Mirrolure. Now, how about telling us *where* you like to fish.

WILLIAMS: UMMM....Would you believe Lake Conroe?