

THE MAGICAL SWIRLEYBIRD

By Bill Vanderford

When I first began my fishing guide service more than 40 years ago we had an abundance of largemouth bass and very little fishing pressure, so it was fairly simple to catch these fish on almost any standard bass lure. Over the ensuing years, however, the largemouth bass began to decline because of shallow fishing techniques, many bass tournaments, and a loss of natural habitat along the shorelines. Therefore, the black bass population changed to 20% largemouth and 80% spotted bass.

Since the spotted bass spawn deeper, have a smaller mouth, and are quick to spit any lure that they inhale, my everyday clients found it quite difficult to hook these fish...especially during the spawning cycle. I tried many different crankbaits, topwater lures, worm combinations, and jig and grub combos with moderate success. The first real breakthrough was discovering that I could use a 1/16th ounce leadhead jig with a 3-inch curlytailed grub and swim it slowly enough to get lots of bites. The problem with this lure was teaching my customers the method in a short enough time to make them successful on one guide trip. Since the bass usually grab the lure by the tail, I had to convince people to only reel slightly faster and not jerk. This would make the bass come back for a second, third, and fourth bite until they finally go the part of the lure with the hook in it. I had success with this method, but knew there was still a better way.

Using my knowledge from my days of wading the Georgia streams and the European rivers for trout, I began experimenting with spinner type lures that acted more like the jig and grub combo. Finally the Swirleybird evolved in a crude fashion.

Over nearly 30 years of development, the Swirleybird has matured into a perfect size that imitates baitfish well, casts easily, and maintains its attractive qualities from the time it hits the water until the end of the retrieve. These attributes and having a treble hook in the tail make this lure especially good for anglers of all ages and skill levels in most parts of the world for almost any fish at anytime of the year.

We now produce these unique lures in seven sizes from the tiny Fly Rod size (1/32 ounce) to the larger Striper/Saltwater version (3/8 ounce) and in three different colors. This lure and a slow fishing method can be much more productive than any other lure under almost any conditions...except heavy grass and brush!

For more Information, go to: www.georgiafishing.com or check the video at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpCdJAeURYM&list=UUhcTec1A-5XccjBwuP2RFVg&index=13