



and topwater action starts in the creeks. Keep your lure small, less than four inches long, and use the **Power Minnow™**, **P.J. Pop™**, **Johnny Rattler™** and **Jerk 'n Sam™**. Best colors are **Fire Tiger**, **Tennessee Shad**, **Gold/Black/Orange Belly**, and **Silver Foil Shad**. Hit spawning areas and sand points. Other productive areas are rocks at the dam, 1097 Bridge and all the bridges in the backs of creeks. Keep a Speed Trap or Hot Lips tied on for the days the fish go a little deeper, but don't get too far away from spawning areas until the end of May.

## SUMMER PATTERNS DIFFER

In summer, Conroe's bass move into 10- to 15-ft. brush piles along drops or deep pond dams and ridges. Use the Hot Lips or **Brush Baby®** for the brush piles. The buoyancy of the Brush Baby lets you pick your way through the brush with fewer hang-ups.

Vertically jig the deep ridges and pond dams at 20 to 30 feet with 3/4-oz Crippled Herrings. The black bass will be thick, but the whites will be suspended. Try trolling Tony Accetta® **Pet® Spoons**, using a **Pink Lady®**, **Dipsy Diver®** or **Jet Diver™** to get down 10 or 15 feet. Once again, the 1097 Bridge is a very productive area.


## AS WATER COOLS

In mid-September, the water starts to cool to below 80 degrees and some fast action on Speed Traps and Hot Lips can be found in the back of almost any creek. Huge schools of shad will be found and black and white bass will be feeding in anticipation of winter. Top colors are **Chrome/Blue**, **Texas Shad**, **Clear-water Flash** and **Tennessee Shad**.


## HEAD FOR DEEP WATER

By late October, the black and white bass head back to deep water as the shad move out. They'll show up on almost any hump, roadbed, or ridge in the main lake. These deep


## TOPWATER BAIT




Power Minnow™



P.J. Pop™



Jerk 'n Sam™



Johnny Rattler™

## TOPWATER TIPS

Bass fishing with topwater plugs is a fascinating experience every angler should try. It's an addictive kind of angling. The excitement and explosiveness of the surface strike can unnerve even the most experienced angler and turns every trip into a memorable one.

**COLORS/SIZES** - On dark or cloudy days, bass normally see only the silhouette of the plug. This is when dark baits work best, while chrome or light shades work best during bright light conditions.

On calm days, smaller plugs with less noisemaking capabilities work better, while you need a real noisy plug to create disturbance on windy days.

In clear water, color is more important because the fish strike by sight. In murky water, bass usually will react to vibrations, so noisier plugs work better.

**WATCH THE WAKE** - Sometimes a bass from a long way off, will take off submarining just under the surface toward the bait, and many times you will see the wake coming. If you can keep the plug working without panicking, you are in for some unbelievable strikes

**WAIT FOR THE WEIGHT** - Sometimes bass will blast a bait, only to hit it with their tail to kill it and then pounce on it again to eat it. You never should "set the hook" when a fish slams your surface plug. Wait until you feel the weight of the fish on your rod before you set the hook.

**SHARP HOOKS** - Sharp hooks are critical in all fishing situations. Hooks on plugs must be super sharp to ensure their effectiveness. Luhr Jensen offers a variety of top quality hook sharpening files which produce sticky-sharp points in seconds.

**SLOW DOWN** - We all tend to work surface lures too fast. Slow down and give the fish a chance to "read the menu". Remember, the prime strike zone is the first ten feet off cover or the shoreline, and, in shallow water flats, all the way to the boat.

fish can be caught by vertically jigg-ing Crippled Herring using a short, hopping action. On sunny afternoons, some fish can be taken on crankbaits in **Chrome/Blue**, **Texas Shad**, **Tennessee Shad** and **Fire Tiger** along rocks or concrete, close to deep wa-

ter. The deep water action just gets better and better as the water temperature drops. December and January are excellent months for catching large numbers of blacks and whites, prior to the spawning that begins in February and March.

## SPECIAL SUMMER TACKLE



Jet Diver™



Pet® Spoon



Pink Lady®



Crippled Herring®



Dipsy Diver®