



Looking at Some Of My Favorite Surface Lures

This month, I've picked a few of lures that I've found to be excellent over the last 12 months. Most are surface lures, as that tends to be the most common way that I fish for all species of fish.

There is nothing better than a surface bite, whether it is a bass or longtail tuna!

Here are a few that I believe to be stand-outs in value, build quality and excellent fish producers.

Lively Lures 120 and 160 Skippers.

Alan Dolan started Lively Lures in 1987 in Brisbane's Slacks Creek. He's since moved his operation to the Sunshine Coast and it has been up there since the 1990s. Al has made lures for a massive range of lure makers, but it is his own range of lures that I keep coming back to.

The catalogue is extensive and all are excellent fish catchers.

Alan added some skipping and blooping poppers to his range in 2012, though it was 2013 and 2014 that I really got a chance to use his new skipping poppers; the 120 and 160 Skipper.

Alan has used their length and their designated design as the name.

As noted in the Editorial last month, it is with great pleasure we welcome Aaron back, as he re-joins the team after an enforced absence that was way too long. But that's all history now, and we're just stoked Aaron is getting back on his feet, getting back out into the field, and doing what he does best: catching fish, and showing we ordinary folk how to make a better fist of it!

At 120mm and 160mm long, they skip across the surface, much like a longtom, garfish or flying fish would while evading predators.

The 120 slowly sinks at rest and weighs in at about 47 grams on my digital scales. The 160's are about 60 grams on my scales and the couple I have fished with standard hooks and rings, have floated at rest. This may change if you upgrade the hooks and split rings to something more substantial.

They cast bloody brilliantly. They are meant to! I have gotten over 80m on my little SMITH/Daiwa outfit - *which is a helluva long way!*

The Skippers can be retrieved at slow to fast pace. At slow speeds, more rod tip action will see them wave their head about more. At a fast pace, it is only necessary to keep the rod tip at about 45 degrees to the horizon so that they skitter and jump along the water's surface, leaving a bubble trail from whence they came. With a bit of wave action/chop, they zigzag and wave their heads like a panicked baitfish that has the speed wobbles.

I have used them as a searching lure around headlands in the N.T for brassy trevally and queenfish. In Hervey Bay, when the longtail tuna were hunting longtoms, these things were dynamite.

Casting them to the leading edge and fringes of the longtail schools, the bites were explosive. Another place I need to try these is in the surf for tailor. Tailor love skipping poppers and I reckon these will be #1 on the rod next winter.

With 6 different colours and a build quality that is damn tough, I rate these lures very highly, along with the Mad Mullet series, Micro Mullet series, Blue Pilly series and Mack Bait series that I own, too.

You can purchase Alan's creations through his website: <http://www.livelyluresonline.com.au/> and go to the Australian online store. RRP is \$15.00 for the 120 Skipper and \$16.00 for the 160 which is excellent value. (Prices correct at time of writing, January 2015).

Foolish Boot's Hitter Jump Frogs.

Let me start by saying that if you have never heard of a Jump Frog before, or seen one, you soon will!

These things are a revolutionary piece of equipment for those who love to target bass, barra, saratoga; heck any of our natives that live in areas where normal lures could not be used.

I reckon the reach could be extended to saltwater environs too, though I have only targeted barra and saratoga thus far with these lures.

So what the heck is a Jump Frog?

It's a lure designed for snakehead (Channa Striata - in Thailand, where Mr Boot is from.)

Foolish Boot is a Thai lure designer who fishes for all manner of species, though at this stage, I have



A group shot of this month's lures. At the rear are 2 Adhek Baby Penipen. Middle left is a Lively Lures 160 Skipper, middle right is a Lively Lures 120 Skipper. At front are 2 Hitter Jump Frogs.



A Longtail that ate a Lively Lures 120 Skipper.