

Florida WILDLIFE



PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE FLORIDA GAME
AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

MAY 1948

P.S.
Casting

Dead Ducks!

BY BILL SNYDER



Working on a production basis, these women equip thousands of lures with hooks, spinners and swivels each day.



The knack of transforming a hunk of wood into a gadget for tricking fish has built a top-flight industry at St. Petersburg.

Bait's the Business!

THE fact that fishing, in a span of a few short years, has become recognized as America's No. 1 outdoor sport has been responsible for seeing the fishing gadget manufacturing business attain unbelievable prominence from coast to coast.

In every state in the Union, machinery is churning day and night to provide the equipment that is destined to hook a big salmon in Alaska, a fighting muskie in Michigan, or a silver tarpon in Florida.

Here in Florida, the manufacture of fishermen's supplies has grown into an important industry during the last five years and provides steady year-round employment for thousands of men and women. On a gigantic scale, the Sunshine State is producing everything from lures and bobbers to glass casting rods and sleek fishing boats—which is proof enough that fishing gadget business very definitely is big business.

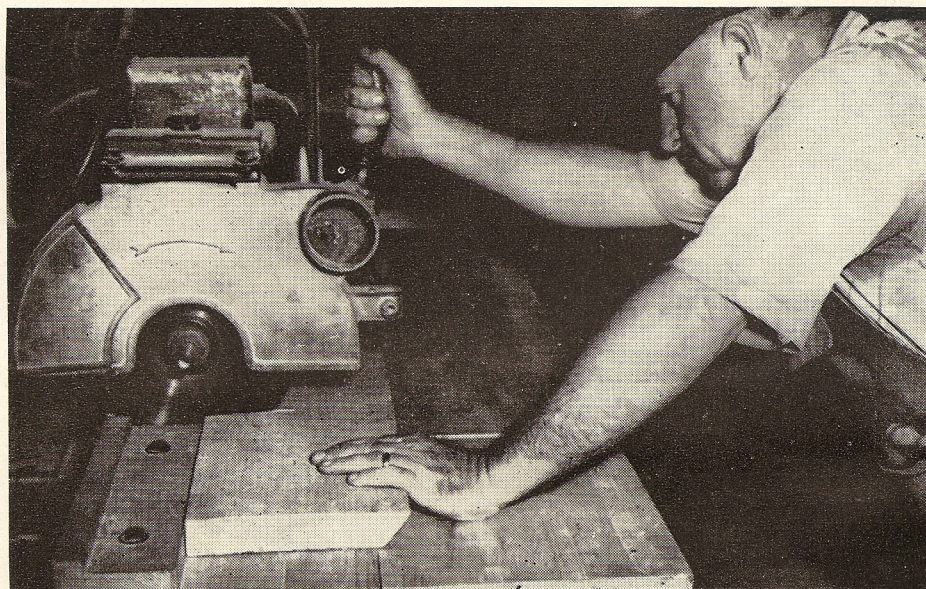
The Florida Fishing Tackle Company, of St. Petersburg, is an outstanding example of the manner in which the fishing gadget manufacturing business has sprung from a meager start to attain prominence in the commercial world. In 1947 the

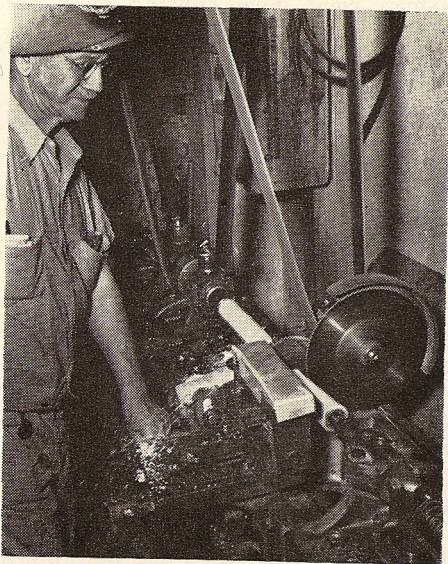
company marketed its products in every state in the Union as well as in Australia, the Hawaiian Islands, Cuba, Porto Rico, Mexico, Canada and even Arabia. During the year, the company sold well over a million fishing lures alone and remember—this firm is but one of the scores of

others that extend throughout the length and breadth of the nation!

Unknown to most St. Petersburg residents, the company was quietly launched by Jack Reynolds, president of the concern, his brother, Carl, the secretary-treasurer, and the late Kirby Huff back in 1928. With but

Six-foot timbers are cut into proper dimensions in the first step.





Artificial lures are first shaped in automatic doweling machines.



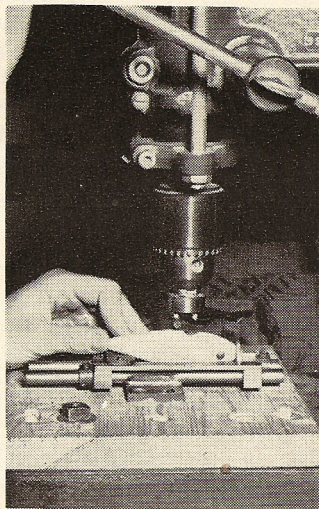
Sanding machine operators erase all rough surfaces from thousands of prospective baits each work day.

three employees on the payroll, the organization started the small-scale making of artificial bait in a humble storeroom in St. Petersburg. However, today the Florida Fishing Tackle Company has 150 people on its weekly payroll and occupies a three-story fishing-gadget beehive that covers half a city block. But the strange thing about the company's phenomenal success is that an Orange Lake shiner gets part of the credit for it.

Maybe it was destiny that took Kirby Huff and the brothers to the lake one day in 1939—maybe it was plain luck, who knows?

The day started off for them more or less as a fisherman's nightmare—no matter what bait they used, they

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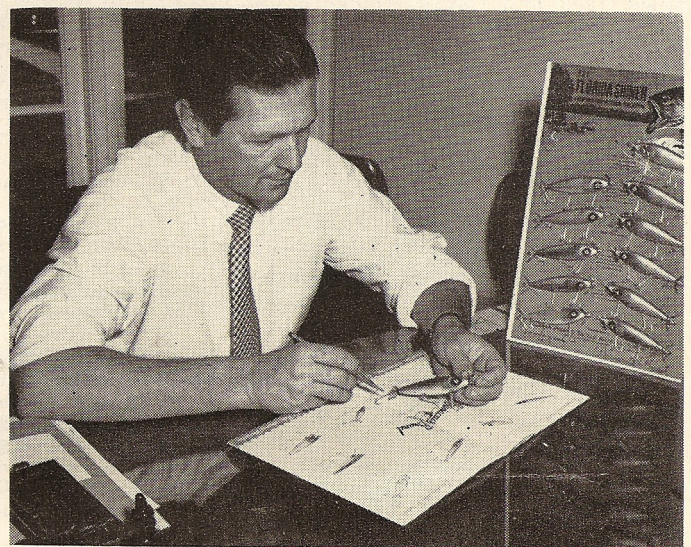
Tiny holes are drilled to provide anchorage for the hooks.



All day long this artist provides the wooden fish with gills and eyes.



This staff of artists adds the "new look" that will make the lures attract both fishermen and fish.



Carl Reynolds, Florida Fishing Tackle Company's secretary-treasurer, checks some of the finished product against dimension and color specifications.

DEAD DUCKS

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MOURNING doves, protected by a 10-a-day limit during a 60-day season in Florida, are not much better off than the ducks in Cuba.

Although it is true that Cuba has set up plans for dove protection—it is ineffectual and the law is openly violated and countless thousands of doves are being slaughtered each year.

The legal Cuban dove season opens the second Sunday of September and closes Feb. 20. In Havana State, the bag limit is set at 50 a day and hunting is permitted on Sunday only. In all other Cuban states, 100 doves a day is the limit and hunting is permitted on Saturday and Sunday.

Doves are unpopular in Cuba, particularly with the rice growers who term them "thieves" and "scavengers" because of damage they cause in rice fields. The irate growers claim that a dove will eat 40 per cent of his weight in rice daily. Strong feeling against the dove has resulted in lax and ineffectual enforcement of protective measures.

As a result of the dove's unpopularity, the bag limit and closed season regulated by the government mean little or nothing according to the hunters.

"The rural police are supposed to take care of it—but we take care of it ourselves," a Cuban nimrod told me with a wink.

The same sportsman went dove hunting 30 times last season and managed to kill a total of 3,210. The most unsuccessful day he had, the hunter explained, was the day he fired 700 shots and wound up with only 378 birds! However, his hunting season as a whole was no disappointment, he added, for in addition to his seasonal bag of doves, he managed to connect with slightly over 800 ducks.

Despite the annual duck slaughter in Cuba, a recent report made by Albert M. Day, director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, revealed that the waterfowl population decline has been checked. Director Day credits the halting of the decline to the rigid hunting regulations and poor hunting weather experienced last season.

In his report Day pointed out that the duck situation this year is encouraging as compared to what it has been for the past three years. But he added that "it holds little hope in the way of relaxation of 1948 hunting regulations." Sportsmen will agree, he said, that we should not be too optimistic if we let the bars down before we are certain that the duck population trend definitely points upward.

After reading Director Day's report, one well known Florida duck hunter added a suggestion for enlarging the duck population.

"I agree with Mr. Day that 1948 is no time to let the bars down on protecting the ducks," he said. "Instead, I think we should add another bar to the fence—a good strong bar in the vicinity of Cuba!"

BAIT'S THE BUSINESS

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couldn't catch a single fish. Meanwhile, fishermen on all sides were pulling in choice black bass with amazing regularity. After enduring this mental torture for an hour or so they finally weakened and did the sensible thing—asked nearby anglers what bait they were using.

Florida shiners proved to be the tempting morsel, and they eventually filled Jack and Carl's stringers too.

"Now if we could make a wooden bait that looked and acted like one of those shiners, it would be one of the best sellers in the business," one of the brothers prophesied while they were tying up their rowboat at the end of the day.

That evening when they headed their sedan toward St. Petersburg, a quart jar filled with water rested on the seat between them—it contained a single, three-inch Florida shiner!

Back at their midget-sized manufacturing plant, Jack, Carl and Kirby worked far into the night. With a pair of calipers they determined the thickness of the fish and carefully measured his diameter. A rough drawing of the shiner's contours was hastily made. Later, a sleepy-eyed artist, roused from bed, arrived to

make copies of the shiner's shimmering coloring.

Months later, after more than 500 wooden models of the shiner had been made and discarded, the men finally produced a wooden Florida shiner that was an exact replica of the fish itself.

The new bait met with almost instant success. Today it has established such an enviable reputation as a bass getter that more than a half-million were sold to sportsmen last year alone!

A trip through the Florida Fishing Tackle plant is like visiting a fisherman's fairyland. No matter which way you turn, you'll see workers producing an endless stream of

fishing gadgets that make an avid fisherman drool. The company manufacturers a dozen or more types of fish-getting lures along with casting rods, jaunty bobbers, gaily feathered flies and silvery spoons. As if by magic, a huge machine turns 15,000 pounds of lead into sinkers to the tune of 400,000 a day. A trip through the stockrooms reveals thousands of rods and reels, the products of every famous manufacturer in the United States, ready for shipment to retail sporting goods stores throughout the South.

To the uninitiated, making a wooden lure is an uncanny operation. It starts when six-foot lengths of rough northern white cedar make a noisy trip through ripping machines at one end of the factory and ends when the same timber has been magically transformed into carefully-fashioned fish-foolers.

In spite of the production-line basis, however, making a successful bait isn't exactly as easy as falling off of a log—it entails a lot of hard work and almost endless experimentation.

Long before a plug goes into production, the engineers, the factory's slide-rule and pencil gang, carefully designed it, artists conceived the proper color combinations and, day

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OUR APOLOGIES

A thousand pardons if your **FLORIDA WILDLIFE** reached you later than usual this month—however the tardiness can be fully explained!

We literally went through fire to get this issue on the press after circumstances for a time threatened to cancel it completely.

Exactly two days before the magazine was scheduled to start rolling off the presses, an engraving plant fire destroyed every plate and photograph to be used in this issue.

Tearing his hair, the editor grabbed two telephones and went to work. Finally, all the destroyed photos were replaced—so here's your magazine!

GAME and FISH VIOLATIONS—(Continued)

Name of Violator	Violation	Fine	County	Arresting Officer
Victor Brown, Dunellon.....	Undersized bass and improper license.....	37.00	Marion.....	W. E. Land and Vanness Seckinger
Bill Thompson, Holdon, W. Va.....	Fishing without license.....	45.00	Marion.....	Grady Cason and W. H. Wiggins
Elijah Clark, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	10.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Ollie Green, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	10.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Willie Dumas, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	10.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Beula Beinny, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	10.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Mrs. Howard B. Baner, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Lenard J. Herd, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Murice Smoak, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Willie Britt Huddleston, Roanoke, Va.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	Alvin Pacetti
Edward B. Mikell, Polk City.....	Fishing without license.....	25.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Perry
Louis V. Hargrove, St. Augustine.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
J. C. Harrington.....	Fishing without license.....	25.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Mrs. W. D. Sharpe, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	20.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Mrs. Earla Hicks, S. Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Mrs. E. A. Hicks, S. Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
John H. Murry, Arlington.....	Fishing without license.....	20.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
George O. Campbell.....	Fishing without license.....	20.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Mrs. E. L. Gibbs, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Perry
Lorenza Wall, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	20.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Ellis L. Gibbs, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
M. L. Shaws, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	20.00*	St. Johns.....	Alvin Pacetti
Byrl O. Woolbright, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Betty J. Blatchly, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	20.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Crane William, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Alvin E. Lane, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
W. S. Garcia, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Mrs. Alvin E. Lane, Jacksonville.....	Fishing without license.....	15.00*	St. Johns.....	E. W. Pappy
Lester P. Harper, Geneva.....	Attempting to take fish illegally.....	117.00	Seminole.....	Warren Tanner
Charlie McQueen, Sanford.....	Undersized bass.....	25.00*	Seminole.....	J. D. Warren
Mrs. W. J. McKenna, Lake Helen.....	Fishing without license.....	14.30*	Volusia.....	M. P. Thompson
L. P. Cottrill, Daytona Beach.....	Fishing without license.....	15.65*	Volusia.....	M. P. Thompson
Hildon Pompey, Sanford.....	Fishing without license.....	25.54	Volusia.....	Wayne Clifton, H. L. Lungren, Charlie Clark
Frank Cook, Holly Hill.....	Fishing without license.....	16.65	Volusia.....	Wayne Clifton
E. E. Adkins, Sanford.....	Fishing without license.....	19.40* and buy license	Volusia.....	H. L. Lungren
B. D. Brooks, De Land.....	Exceeding bag limit.....	19.90	Volusia.....	M. P. Thompson
Saunders Williamson, De Land.....	Shooting coots during closed season.....	50.00	Volusia.....	M. P. Thompson
Henry C. McLean, Daytona Beach.....	Exceeding bag limit.....	16.40*	Volusia.....	M. P. Thompson
Lanzo Jackson, Daytona Beach.....	Exceeding bag limit.....	16.40*	Volusia.....	M. P. Thompson

* Bond forfeited

† Suspended sentence

S.D. Sentence deferred

BAIT'S THE BUSINESS

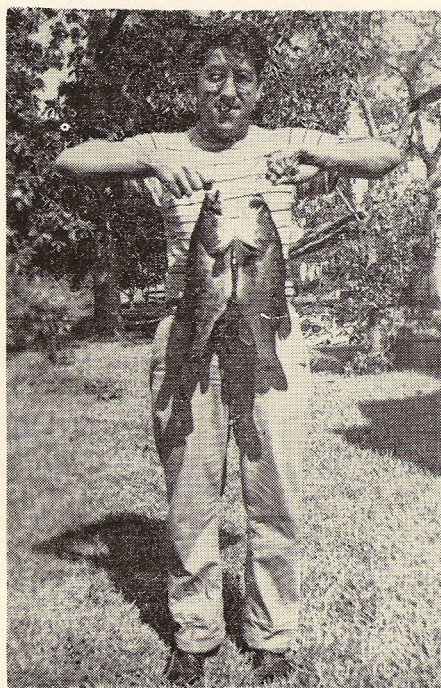
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after day, hard-boiled fishermen tossed it around and made unbiased suggestions for its improvement. Actual production begins the day a lure has been given the green light by the staff of fishing gadget experts. That's the happy day when those six-foot lengths of white cedar are ripped up into the right lengths to be shaped in automatic doweling machines; smoothed off in sanding machines; painted by artists; fully equipped with hooks, spinners and swivels; and finally placed in attractive boxes designed to win the eye of fish-hungry sportsmen.

Yes, there's a lot of hard work connected with turning out the nation's fishing equipment supply—but the effort has put the fishing gadget business in the big league!

The musk deer is eagerly sought by the natives throughout the Orient as musk is valuable for perfume. In Mongolia a "pod" is worth five dollars (silver), and in other parts of China it sells for considerably more. The musk sac is present only in the male deer and is, of course, for the purpose of attracting the does.

All bumble bees die in the winter, except the queen bee. She alone survives to produce another generation.



Mark Greenwald, of Lutz, went home satisfied after hooking these bass while fishing in Thirteen Mile Creek in Hillsborough county.

Duck Decline Checked Says Federal Official

Waterfowl population apparently are leveling off at the bottom of their decline, says Albert M. Day, director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Increases in the Mississippi, Atlantic, and Pacific coast flyways appear to be offset by decreases in the Central flyway, Mexico and Canada, but the over-all numbers seem to be about the same as last year.

Director Day credited the halting of the decline to the rigid hunting regulations and poor hunting weather experienced last year. The Service's chain of refuges which provided resting and feeding places for migrating birds, also played an important part.

"Although the situation this year is encouraging compared to what it has been for the past three years," he said, "it holds little hope in the way of relaxation of 1948 hunting regulations. Sportsmen will agree that we would be too optimistic if we let the bars down before we are certain that the duck population trend definitely points upward."