

Dog Days of Summer (and Fall and Spring)

Lucky Craft Walking Baits

September 2009

Bob "Lucky" Lechel



Photo 1-From Top to bottom: [Lucky Craft Gunfish 115](#),
[Lucky Craft Sammy 105](#), [Lucky Craft Sammy 100](#)

Lucky Craft is well known for its Sammy series of walk-the-dog topwater baits. Anglers know that walk-the-dog topwater baits are known to catch big bass. What many anglers don't know is that Lucky Craft has two lesser known walking baits that are flat out fish catchers. They aren't lesser known based on them not being as effective at eliciting strikes. On the contrary; I believe anglers have a hard time steering away from the original Sammy as it is has become many anglers "go to" bait for walking the dog topwater action. It's hard to break the addiction. Hoping to add to that addiction by enlightening the reader on the other members of the Lucky Craft family that each have their own unique fish catching properties, I've put this review together.

The [Lucky Craft Gunfish](#) has been out for quite a while, but many anglers don't know about its unique action and sound. This bait is offered in 3 sizes ranging from 3" to 5" (75, 95, 115) 1/4oz to 3/5oz and a myriad of signature Lucky Craft colors. The baits are weighted with a tungsten system and have glass rattles (similar to the original Sammy) in the head of the bait that give it a high pitched rattle during each side to side motion of the retrieve.



Photo 2- Lucky Craft Gunfish 115 glass rattles and side profile of cup

Other defining characteristics of these baits are the slim profile, unique cupped mouth, and its ease of "walking". The unique cup at the head of the bait allows the angler to impart much more forward splash, spitting, and sound (like a [G-Splash](#)/popping topwater) while still maintaining the ease of walking the bait.

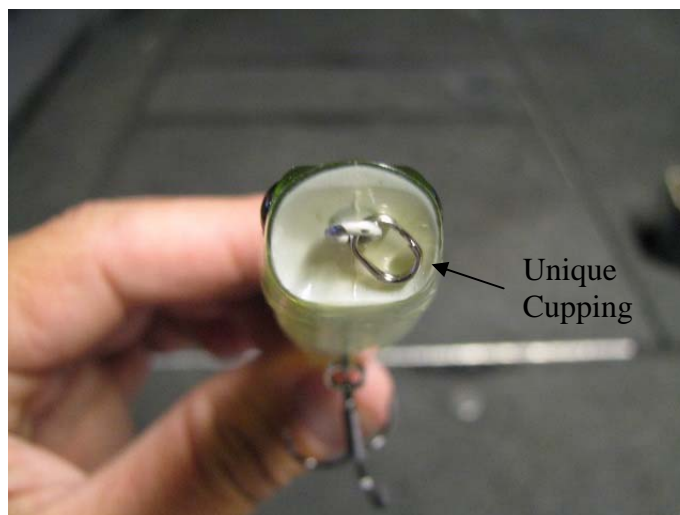


Photo 3- Lucky Craft Gunfish 115 front profile of cup

Normally I go to the Gunfish when I need to make a lot of commotion on the surface while still using a walking bait. Most often it's when you get a slight wind or boat chop. Never have forgotten a September trip to Amistad where we were throwing the Gunfish

115 in Aurora Black in 10-15mph wind and waves. The Gunfish was the ticket to getting big bass to find and commit to the topwater, culminating in the biggest bass I've ever hooked on a top water lure. It's also really good on schooling fish as you can work it really fast spitting and darting like a fleeing bait fish to generate a strike.

The [Sammy 105](#) is a relatively new addition to the Sammy Series (debuted at ICAST 2008). Lucky Craft gave this Sammy a few different tweaks from the original. It still comes in several of Lucky Craft's most popular colors and has the great Lucky Craft finishes that we all drool over. Sammy 105 comes with 3 hooks (better hook-up-to-land ratio) and doesn't have the signature glass rattles in the head like the original. Instead it has a large single knocker that gives the bait more of a clunking/knocking sound.

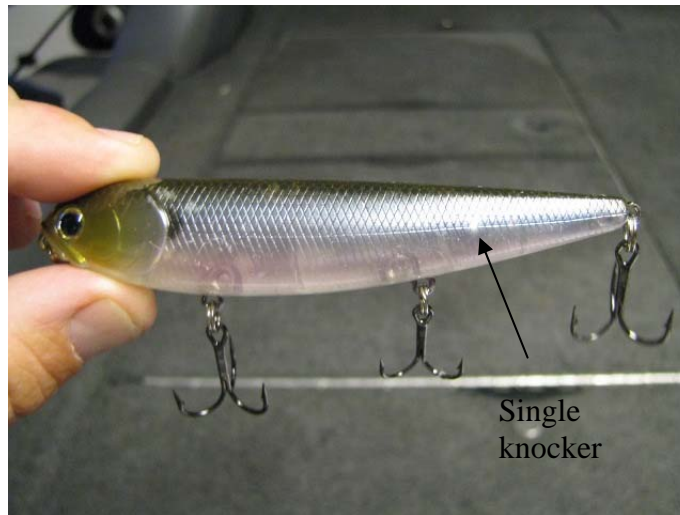


Photo 4- Lucky Craft Sammy 105 (3 trebles) single knocker

It is also weighted so that it lays flatter on the water which will allow for slower retrieves while walking the bait. This bait gives the angler a different sound and allows the option of a much slower retrieve which is sometimes all that is needed to get the big ones to bite.



Photo 5- Lucky Craft Sammy 100 (2 trebles) and glass rattles

Not forgetting about the one who started it all, the original [Sammy](#) has been a long time favorite. It comes in 5 sizes (65, 85, 100, 115, 128) ranging from 2.5” to 5” and weigh from 7/32 oz to 1 oz and come in a ton of Lucky Craft colors. The majority of the Sammy’s are equipped with two treble hooks (except the 128 has 3) and are weighted more heavily in the rear section which makes them cast like a rocket and are incredibly easy to walk-the-dog with. They also have the signature glass rattles in the head of the bait creating the high pitched “tick, tick, tick” sound that draws the fish in.

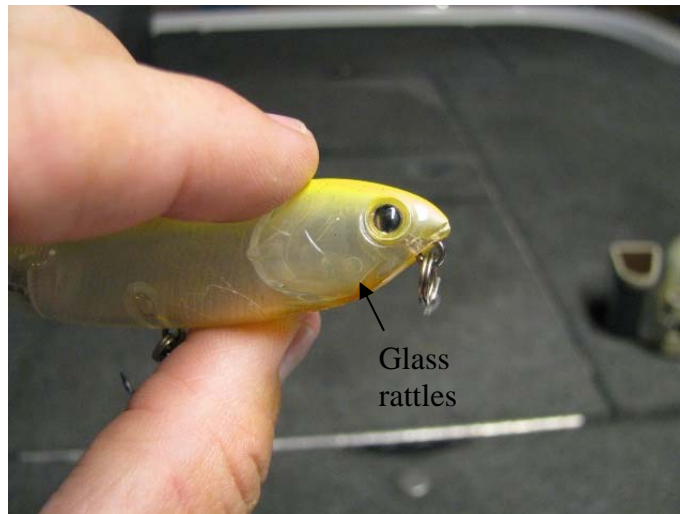


Photo 5- Lucky Craft Sammy 100 glass rattles location

Typically I start throwing Sammy’s and Gunfish once the spawn is in full swing, but in the Western reservoirs it really starts to shine in the post spawn time frame (usually May/June). I utilize a 6’6’ G Loomis IMX medium action rod ([MBR782C-medium](#)) spooled with 14-17 pound monofilament line spooled on a 6.2:1 shimano Citica reel. Monofilament floats (as compared to fluorocarbon) and has a little stretch which is a good thing when you are using top water. It makes it much easier to work the bait with a floating line and with the stretch it gives that fish a little more time to get the bait. The retrieve is one of the most important parts in utilizing walk-the-dog baits. The angler must start the retrieve with a little slack in the line. Holding my rod tip down close to the water I start the “jerk, jerk, jerk, jerk...” cadence simultaneously reeling in small increments of line. If done right, the bait will dart back and forth while moving forward (minimally). Of course the aggressiveness, speed and any pauses in the retrieve all have to be experimented with to see what the fish want. A steady cadence retrieve with no pauses is always a good starting point. All I can say is vary it until you get a strike and then try to reproduce that action.

For more information on or to purchase Lucky Craft Sammy or Gunfish please contact Charlie’s Sporting Goods Albuquerque, NM at 505-275-3006 (8508 Menaul Blvd NE). The new Sammy 105’s are also available through [Strictly Fishing](#).

[Bob is on Pro Staff for Lucky Craft, Skeeter, Yamaha, G. Loomis, Charlie’s Sporting Goods, San Juan Marine & Sports]