

Swamp Monkey Lures, Lacy Burnette Presentation, 9.10.21

[Link to presentation video clips for SMSC Members](http://www.smithmountainstriperclub.com/sml-fishing-resources.html)

<http://www.smithmountainstriperclub.com/sml-fishing-resources.html>

password: bigbait

Background

The maker of Swamp Monkey jigs, Lacy Burnette is a native of Smith Mountain Lake and grew up in Huddleston, VA. He began making lead jig heads in 2007, using the highest quality Gamakatsu hooks to eliminate bent hooks and lost stripers he'd experienced with cheaper hooks. He first tested his "jig head with a skirt" concept, which would later be named "Swamp Monkey," with leading local Striper guides at Smith Mountain Lake, including Captains Dale Wilson, Travis Patsell (Cats n Stripers) and Todd Keith (Shad Taxi). Other local guides using the product include Captain Bert (Mitchel's Point Guide Services), Kenny Short (Kenny's Striper Guide Service.), Clint Gray (Clint's Striper Guide Service), Dean Wood (Hooked Up Charters), Dakota Wright (The Fat Shad Charters), Tommy Moore (Wicked Striper Guide Service), and Chad Green (Last Cast Guide Service). The first sale took a few months, but finally a customer bought two to try out. That first buyer did so well with the new Swamp Monkey, that he came back the very next day and bought all the rest in the store. The name came from Captain Travis Patsell, after he'd hooked a big Striper while using one of the early models. Captain Travis declared the big fish was fighting really hard, "like a swamp monkey!" The unique name stuck. Monkeys have caught Stripers at SML over 40", with salt water catches in the Bay and at OBX including drum over 50" and seatrout over 20".

Construction of Swamp Monkey and Triangle Jigs

Lacy makes several products, but the two used with Stripers at SML are the original Swamp Monkey (skirted jig head), and the plain Triangle Jig head. The idea for non-skirted, "triangle head" jigs was suggested by Mitch Arrington of SML Sporting Goods (no longer in operation). The white head with silver eyes is a top selling of that jig style. Gamakatsu 6/0 hook is core of the ½ oz and ¾ oz jigs, and 5/0 hook for ¼ oz and 3/8 oz baits. Lacy pours the lead and powder paints the jigs by hand. The triangle head and Swamp Monkey head are most often paired with the 5 1/4" Zoom Super Fluke (with deep belly hook slot and split/forked tail). The larger Zoom baits (magnum size) pair best with ¾ ounce larger triangle head in matching color. Other sizes are Super Fluke Junior (4") and Magnum (7"). <Click this link for more details: [Super Fluke - Zoom Bait Company](#)>

Rigging Zoom Fluke Soft Bait onto Swamp Monkey and Triangle Jig Head

To rig either a triangle head or Swamp Monkey head to a soft Zoom fluke body, cut off the first ¼" of the bait. This makes it fit square and flush up against the edge of jig head. Then tilt the Swamp Monkey and hold the skirt against the head so the hook shaft is visible with hook pointing up. With the Zoom fluke bait held straight side down and belly slit up, the press the hook through the square front of the body and into the open slit, then push the bait forward firmly up to the square edge of the jig head. Then rotate the soft bait to put the straight edge up and the belly slit down. Finally, press the hook through the back so that the body lays straight on the jig from front to back. The hook should be in the center of back, not to one side or the other. Lacy also recommends one final step for the triangle head and Swamp Monkey, a drop of Loctite superglue to attach the soft bait to the head, to make it stay on and last longer. The glue can break down the skirt on the Swamp Monkey after several months, so it is not recommended for baits that will be stored.

SML Striper Fishing Tips

Triangle head jigs are used for vertical jigging, when schools can be seen on the fish finder directly below the boat. “Lift and drop” active jigging moves the bait up and down by a foot or so. “Dead stick” jigging involves a soft tip rod left alone horizontally in the rod holder, to translate boat rocking motion to the underwater jig to appear like a finning fish. The heavier the jig head, the faster it will fall in the water column. Larger triangle baits can be more effective in reaching fish quickly that are suspended in deep water (over 30’).

Swamp Monkey skirted jigs are effective for cast & retrieve fishing in the upper water columns, busting fish on the surface, fishing with bait lights suspended in water, and in winter when snow is forecast (high to low pressure change). Getting near diving seagulls in the winter can also be a productive tactic. Birds resting/floating are usually near schools, but not the same as diving birds. Many anglers will use sonar to find schools over submerged points and other structure, then begin fishing the Swamp Monkey when fish are confirmed in the area.

Color combinations

| Zoom Fluke Soft Bait Color | Triangle Jig Head Color | Swamp Monkey Jig Head/Skirt Color |
|--|--------------------------------|--|
| White Ice, White Pearl; Chartreuse Pearl, Baby Bass, Lemon Pearl | White, Chartreuse, Bare | Silver/white |
| Sexy Shad, Smokin Shad, Blue- White-Pearl, Albino, Rainbow Shad | White or Bare | Blue/white |
| Chartreuse Pearl, Baby Bass, Lemon Pearl | Chartreuse, White | Chartreuse/White |
| Blue Glimmer, Arkansas Shad | Bare | |

Local Retailers – Swamp Monkey & Triangle Jig Heads; Zoom Super Fluke 5 1/4” Soft Baits

1. **SML TackleShack**, 13326 Booker T. Washington Hwy. Suite B1 Moneta, VA.
Swamp Monkey casting rod produced by SML Tackleshack, contact Keith for more info & details.
2. **Captain’s Quarters**, 16525 Booker T. Washington Hwy, Moneta, VA, (March 1 - November 1)
3. **WW Novelty** located at 2323 Lakeside Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24501.
4. **Direct from Lacy Burnette** via Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Swamp-Monkey-Lures-178475392175542/> , or email laburne1@vt.edu, or cell (540) 874-3265.