

Members Article - By Matthew Perdrau

Suspending Success's on Impoundment Barra

Regardless of what species you target there is no doubt that the re-incarnation of soft plastic lures has added a new dimension to the way we approach our quarry. In general soft plastic lures can be split into two categories – un-rigged and pre-rigged. Un-rigged soft plastics are the most versatile as they can be rigged in a variety of ways to suit the intended species or environment.



However one of the down sides to un-rigged soft plastics (particularly for the beginner) is the fact that, in most cases, they need to be rigged correctly in order to work properly. Pre-rigged soft plastics on the other hand are rigged during the manufacturing process and ready to rock straight from the packet. Storm lures are probably one of the biggest manufacturers of pre rigged soft plastic lures and although most of their pre-rigged plastics incorporate a lead weight and are intended to sink, it's their small range of pre-rigged suspending plastics that have provided a lot of success for me over the last season. Although many Flathead and the odd Murray Cod have fallen victim to these lures, it was the meter plus barra's from Peter Faust Dam that concreted the success of these lures.



There are two suspending models in the Storm soft plastic lure range - namely the Suspending Wildeye Swimbait and the Slow Sinking Curl Tail Shad. In appearance these lures are very similar to a pre-rigged shad style soft plastic except they have an internal hollow plastic chamber in place of the standard lead weight. The hollow plastic chamber also houses small ball bearings that provide the lure with an in-built rattle. The lures range in size from 3 to 7 inches (7.5 to 17.5cm). The larger models (4 inch and

greater) come rigged with the standard dorsally exposed single hook and a belly treble hook, whilst the smaller 3 inch model comes rigged with the belly treble hook only. The hollow plastic chamber also gives the lure a wider more rounded profile, providing the lure with a greater sideways rolling action in the water. When coupled with either the wave-like shimmering tail action on the curl tail model or the wide beating throb of the paddle tail on the swimbait model, these lures look unbelievably life like.

It was a fluke decision at Peter Faust Dam in November 2006 that exposed me to the effectiveness of the suspending Storms, but I'll never forget it. I had tried all the lures, techniques and spots that had provided success in the previous two years, but the result was zero. After my second evening session without a touch I decided to call it a night, but instead of using the outboard to motor back I decided to troll with the electric. I was only in shallow water so to stay up above the weed beds I tied on a recently purchased 7 inch Storm Suspending Wild Eye Swimbait for the first time. I'd trolled no more than 50 meters when my rod was nearly ripped from my grip and a big Barra erupted close to the back of the boat. After a chaotic 10 minutes or so the 110cm demon was netted, photographed and released. That was the start of my best trip up there, landing 26 barra between 89cm and 125cm over the remaining 3 days.



The Barra's were caught using both trolling and casting techniques, however trolling achieved the best results. The reason for this was because when trolling I was covering more water horizontal to the weedbeds, which coincidentally is where the barra were cruising and feeding. The technique was quite simple really. Focusing on water between 1 and 3 meters deep I'd set the electric motor at a slow walking pace and the lure was deployed a short cast (about 5-8 meters) behind the boat. I would then cruise along and in between the weedbeds aiming to keep the suspending Storms as close to the weedbed edge as possible, but at the same time weed free. Every twenty seconds or so I'd rip the rod forward in short twitches and then let the travel of the boat take up the slack. Essentially, the Barra would hit the lure on the slack and in some instances even start cart wheeling out of the water before I felt any weight through the rod.

At night the fish were closer in on the surface weed edge and this is when casting provided better results. This technique involved casting the suspending Storm as close to the weed edge as possible. The first 3 or 4 meters of the retrieve consisted of a fast twitch and burn combination (sometimes resulting in the lure skipping out of the water), followed by a 5 to 10 second pause, then 4 or 5 short twitches, and finished off with a slow roll back to the boat. This technique was repeated up and down a 100 meter stretch of bank.



One modification I make to the suspending Storm's is the addition of a split ring to the tow point. This allows for more movement between the tow point and the loop knot or lure clip (which ever you prefer to use) and greatly enhances the action of the lure.