

# THE FISHERMAN'S OCEAN



How marine science  
can help you find and  
catch more fish

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are especially strong, the wire or sinking line will at least get your lure below the rough surface water.

Probably the most common wire-line lure used in New England waters is the parachute jig, a heavy jig (4 ounces or more) with a fiber skirt that extends both fore and aft of the hook. The forward part flows back when trolled in a pulsating motion that mimics a swimming squid. The hook of the jig is usually tipped with a strip of colored pork rind. Jigs are often white, red, or chartreuse; similar colors are used for the pork rind. The tail of the pork rind can be split to make it flutter.

Capt. Ron Murphy, a charter captain who fishes out of Hyannis, Massachusetts, has developed a fly that resembles and behaves like a parachute lure. It is composed of layers of different-colored fibers (usually reds, pinks, and whites) tied around the middle of a long hook. He positions his fly-fishing clients near the edge of a rip, holds his boat's position using his engine, and has his clients drift their flies out into the rip. The method can be very successful.

Anglers work the jig-and-pork-rind combination or the parachute fly by rapidly moving the rod forward every few seconds and then letting the line and jig drop back; with a fly rod, you're better off working the line by hand, rather than moving your rod. However you do it, the parachute jig or fly will puff out when it drops back, looking like a swimming squid.

## Trolling Along Rips

Regardless of what kind of trolling line you are using, trolling speed when fishing a rip can be very important to your success. Fish such as bonito and Spanish and king mackerel often prefer lures trolled at speeds up to 7 knots, whereas bluefish and striped bass are more responsive to lures trolled considerably slower. Sometimes a change in speed of just 25 to 50 rpms on your engine can make a major difference in hookup rates. Likewise, you might want to adjust your speed depending on whether you are trolling with or against the current.

Often fish will only strike lures or flies trolled in a certain direction, which makes sense if they are holding on a structure or facing into a current. (Remember, fish almost always will face into a current.) If so, save time and speed up when going in the other direction, rather than troll. I often find fish where there is a bend or curve in the rip, or where there is a break in the rip pattern. Such a break presents an edge or boundary, which often attracts fish.

It usually is best to keep your boat positioned at some angle to the rip. Often, you'll have to experiment to find the best trolling speed. (In my experience, it's easier to go too fast than to go too slow.) When you get