

What's Hot Where

A spot check of what's selling around the country.

BY RONELL SMITH

Ed. Note: Interviews for this month's "What's Hot Where" were conducted Nov. 29. Comments address what was selling at the time of the interviews. Retailers interviewed were selected at random.



NORTHEAST

■ A strong rockfish bite along the East Coast means customers are in a spending mood at **Joanne's Bait & Tackle** in Dagsboro, Del. Popular lures include Storm's WildEye Swim Shad and Calcutta's FlashFoil Swim Shad, especially the bunker colors, says store owner **Charles Mershon**. Another hot lure is PRADCO's Bomber A-Salt in just about any color. The line that's the store's best seller, Hi-Seas Quattro Plus Ultra Camouflage, is moving in sizes from 12- to 60-pound test. Two brands are the stars of the reel department: Penn — the Captiva baitcaster in particular — and Pflueger, whose spinning models in combo with rods are moving. Sales of Silstar's Power Tip rod are growing. "We sell as many of those as we do [Shakespeare] Ugly Sticks," Mershon says. "They [Power Tip rods] are very cost-effective and last for years and years."

■ With trout fishing hot in the nearby Housatonic and Salmon rivers, it's little wonder that **Brandon Szadaj's** Wallingford, Conn., store is selling a fair number of lures for trout. He says the fastest movers at his shop, **Uncle B's Bait & Tackle**, are Acme's Kastmaster and Phoebe spoons. Also strong is the Worden Rooster Tail. In soft baits, Storm's Wild-Eye Swim Shad is doing well, and so, too, are Bass Assassin's soft lures in craw and worm shapes. Szadaj says many of his customers are asking for Okuma's AD and ED spinning reels; the rods they are buying to go with the reels are 6-foot, 6-inch ultralights from local rodmaker John Henry.

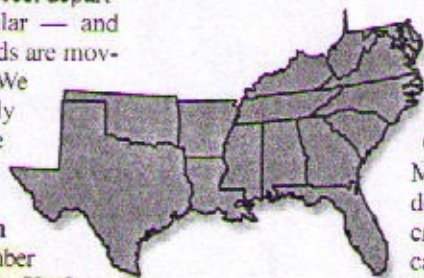
■ This time of year, tuna fishermen are about the only visitors to **Port Harbor Marina** in South Portland, Maine, says manager **Jeffrey O. Irish**. He says these anglers are buying Shimano combos and Sufix Tritanium line. "That's been a good line for me," says Irish. Seaguar Fluorocarbon and Gamakatsu hooks have had a few takers lately. Another item getting attention, he says, is the CDS (Custom Divider System) StowAways, the utility box from Plano that combines straight and angled dividers.

■ At **TNT Tackle Plus** in Edwards, N.Y., ice fishing tackle is the hottest thing going, says **Vicki Brunet**, store associate.

She says tip-ups from Hi-Tech Tackle and line from U.S. Line Co. are among the store's top sellers. Ice fishing accessories are moving — nets, buckets and ice scoops, in particular — and many of them are made by Hi-Tech. But about the only lures moving with any frequency just now are Berkley Power Bait Power Grubs.

SOUTH

■ Cool fall temperatures haven't stopped the fish from biting or fishermen from buying, says **Jim Teel**, owner of **West Georgia Sportsman** in La Grange, Ga. Anglers shopping for lures tend to favor Zoom's Horny Toad and Yamamoto's Senko, he



says. Also hot are Zoom's Big Salty Chunk trailers in pumpkin, black and potato. "We've sold out of just about every color," Teel says of the jig trailers. In hard baits, Lucky Craft's Live Pointer, Pointer 78 and Moonsault CB-200 crankbaits are doing well, but Bandit's 200 and 300 crankbaits are the hottest sellers in the category. In the spinnerbait aisles, brands such as Ol-Nelle, War Eagle,

Booyah Blade and Terminator are tops, with the 3/8-ounce and 1/2-ounce white/chartreuse models selling best. "The bleeding spinnerbait from Ol-Nelle has done very well," adds Teel. P-Line remains the hottest line at the store, while Owner and Gamakatsu share top-seller status in the hook category.

■ With fall slowly giving way to winter, sales at **Fishing Fever Bait & Tackle** in Rogersville, Tenn., are slow, says owner **Andy Phillips**. One category that continues to pull sales, though, is soft plastics, and that means Zoom products, especially the 6-inch lizard, and Finesse and U-Tail worms. Popular plastics colors include pumpkin, green pumpkin, watermelon seed and cherry seed, he says. The Rebel Spoonbill Minnow in silver/black and the Bandit Flat Maxx crankbait are selling too. Hottest line is Stren Clear Blue Fluorescent. And in terminal tackle, says Phillips, Eagle Claw baitholder hooks have no equal.

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