

# The Big Bait

## Journal

Special Film Release Edition Summer 2011

VOLUME 06



## SOUTHERN TROUT EATERS

Trout. t-r-o-u-t is a five letter word, and about the only word I've had true paranoia about. This is a special edition of the BBJ, and let me just say, thank you all for letting us share and to some, your patience. This has been a not so 'top secret' project at times, but man, something we are super pleased to have done and go public with. southernswimbait.com is pleased to announce the release of our first film: ***Southern Trout Eaters***.

Trout are found in most parts of the country. California has long been famous in the fishing community for growing enormous bass because of the county and city lakes with heavy trout stocking programs provided bass literally truckloads of super nutritious protein bars called "stockers" --- the farm raised trout. On the West Coast, the term "trout eater" is commonly heard among anglers to describe bass that eat stocked trout and swimbaits. It is safe to assume, you put 8-12" trout in a lake with bass in it, the bass are going to eat the trout. However, very little has ever been documented outside of California, when it comes to the pursuit of these 'trout eaters'. This film explores the search for trout eaters in the South, which speaks to the greater opportunity to catch trout eaters all over the country.

*Southern Trout Eaters* was filmed from the Fall of 2009 thru the Fall of 2010. We filmed in the Blue Ridge and Ozark Mountains. This film doesn't encompass everything trout eater in our world. This is just what we captured on film. This was a group project, and my team of guys delivered excellent footage and I cannot thank my crew for their footage and input enough.

There is a funny catharsis about the release of this film. It's like okay, now this is out in the open, so we can sorta take a sigh of relief and just keep pushing forward. This is a business move too, make no mistake. I want to earn the right to be the 'go-to' guy for trophy/swimbait fishing in the South/East. Guys like Brad Rutherford too are working to earn their place among the best in the world.

What lakes have trout in them? What lakes are directly stocked? What lakes have tributaries or an upstream tailrace that gets stocked? Sometimes it's as easy as Google. Other times, you have to pretend to be taking your kids fishing, begging to get the 411 on where the trout trucks are headed or you have to sack up and go explore, go camp, go fish and see what happens. Trout are stocked all over the country. Be among the first to throw a swimbait on a trout fed lake (and throw the right baits, with the right gear and right mindset) and you just might find yourself living out of your truck too.

The mountains of Georgia, South Carolina, Western North Carolina, and Eastern Tennessee are ripe with trout, trout streams, trout stocking programs for lakes, and have the right ingredients. It just took some effort to find which lakes have the right elements, conditions and enough trout presence to create a bigbait bite. We are still learning and still exploring. Their might be some real interest in trout all over the country as a result of this film.

*Southern Trout Eaters*, the first chapter in a series of film projects we are committed to producing, exposing bigbait fishing in the South/MidWest and East. And doing it with style and grace.

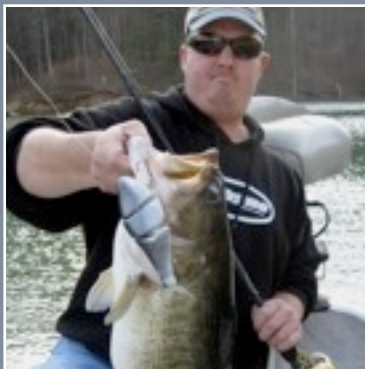
## ANGLERS:



Jeremy Pratt



Rob McComas



Mike Bucca



Chris Koon

## Setting the Tone:

Our intent was to put together a film that contributed to the sport of bass fishing, gets back to a more roots approach to doing things and helps further define professional angling. We didn't have much of a budget, let alone the skills to produce DVDs, but what we lacked in professional film production, we made up for with the content of the film. Quite simply, good things happened to us on film. Amazing things actually. The glueing the film together, and getting a finalized product, boy, now that was a bit more of a battle. Imagine a group of fishermen with 7 different video cameras and all the inherent format and testing issues, the ever classic Mac vs. Windows issues, etc trying to collaborate on a project!

The film just sorta "came together". We started in the Fall of 2009 and thought we'd be done by Summer 2010. But as things go, time lines pushed out badly. Here it is July 2011 and we are just now even going public with the film. Things have a funny way of working out, each time it became clear we had months to go and things just needed time, another fishing adventure would happen, and we'd have more stuff to work with. Different times of year Fall, Spring, Summer and back to Fall. We wound up in Arkansas and that just took things to new levels. We got to document our legitimate first attempts on new water, and just broaden the depth and breadth of the project.

Very very little has ever been done to document true swimbait (aka bigbait) fishing outside of the West. This film is NOT paddle tailed tube and swimming worm fishing and a bunch of hard fast and loud music and fabricated extremeness. That is exactly what we wanted to steer clear of, as much as possible. I narrate the film, and will tell you this is something along the lines of a Ken Burns (*The Civil War*) or Bruce Brown (*The Endless Summer*) style of film and narration. The film is in standard definition and won't get me an invite to the Academy Awards. However, I am confident this film will open up a lot of minds and discussions around the fishing world.

This film is hugely personal to me, and that is apparent in the film. But this was a group project, and the guys really stepped up with some killer footage, style and fishing of their own. This is a project all of us involved will be proud of, for the rest of our lives. How many films have you ever produced? This was my first. Film is a fabulously interesting way to communicate a message, tell a story or share information. We are the first ones to document real swimbait fishing outside of California. No one can take that away from us. We made history with the release of this film, it's great to feel like you've contributed to a sport that has given you so much.



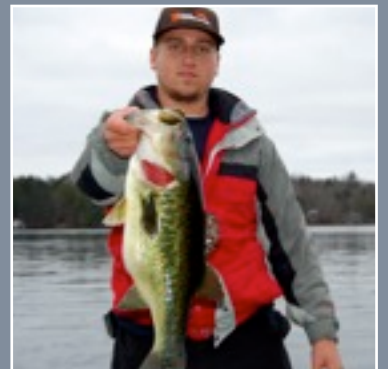
Ryan Thoni



Bob Rutherford



Brad Rutherford



Robert Malcom

## A Bass Fishing DVD?

Bass fishermen have never been an excellent market for DVDs. I've been warned about how poor sales of fishing DVDs are. I'm a glutton for pain and punishment. I mean, I'm the guy throwing swimbaits in tournaments, right?!! There was a lot of risk assessment involved in this project. This is the age of YouTube and 'on demand' everything. ICAST just happened and that has everyone attentions right now, so this is horrible timing, not to mention it is summer time. It is in spite of the reasons this project should be deemed a failure, that we went forward with it. I believe there is a market for good fishing footage and straight talk. Enough to make a living from? To be determined.

I want folks to watch the film and realize there is a great swimbait bite in the summer months, so maybe timing isn't so bad. ICAST worked out great, not everyday you can go to one place and find so many industry folks under one roof, when you've got a new film in your hand and a lot of questions, ideas and thoughts. You realize DVD isn't dead when you live in an industry where 3-5 minute YouTube clips, that rarely include a fish catch and informercial style DVDs are the norm. Tournament news and sponsor driven clips are the majority of what is out there. Or technique stuff that never gets deeper than a few tips and tricks. That is all fine and dandy and effective, but I'll go ahead and compare the world of surfing to fishing here. Surfing has a zillion photos online, YouTube Clips, contest results, rankings, and all kinds of real time and current Internet based chatter going for the sport. But there is also a strong film and DVD market in surfing. The reasons why surfing films are successful is something I find myself always circling back to. I watch surf films to learn style. To learn about the guys and what they add to the sport and why they do things a certain way and what they learn on the water and what mistakes they make, their triumphs and failures, and of course, the equipment they use. Take it a step further, and explore why surfer and the company funding his surfing/the film are both profitable. It's hard to make fishing a spectator sport. But DVD/film allows that. Film gives you an opportunity to take the time to do things right. Time to talk to the guys who make the baits, time to explore fishing the same baits thru the seasons, to explore new retrieves, new tackle, new rigging, your travels,

the first attempts at something, and the freedom to take risks you cannot do when you need to bang out 10 clips in the same day, that involve 7 different professional anglers talking about worms, crankbaits, jerkbaits, topwater--you get the idea. I've learned a lot of valuable lessons living in the South for over 6 years, and the most important I tried to embrace and recognize during the film project: patience. Southerners and MidWestern folks live at a completely different pace of life than I do. I've learned a lot about slowing down and listening.

Swimbait fishing, the real swimbait fishing, is a different animal than the tournament world of bass fishing. When guys like us see someone talk about swimbaits and start running their mouth about baits they don't hardly know, let alone have any real experience with, or fish catches of any consequence...we see opportunity. The tournament world has a fast paced, in your face style of marketing and advertising, and it tends to 'shape' and drive the bass fishing culture and media. That isn't a bad thing, it's just not the ONLY thing, in my opinion. Now, I love tournament fishing, and I totally support and adore that side of the sport, I just make the analogy that swimbait fishing is to bass fishing what big wave surfing is to surfing. I believe there is opportunity to look at bass fishing from a trophy and bigbait standpoint and make a living from it, and this film, this DVD, is in a lot of way, is the 'launching pad' to that endeavor. So even if this DVD becomes a glorified business card, I'm comfortable with that, because I believe it will make a darn good business card.

### **southerntrouteaters.com**

We put a lot of thought into creating a website for the film ([southerntrouteaters.com](http://southerntrouteaters.com)). A fishing DVD that is complimented with an online repository of photos, further discussions, outtakes, rigging information, and information on where to buy the products and rigging materials is something we felt was an opportunity to strengthen the project and huge value. We are asking folks who want to purchase the products featured in the film to click thru the links provided on the products page. The links take you to Tacklewarehouse, where you can purchase the products as you would, and we are credited with driving the traffic. Very simple model. We can be held accountable and provide our business partners

qualitative hard evidence of what sales we are responsible for driving. Tacklewarehouse is also the exclusive ONLINE retailer for the film. Brick and mortar shops are allowed to carry the film, just not sell the film online. Tacklewarehouse is such a solid business partner of ours, and a relationship I'm proud of. They acquired a lot of specialized tackle that we asked them to, so we could provide you down to the details, the products and tools of our bigbait fishing. So when we say we provide value, giving you a video clip about rigging a Huddleston Deluxe Rainbow Trout is great, but to also provide you links to buy the right crimps, leader materials, hooks, and rings based on the video clip is powerful. The detailed stuff that anglers really want to know. Powerful stuff to our business partners and a super easy way for anglers to get the right gear and get after it. Everyone wins.

I have been so stoked on the feedback from the folks who've put comments and reviews of our film online. The angling community is validating what we are doing, and it feels great. We of course are using social media to promote the film. We will be doing some contests and giveaways, to thank our fans. We are reaching out to outdoor writers, the media, and other fishing professionals and bigbait specialists to keep conversations rolling, to promote the film, and to have discussions about swimbait fishing that are highlighted or touched on in the film. My hat is off to the BigBait Posse guys for their film. I really enjoyed it and it was definitely an influence on us, and I want to extend a shout to those guys and to all guys who understand the things we say and how we say them in the film. They are themselves faced with the same challenges of disclosure, trust, creativity, professional status, and a shout to all those who uphold the true character of swimbait fishing and continue the quest to catch bigger fish. It's all about catching big fish, even in tournaments, big fish are usually what win.

Of course, I'm exploring digital downloads/iTunes and leveraging the Internet to deliver films. DVD as the medium to deliver film might be dead, but not film. I predict a massive resurgence of film. I already have consulted with a few FLW Tour and Elite series guys about filming their fishing.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

# SOUTHERN TROUT EATERS



DVD  
VIDEO



View the Film's Trailer  
on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8XOlrU6s8g>

**\$19.95**

Click [HERE](#) to order

## SOUTHERN TROUT EATERS

- FEATURING THE HUDDLESTON DELUXE, TRIPLE TROUT, NEZUMAA RAT, MS SLAMMER, BIG HAMMER, AND BULL SHAD
- INCLUDES RIGGING, HOOK SELECTION/TERMINAL TACKLE, AND ROD & REEL & LINE SELECTIONS
- FILMED IN THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS OF GEORGIA AND THE CAROLINAS, ALSO INCLUDES OUR FIRST ATTEMPTS AT BIGBAIT FISHING IN THE ARKANSAS OZARKS
- INCLUDES SWIMBAIT INDUSTRY INTERVIEWS AND NARRATIVE, AND IS INTENDED TO EDUCATE BEGINNING AND ADVANCED ANGLERS ON FISHING THE BIGBAITS
- 75+ FISH OVER FIVE POUNDS
- APPROX. 2 HOURS AND 40 MINUTE RUN TIME



DVD  
VIDEO

Southerntrouteaters.com  
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(from page 5)

I know this film will spark some younger anglers to roll film and do something. Film is pretty incredible actually. It doesn't have to be delivered on a DVD. It might be a digital download, it might become a 23 minute show on cable television, it might become 8-15 minute YouTube clips that are well done, released in a logical sequence, and actually get deep into real topics and include fish catches to back up the talk. Films might be given away by the folks who funded the projects as marketing collateral or to build their brand as the brand that is aligned with this style of fishing, or just simply from an awareness standpoint. Film has all kinds of uses, not just DVD. Check me out, how 'full disclosure' am I already becoming? I start talking about trout eaters in the mountains and it just opens up a floodgate of thoughts and chain reactions.

## Rebel Music

The setting for the film is the Blue Ridge and Ozark Mountains. The only music for the film would be bluegrass music. I am a huge bluegrass music fan. I love country, bluegrass, old time and anything acoustic. Especially traditional AMERICAN tunes. I absolutely love the music of the church, the traditional tunes from weddings, funerals, sea shanties, and the tunes that have been played for hundreds of years on American soil. Choosing bluegrass music, was of course, taking a risk. I don't know why people tend to freak out and be only able to make ignorant references to *Deliverance* when they hear banjos, mandolins, and that high lonesome fiddle sound, but a lot of it is learned behavior, brought on by pop-culture. I was seriously pursuing traditional native american tunes and chants to include in the film.

Licensing music is a case study in itself. Very complicated and expensive. So, when I was able to get thru to Craig Miller at Acoustic Disc, and work out a reasonable licensing agreement, I knew the film was headed down the right path. The opening tune of the film is "Shady Grove". Shady Grove is a traditional Appalachian Mountain tune, and the Garcia/Grisman arrangement is one of my all time favorite songs, period. So to use it and include it in the film was just an absolute treat. We licenses some great Old&In the Way

arrangements, including Angel Band, Pig in a Pen, and Working on a Building---songs that have been played a few billion times on back porches, Sunday services, and campfires and but never by the mainstream media. My brother is a musician and his recording label, Body Deep Music, helped me license a tune from Montana Slim called "the C", a bluegrass/sea shanty style tune that serves up a section of the film called, "The Blue Ridge Huddleston Breakdown". Sea Shanties are such wonderful tunes, and this song immediately resonated with me, and I think it fit the film well. Finally, I was able to get access to a few tunes from the Muses, a band I used to rock out to in college. Just good friends who play outstanding country rock. I wanted music that added culture and sophistication to the project and to heck with haters. There really isn't even that much music in the film, its mostly narration or just natural sounds. There is very little music, but what is there was put there purposely to celebrate the Ozark and Appalachian Mountains.

## Value

The film is 2 hours and 40 minutes. We built a website for the film to compliment things we didn't have 'time' to cover in the film itself. The website is also a central repository of photos never previously released, information on where to buy products featured in the film, and additional footage that includes rigging and discussion points that add another hour or so of content. We are pushing 4 hours of content, that includes FULL DISCLOSURE on things it took us years to learn. So yeah, \$19.95 for a swimbait DVD of this depth and breadth is a fair price and a good value. No one will be asking for a refund after they see the film, I'll put it that way. You can expect us to release additional content from the film project over time (ie, the entire Ken Huddleston interview perhaps). No other fishing DVD was created with a website to compliment it all to this level. I'm proud of that model. It will be copied, and so will a lot of themes and things we did in this project. The photos we are posting to [southerntrouteaters.com](http://southerntrouteaters.com) include fish, shots, angles and misfires never previously released. There are approximately 2000 photos that compliment the film, and serve as a chronology of our search for trout eaters.

If Tacklewarehouse was a public company, I'd tell you to buy stock in them. I was able to work with Tacklewarehouse to acquire specialized products we use to rig and fish our baits. Things like double barrel crimps, landing nets, and hand tools borrowed from the salt water world. That is value. Our Huddleston rigging is a triumph of time on the water and thorough testing. So to provide 'how-to' rig a Huddleston video clip and provide the supporting information to purchase all the little detailed components that are involved, speaks to our ability to work with our business partners to deliver valuable information and tools to the angling community.

## Business Move

Make no mistake, this film is a business move. I am not a million dollar tournament winner. I haven't even cashed a check on the FLW Tour in 2011. This has been a rough year for me on Tour, but I'm not dead yet. Tournament fishing is a huge part of my life, but this project is completely unrelated to my tournament life for the most part. It has been a comfort to have in my back pocket during a tough season fishing the Tour. I don't know why things work like they do, but I try each day to find meaning in my life and all I know is this film has come together and I'm not back to selling software or working a regular job...yet. I'm close, but not quite there yet and thank God. I feel reborn all the sudden. Hell yes I'd like to have the \$ to fish Champlain and Gunter'sville. I could turn my whole Tour year around with one good finish. Ha, yep, see, I'm addicted to tournament fishing too.

I thought I'd learned quite few things to shoot, narrate, edit and produce the film itself. However, I'm finding the promoting and release of the film to be another completely new field of work with still lots to learn. I learn new things every day and am just enjoying it all. I have all sorts of ideas to put together proposals or at least structure a conversation around the film or footage we have captured, etc. Yes, I'm hoping someone will actually see the film and contact us. Someone who recognizes what we are doing from a fishing, advertising, and business partner approach. However, I won't hold my breath on that. I'm back to being a salesman and knocking on doors. Anyone looking to grow or increase visibility in MidWest/South?

## Southern Trout Eaters: By the Numbers

### Number of Video Cameras

Lost: 2

Brad Rutherford and I both dunked a video camera. Both cameras ruined. Brad had been 'storing' various days of fishing, so we lost approx. 10 fish on film including a couple giants. I didn't lose any fish when my camera went swimming, just a day to run to the big city and buy a new one.

### Number of Days Filming: 75

This is an educated approximation of the days I spent on the water specifically filming for this project. Add the number of days each guy put into the film and we are talking well over 100, probably closer to 150 days on the water to capture the footage we did.

### Number of fish caught on film: 100

Again, an approximation. Figure we spent 100 days of filming combined and have approx. fish on film = 1 fish per day of filming. We'll take it. There are plenty of fish clips yet unseen. We ran out of 'time' to share everything. Not to worry, those fish won't go to waste.

### Number of double digit fish in the film: 5

Ryan Thoni's opening fish. Matt Peters dam wall intro fish. Matt Peters leaf blower frontside dock fish. Jeremy Pratt archives holding a 10.

Bob Rutherford dam wall hoss.

### Biggest Fish on Film: 11.25 pounds

Bob Rutherford. After I tell you to do things different than 'parallel the dam wall' in the intro t the film, Bob too proves me wrong. Or did he? Do you think fish notice the direction a boat travels and the inherent danger zones everywhere but directly behind the boat? I do. Paralleling BEHIND the boat is different. Holdover 8" Rainbow Trout Huddleston Deluxe swimbait, ROF 12. Nice one Bob and good camera work Malcom to get it on film.

### Most Fish on film in a single day: 10

Brad and I quite simply had excellent 'sessions' together. One fall day, we had 10 fish in the boat and missed others, in a single afternoon of filming. Some days, they just bite, most days, they do not.

### Biggest Spotted Bass: 5 pounds.

The session I mention above, I take Brad to a dock I knew had a wolf pack on it. The fish aren't on the first two angles, but the final angle is the trick. You here me tell Brad to not touch the trolling motor and cast all the way to the seawall, and...bang goes the dynamite.

We have multiple MAGNUM spotted bass in the in

film, but unless we catch a spotted bass that is unusually big, we don't weigh them. Spotted bass are cool and we love to catch them, but let's get real, its double digit largemouth we are hunting. The teens and beyond. At least that's where my head was.

### Biggest Smallmouth Bass: 4 pounds

Jeremy catches a 'good one' on the 8" Hudd. Not sure if its a 3.75 or a 4, but we only have a couple smallies on film, but heck, the film keeps a rolling and don't worry smallmouth heads, we'll get with the program someday soon.

### Number of days getting skunked: 20

Again, an educated approximation. We all got skunked plenty in the filming process. I go thru a 5 day stretch where I only have one bite and miss it. Ouch. Film (and television) doesn't share the reality of getting your butt whipped, often.

I know McComas was ready to scream at one point, because I'm demanding film and giving deadlines (that ended up pushing out badly) and the fish weren't cooperating. But the Lord has a funny way of working things out. Rob comes back guns blazing...two fish on one cast, sick i topwater bites, and the film hit 4th gear. Be prepared, skunks abound in swimbait fishing.



**Mr. Ken Huddleston**

I wanted to get input from guys like Ken who make the baits we throw. I was headed to Orange County, CA from Arkansas, saw a sign for Las Vegas, and got a wild idea to call Ken. We were sitting and chatting an hour or so later at a random park. I had no idea what I was in for. I rolled film and we had an excellent session.

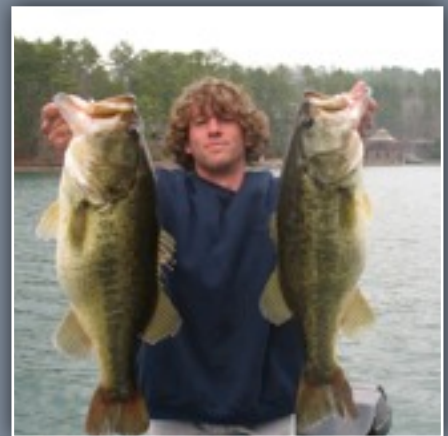
I literally have been stuck in Ken's 'Vortex' ever since. A lot of things made sense all the sudden and opened my mind to the idea of true realism and it was the first time I grasped what Ken was really doing.

The 8" Huddleston Deluxe Rainbow Trout is THE BAIT that all other trout baits are compared. Its been our #1 tool and a lot of the film features Huddleston fishing.

**Appalachian Mountain Stomp**

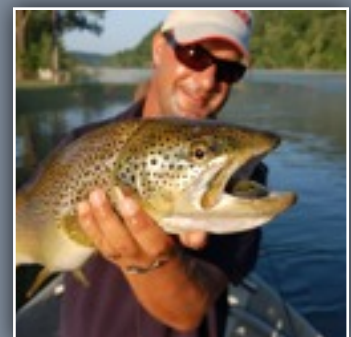
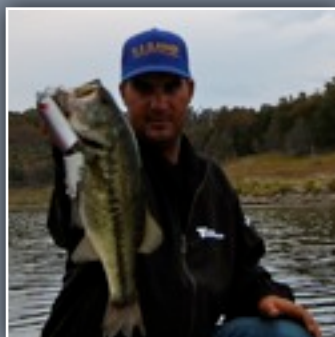
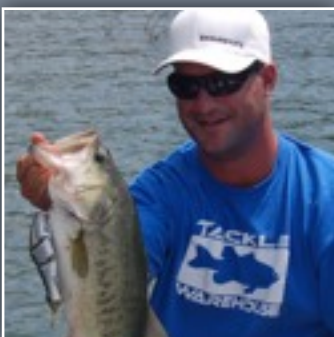
Guntersville? Chickamagua? Santee Cooper? Okeechobee? Kissimmee? Eufaula? They ain't got nothin' on the trout eaters. These fish don't eat frogs, chatterbaits, rattle traps, and boot tailed worms. They eat trout.

Average size of fish in the film, approx 7 pounds for the largemouth, and approx 4 pounds for the spotted beasts. We have approx. 75 fish in the film, with some double digits of course too. Not California big, but I challenge you to find and document bigger, 13 month window, no live bait, no guides, and no nonsense, from water that isn't in the Golden State. Texas perhaps? Not sure, we'll keep looking too!



**The Ozarks**

I told you Arkansas added depth and breadth to the project. Huddleston, Triple Trout, and MS Slammer fish and oh yeah, we found another kind of trout eater: Mrs. Brown



# WE NEED YOUR HELP

In no particular order, please consider:

## FACEBOOK

Please friend us on Facebook, and please tag "Southern Trout Eaters" to any photos you deem worthy. Could be a 10 pound swimbait fish, or could be your daughter or son with a mouthful of food or your wife at dinner with a big plate of sushi. Be creative, need not be an 'angler' to participate. Be creative. Find us on Facebook [HERE](#).

Expect contests and giveaways from our business partners to follow. Search "southern trout eaters" on Facebook and you should find us.

## TWITTER

We have a Twitter account, if you care to get updates and real time information about things, please follow us: @southernbigbait

## YOUTUBE

Our YouTube Channel is 'southernswimbait' You can see all of our outtakes and clips from the film, and other fishing projects we've done by checking out our YouTube channel. We will continue to post all sorts of swimbait fishing and discussion. Click [HERE](#) for our Youtube channel.

## ONLINE FORUMS

If you are an active member of any online bass fishing community, and are willing to say something about the film, good or bad, online, we welcome it. Feedback from the folks who watch our films is critical to us understanding how to better shape and massage things going forward.

## ONLINE REVIEW OF FILM

There is a Customer Feedback tab right next to the Product Description tab on the Southern Trout Eaters Product Page on Tacklewarehouse.

Click [HERE](#) to see it.

We do NOT want to solicit favorable reviews or anything like that, but asking you to post your honest feedback and thoughts on the film is super helpful to our cause, so anyone who is willing to post a quick blurb about the film there we'd certainly appreciate.

## FISHING PROFESSIONALS

If you are an outdoor writer, industry professional, FLW Tour or Bass Elite angler, FLW Outdoors or BassMaster Tournament Staff, or a media person or something thereof who ultimately can help us promote the film, the ideas and techniques of the film and/or do joint or collaborative projects, we welcome you to contact us.

## The Journey to Film

The actual filming took approximately 13 months, but the concept and impetus for the film began at different times for each of us. My journey to this film began when I left California in January 2005, headed to a new gig within the same company in Atlanta, GA (somewhere I'd never been or had any friends or family). For Rob McComas his journey to this film never begins or ends. He calls Appalachia home, and always has, and always will. Rob's been on these fish for 15+ years. Rob was the one person I asked permission to do this film. Rob agreed it was an opportunity and something we thought we could do well. Rob's footage was simply fabulous. We filmed together one day and got some great Slammer conversation and just talk about catching swimbait fish in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Rob answered the call with the Slammer (and Huddleston) footage he provided too. Excellent surface bites, and beautiful footage. Jeremy Pratt grew up in Tryon, NC, in the foothills of Asheville. He knows how to catch big fish in the mountain lakes, and then learned to swimbait fish, and now he's lethal. His style and personality come thru big time in the film. Jeremy is just a unique individual with excellent big fish skills. Jeremy's fishing isn't fairly represented in the film. Jeremy is in a funky transition period of his life and didn't have the time and resources to do what he's done the previous 5 seasons which is punch the big fish in the mouth with the bigbaits. Take a look at Jeremy's photo gallery on [southerntrouteaters.com](http://southerntrouteaters.com). Jeremy's film is nothing short of fabulous and really added some color to the film. The Rutherfords call Lavonia, GA home, and Robert Malcom calls Royston, GA home---both places a great launching pad to the mountains. Now Robert and Brad call Young Harris College home. I'm sure it had to do with the great curriculum and staff, and nothing to do with the location of Young Harris! Bob Rutherford has caught his personal best (12 pounds) and multiple other double digits in the few short years I've known him. Chris Koon is from Prosperity, SC and calls Lake Murray home, but he was wise enough to recognize the midlands were limited to blueback herring, but the mountains had the trout. I used to give Mike Bucca a hard time because he used the word 'swimbait' so often at times online, I asked

him if he thought it was a pronoun or a verb or something! Mike is just a swimbait addict and brings additional depth and breadth to the film, showing a different style of bait used to target the big shad eating fish. The non trout eaters. Another really interesting topic. Ryan Thoni was well informed about what we were doing over here before he moved from California to Boone, NC to attend Appalachian State. He brings his Western style and bigbait skills and put them to work for immediate success---in fact, he's got the opening fish.

When we decided to move forward with the film, I tried giving very straight forward instructions to the guys, about like this, "Get me fish on film, get me anything educational or funny on film, get me pictures, and keep an air tight low profile on the project". But this is all of our first times at film. Film is a completely different way to communicate a message, work in groups, collaborate, have creativity, etc.

I'm the only one of the crew who fishes full time, so I had way more time and focus to commit to the project. The bottom line was we got our acts together, we all contributed to the film, and I'm proud of the final product. The best compliments I've received from the film come from my sister, my mother, and all my friends and family who have never caught a swimbait fish. I'm not saying your wife or brother who doesn't fish will like this film, I'm just saying I'm flattered that folks who don't fish understand a bit better what it is we do.

### **southernswimbait.com**

[southernswimbait.com](http://southernswimbait.com) was conceived and created around the trout eaters. I got into a good swimbait bite my first spring in the South. I mean, a good bite, and I was pretty certain no one else on the lakes I was fishing owned a swimbait, either. [southernswimbait.com](http://southernswimbait.com) is a work in progress. I have plans to re-do the entire website, provide better, more real time content and information, hire professional help, etc. All good things in all good time. The release of this film 'allows' us to be more forthcoming about our fishing. Most of our trophy fishing has been hidden or cloaked in secrecy, so the release of the film precipitates changes to the site, the information and articles on the site. This film was something in mind for years (we share "one for the vault", a fall 2006 trout eater captured on film). Part of fishing,

especially trophy fishing, is managing information and people. You can go real time full disclosure on some of it, but other things you need to sandbag and stall out. You don't just give away everything you got in real time. You need to explore things, test them, and validate them before you can go making claims about them or go sharing it around where the fishing pressure itself with change the dynamic. Some people use misinformation: giving you bad or false information to keep you off their fish. Purposely misleading you. I don't subscribe to misinformation much, but purposely leaving stuff out or not releasing things as they happen---guilty as charged.

We so appreciate the feedback and support on the film. I am confident [southernswimbait.com](http://southernswimbait.com) or whatever we eventually decide to name and brand what we are doing or whatever happens, will keep moving forward and keep evolving to deliver the best possible information on swimbait fishing in the South, MidWest, North or even West. I don't worry about what latitude and longitude I am at to talk about swimbaits.

### **Grass Roots**

Besides our first attempt at producing a film, this is our first attempt at launching a film. Feel free to forward this newsletter, or information regarding the film or film project to anyone you think might value or have interest in what we are doing. We want the customer reviews, the posts to online forums and the internet activity to be genuine and unsolicited. There is a ton of power in social media, but also just the power of networking and the small world effect. So we are asking folks who like what they see to be vocal about it.

### **Guys named Matt Peters**

There are 2 guys named Matt Peters in the bass fishing world.. Myself and Matt Peters from Minnesota. We both fish FLW Outdoors and various tournaments and are both involved with the fishing industry and people. Just to be clear, there are two of us named Matt Peters. It can be the source of confusion. Especially since we both live part of the year in or around the Atlanta area, it really causes confusion. Two guys with the same name, who fish in the same circles. In fact, Matt Peters from Minnesota's picture was put in the 2011 FLW Tour Yearbook instead of mine (poor guy)!

# WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING WHO'VE SEEN THE FILM?

Click [HERE](#) to read the SwimBaitNation.com SwimBait Fishing Forum Discussion on the Film. The below is one highlight from the thread, we are humbled to receive. Anglers are validating our suspicions that indeed there is a market for what we do and how we do it. Here is some feedback from Eastern Kentucky, mrbassky1 says:

“As far as the video overall its easily the best fishing DVD I have ever watched. Its what fishing DVDs should be. I have a library of fishing magazines (Bass West, Bass Angler Mag, Bassmasters, Bassin, Infisherman, FLW Outdoors ect.) and videos. I have over 50 bass fishing videos including-Bass Edge both seasons, Classic Patterns seasons 1 and 2, All the BassProShops library videos on bass, All the BassPros tv show seasons, Big bass posse, Lucky Craft video, BBZ, Ikes finesse video, Smallmouth Neighborhood, Infisherman videos, regional videos (float and fly, topwater, jigs), and several more.

This is the best video I have seen for several reasons. First off its longer than almost any video I own. The only way you can get more video length for the money is buying a whole season of a fishing show. As far as instructional videos on one type of fishing its the longest I have seen. Its also the most in-depth video I have seen. Most videos don't really show as much about a technique as this one does. To me for \$20 all instructional videos should be this long and this in depth. Its going to be hard to pay \$20 for another 30min video with information I already know. Theres no reason anybody shouldn't be able to put together 2 hours of footage. Its not that hard with most techniques and it doesnt cost anymore to put another hour of footage on a disk.

I give it a 10 and I hope Matt makes a ton of money and decides to make more bass fishing videos.”

## Customer Reviews of the Film on Tacklewarehouse.com [Southern Trout Eaters Product Page](#):

**Comments:** I have been watching this video for the past couple of days and i still cant get enough. It seems like i learn something new every time i watch the video. Every question i ever had was answered in this video.This video is packed with so much helpful information and tips on swimbaits, fishing techniques, applications , and equipment. This video is a must have regardless if you are a beginner or advanced swimbaiter. The most informative trophy bass video with the most cast to catch footage you will ever see. Great job on the video! I look forward to see what you come up with next.

**From:** *Daniel: So Cal*

**Comments:** just finished watching my copy great film the big bait posse was a nice swimbait highlight reel but this is put together to actually show the passion and commitment of these swimbait throwing addicts it shows the ups and downs has a serious side and a informative side yet certain clips stand out to make it light hearted and fun a lot of laughter from the to young what seem to be "wild ones" Jeremy Pratt and Robert Malcom yet serious in depth interviews with people like ken huddleston and mike shaw the video is an all around masterpiece hands down

**From:** *Richard: Houston, TX*

# CLOSING CREDITS

## The Film Keeps A Rollin'

If you would have told me I would have ever gotten into film production, I would have laughed. This *Southern Trout Eaters* project really opened my eyes to a new side of media. I enjoy the heck out of writing and photography, so video and film is just a natural progression. Filming by yourself is no easy task and quite honestly its not the best way to do it, but it's not horrible either.

I'd love to have a small crew of folks to travel and film full time with. Perhaps get into some sort of cable television show or something. A major sponsor or two. Produce GOOD content, and lean on a team of professional editors and producers and audio visual folks to do what they do best. Have a nice RV and do it up right! Have a nice woman I travel with, you know, work with me here, now! Go chase good swimbait bites around the country. Go find new water, new fish to fish for (walleye, bass, striper, salt water anything, trout) fish the BassMasters and FLW Outdoors events that make sense, and go have some fun but keep it professional and profitable.

I wanted to come out guns blazing with this first film. It will be hard to duplicate the amount of time and effort and experience that has been put into the techniques and the collective project. If you want to do a series of films, you better start off right, because if the first one's a bust, number two may not get off the ground. The model is simple, build something that people value and trust and you will become a trusted advisor to the angling community. Sponsors (check that, advertisers) want eyeballs and ears to see their product or service, and the more credibility and trust you have with your audience, the more leverage you have to structure win-win sponsorship/advertising arrangements.

Besides full blown films, we absolutely will be leveraging YouTube to provide short clips

and keep fresh content flowing. YouTube is a great tool, it's not our only tool. We've got other full blown film projects underway, but its hard to say where things will lead.

## What Now?

In the short term, you can expect us to continue playing off themes, discussions and techniques we touch on in the film. I am working to align myself with other bigbait specialists and/or media outlets to provide ongoing discussions about bigbait fishing and trophy hunting, but also borrow and build on themes we touch on in the film. We want to sell films, but our other hope is the angling community will be better equipped to have meaningful discussions and dialogue after seeing the film. For example, in order for us to have a meaningful conversation about 'realism' its nice to be able to speak to specific examples that are highlighted in the film, a baseline, if you will.

We have footage that was featured in the film, and also lots of additional footage and ways of presenting the same footage that will make for good healthy discussions. We'll encourage other bigbait specialists to give their opinions and feedback and to provide footage/content that backs up what they are saying. Just healthy, professional, meaningful conversation, that is progressing the world of bigbait fishing, and more broadly represents what is going on in swimbait fishing across the country, not just the West Coast.

## Curtain Call

I'd be remiss to not mention my FLW Tour debut. 2011 has been a TOUGH year for me on the Tour. I've had to forfeit events, I just could not afford the risk to take on. It's been a tough year for me at the Everstart level too. No excuses, just fighting my way thru a tough



tournament season, trying to keep the wheels on the wagon. I've never worked so hard in my life and have zero to show for it. I did qualify for my 3rd consecutive Everstart Championship on Kentucky Lake. I am hoping to afford Champlain and/or Gunter'sville to finish up the Tour and get back to unfinished tournament business yet in 2011. We shall see.

I'm in a perpetual fight for survival. I have no interest in going back to work in corporate america but am not afraid to either. If taking time off to regroup financially make sense, so be it. I'm trying to feel my way around what makes the most sense, and create some good fortune with my fishing career with projects like this. We shall see. I feel good about what we have going, and you never know, I just might catch 'em on tournament day one of these days and help myself that way.

I thank everyone for their encouragement and support of my tournament and bigbait fishing. Thanking my team for their incredible patience and contributions to *Southern Trout Eaters*. We did it and no one can take it back. At times it felt like the never ending story, but it all just came together and worked out.

Expect us to be revamping southernswimbait.com, pumping out more regular content, and being a bit more public facing going forward. Expect another edition of the BigBait Journal soon. I've been sandbagging on that too. MP

## The BigBait Journal

THE SOUTHERNSWIMBAIT.COM NEWSLETTER

# THANKING THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF OUR FISHING:

