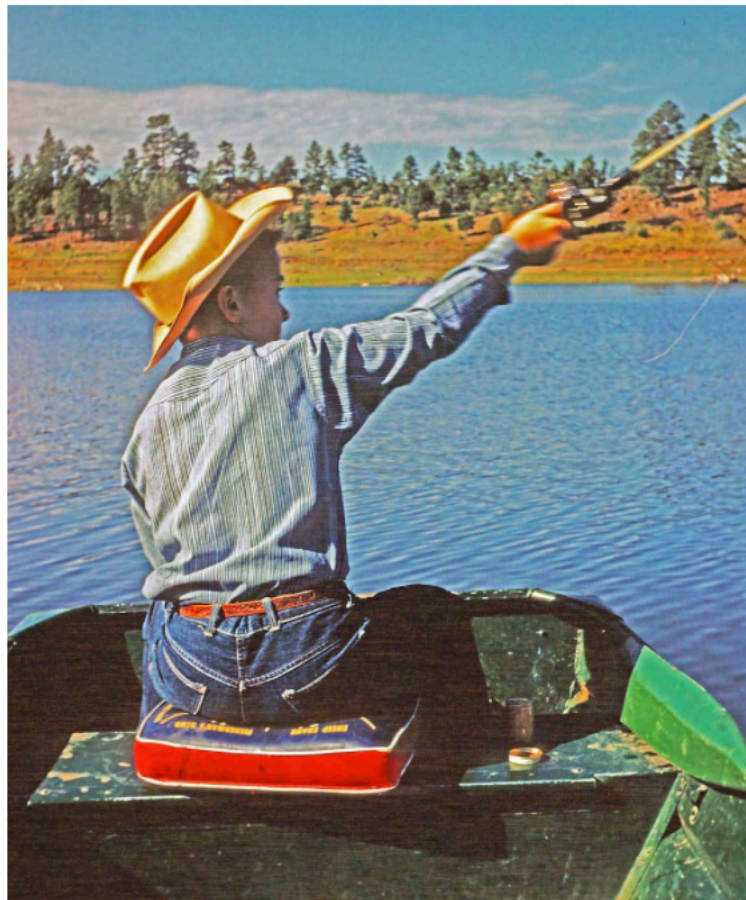


GEAR

How Fishing and Boating Can Change Life for the Better

Ode to a Super-Duper lure.

By [REDACTED]



The author and his dad fished Arizona lakes from a rowboat in the 1960's, often finding success using Super-Duper lures. The same lessons can be learned by anglers today. [REDACTED]

I was ten years old when the Super-Duper lure taught me a valuable lesson in life. That summer, I rowed (yes, rowed) my father and I in a rental aluminum boat all over Show Low Lake in the White Mountains of Arizona. There was a Super-Duper lure in each of our tackle boxes and, between us, we decimated the fish population.

The back story is that my father navigated B-24 bombers through World War II, finding pinpricks of islands across the Pacific and Atlantic with nary a qualm. After the war, he joined Douglas Aircraft and we found ourselves in Tucson, Arizona, where he was the plant manager.

Unfortunately, his boss was a take-the-credit-pass-the-blame type, and my father overstressed. One day, he came home, sank into his favorite lounge chair, and went to sleep. We couldn't wake him.

In the hospital in a coma for a month, I remember thinking he was just asleep and tried to wake him to no avail. Surgery saved him, but he needed a long recuperation.



The author, [REDACTED] age 10, and in his element. [REDACTED]

That came in the form of a rustic cabin on the edge of Show Low Lake. He and I had always fished streams, and the Christmas gift of a fly-tying kit turned me into a mini-entrepreneur, selling flies to local sporting goods shops. I was the king of the Royal Coachman.

But lake fishing was different, so we asked locals for insights, and one lure was continually mentioned: the Super-Duper. Two were added promptly to our tackle boxes, both chrome with red linings. The Super-Duper looked like a tie clip with a triple hook on it. But according to everyone from good ol' boys to the guy who rented our dented rowboat, you could do anything with Super Dupers: troll them, cast them and jig them. It was said they were popular with

saltwater sport fishermen, and they even claimed the Super-Duper worked in streams, but I wasn't about to give up my prized box of Royal Coachman and White Wing dry flies!



The author's Luhr-Jensen Super-Duper, cherished for decades, stands as an important reminder of what is important in life. [REDACTED]

I know my love of rowing came from the many hours of oaring that @\$% aluminum tub around the lake. I rowed (faster boats!) in college and still have a rowing wherry in my backyard.

But more important was that my father and I talked. *Really* talked. And thus I came to understand about life's pressures and how they take their toll. He had bottled up his anger and frustration and powerlessness, and these toxins had such a deleterious effect. I realized how lucky and privileged I was just to still have him to row around.

I also made a promise to myself that I would never, ever, allow myself to bottle up those venomous poisons, and that changed my life. Forever. I stepped away from a lucrative job because I realized my boss was a duplicate of the one who had nearly destroyed my father. I passed on a promotion that would have put me under another similar abuser. Now my only real boss is She Who Must Be Obeyed, and we have an unruffled and perfect relationship (well, almost perfect).



Super-Duper lures come in a variety of sizes and patterns. *Courtesy Rapala*

And, so it is that I keep that original Super-Duper lure on a corner of my bulletin board, just as a reminder. I don't see it often (usually when dusting) but I know it's there, a memento of another world when I was so happy to row my father across a calm lake under puffy cumulus in an azure sky. I had my carefully rolled cowboy hat to shade my fair skin, a snap-pocket shirt with long sleeves rolled up, and a few treats from Mom: onion sandwiches, cold root beers, bags of M&Ms. The fare of great fishing warriors.

More important, that little corroded lure is a reminder not to let anything get to you. Don't bottle things up. Flick them off your shoulders like dust. Breathe deeply. Go fishing, and let the water and the sky and the wind work their magic.

Thank you, Super-Duper.