

I've just finished working up a draft for an article I'll submit for the March issue of *Texas Saltwater Fishing Magazine*. In the piece, I identify several common mistakes anglers make when fishing for speckled trout with lures. Below, I've listed the mistakes and briefly described how to avoid making them. For a more thorough discussion on the topic, pick up a copy of the magazine in March and read my feature.

1. **Reliance on a short list of favorite spots.** I know people who return to the same few spots virtually every time they go fishing, regardless of the conditions or season. Studying all available resources related to the bays and waterways will help one develop a more extensive catalog of spots, as will maintaining a detailed fishing log.
2. **Insistence on fishing from the boat.** Sometimes, fishing for trout with lures from the boat is more effective, even necessary. More often, wading is a better way to catch more and bigger fish. I believe many people who refuse to wade do so because they are afraid of what's in the water, or they don't have a clue about where to stop and get out. Acquiring all the necessary equipment, including ray guards, and working on identifying potentially productive spots, will help one catch more fish while wading.
3. **Wading too fast through an area.** Cliff Webb dubbed these people "greyhounds", while Jay Watkins called them "track stars". In the article, I've described them as a "fishing version of a road runner with a coyote on its tail". Regardless of what we call them, waders moving too fast through an area catch fewer fish than those who move slower and display a more focused effort.
4. **Wading and casting straight downwind.** Doing so causes them to cover a narrow corridor of water, rather than a wider swath around them. Shuffling sideways to the wind and fan-casting are far more effective than walking and casting downwind.
5. **Changing lures too much, without a sound plan in mind.** Many anglers seem intent on trying every kind and color of lure in the box every time out. Essentially, they are wasting time, mostly because they haven't identified what should work, given the conditions of the day. Using sources like my books, DVDs and blogs, and other kinds of reliable information disseminated by experts will help narrow the focus to a short list of lures. Those lures can then be deployed in a thoughtful manner for an appropriate amount of time before changing to another.
6. **Working each kind of lure the same way all the time.** All lures can be worked in various ways, by changing the speed, intensity, cadence and rhythm of the movements of the rod, and also through the use of the reel handle. The best anglers learn various ways to use each kind of lure, and they seek to identify when certain aspects of presentation are most useful. Lesser anglers fish in auto-pilot, doing the same things over and over again, even if no bites are coming.