

It's a

WAHOOOOOOOOO!



THE WAHOO is a fish whose name truly sums up the experience of having one on the line. WAHOOOOOOOO! Now that I got that out of my system I can tell you that this is one fish you want to catch and then as a taxidermist try to paint. Liquid holographic bars of silver blue and gray flash

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before your eyes as the fish bends relentlessly as the fight continues on the boat. Flashes of blues, greens,

purples and gold's all come and go as your eyes pass back and forth over the body of this great trophy of the sea. The Wahoo is just that... a true trophy sought after by serious anglers worldwide. The Wahoo is also a fish that is often misrepresented by many paint jobs. There are some artists out there who can bring out the essence in a fish and this one will require all your ability and talent.

This article is possible for us due to a great fishhead and student Mr. Tom Lyons. I typically would say Tom is from Rochester New Hampshire, but Tom recently moved to the Tampa Bay area of Florida. Tom called us up and scheduled a workshop for a Wahoo. I asked, "Tom, are you getting these in from clients in New Hampshire?" Tom said, "No, I just want to fit in and make the best possible impact for my move to Florida." What a cool move for a fellow fish head, great guy and talented gentleman. Tom chose a reproduction Wahoo from friend Mike Kirkhart of New Wave Taxidermy of Stuart Florida—Nothing better than beginning a project with the best foot (or fin) forward.

Painting the dead.

Think about it, we study dead fish more than we study live fish. We get them dead, we work on them dead. And for the most part it is hard to get great live photos of some species unless you personally catch them as both angler and photographer. As a teacher of all things fish, I spend a great deal of time instructing the art of reference and color interpretation. Even for me it is a challenge to get the best reference so I can teach how to paint in all the effects and signature characteristics that make each fish unique.

Who is the Wahoo?

The Wahoo, *Acanthocybium solandri* is one of the largest and fastest of the Scrumbrid fish (mackerel family member). This 60 plus MPH silver-sided prize is one of the fastest fish in the water as well one of the tastiest of the Mackerel family and a commercial fisheries delicacy. A worldwide opportunity with razor sharp teeth and a powerful ability to destroy fishing line

makes this fish a true trophy amongst sportfish. It's terrific that this fish can reach just over 8 feet in length, giving the avid angler a real opportunity for not only a thrill but also a great big fish on the end of a line.

How about a list of colors and some tools you may need before you get started.

Before you get your Wahoo reference together here is a simple list of a few items you'll want to help you get ready to paint this fun fish.

TOOLS

- Blue painter's tape
- A modeling tool to help with the tape or any thing else a good modeling tool can be used for.
- A soft cloth for buffing (you heard me correctly)
- A series of fine paintbrushes for hand painting
- Your trusty Badger airbrush or a suitable favorite.