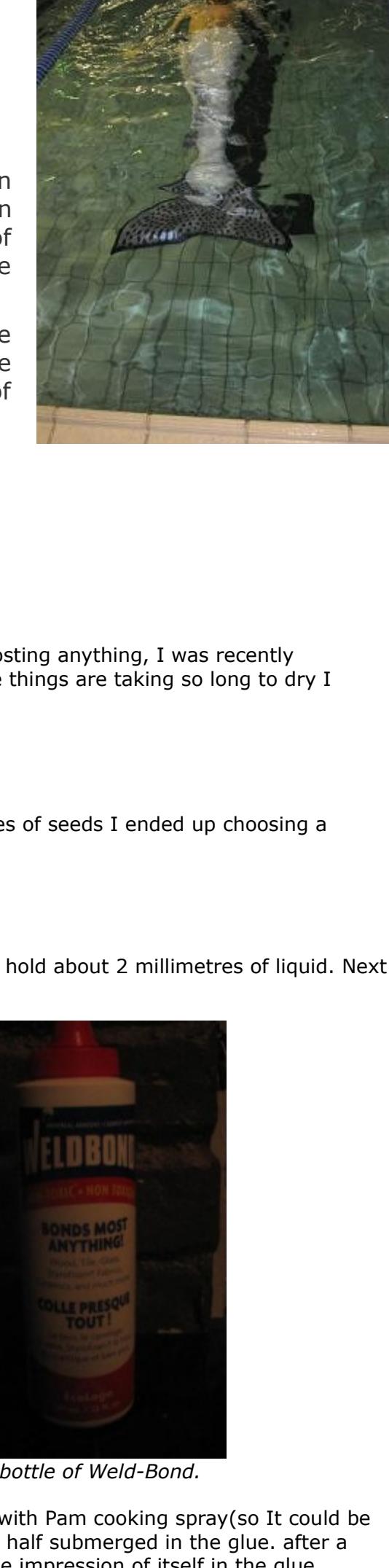


# How to make a Molded Silicone Tail

By Dr. SeaWeed



This tutorial was adapted from a thread on MerNetwork.com titled "[Andrew's Tailmaking Journey](#)". In this thread Dr. SeaWeed generously shared a huge amount of information he learned and discovered on his own while making a silicone merman tail.

Following a copy of the relevant posts in the thread are two appendices. Appendix A includes links to all youtube videos featured in the tutorial. Appendix B includes a list of all other links that appear in the tutorial.

## Part 1: The First Post in the Thread

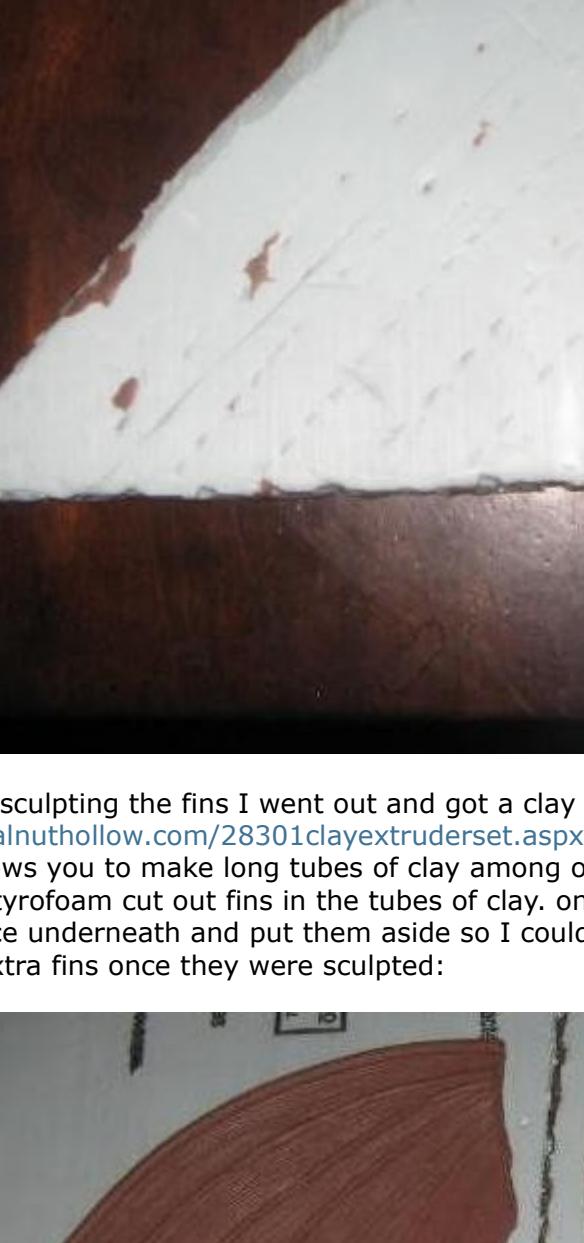
DR SEAWEED

Hello there fellow mers. While I still think its a little early for me to be posting anything, I was recently encouraged to post my progress so far on mold making etc. and because things are taking so long to dry I thought I might as well while I'm waiting 😊

I started out with some MonsterMakers Premium grade clay. link here: <http://www.monstermakers.com/product...ard-grade.html>

First I started on the scales. After some trial and error with different types of seeds I ended up choosing a roasted melon seed that I liked the size/shape of. Next I began creating a simple push mold of the single seed.

Basically, I took a styrofoam cup and ripped the sides off so it could only hold about 2 millimetres of liquid. Next I took some Weld-Bond (a type of glue found at the hardware store).



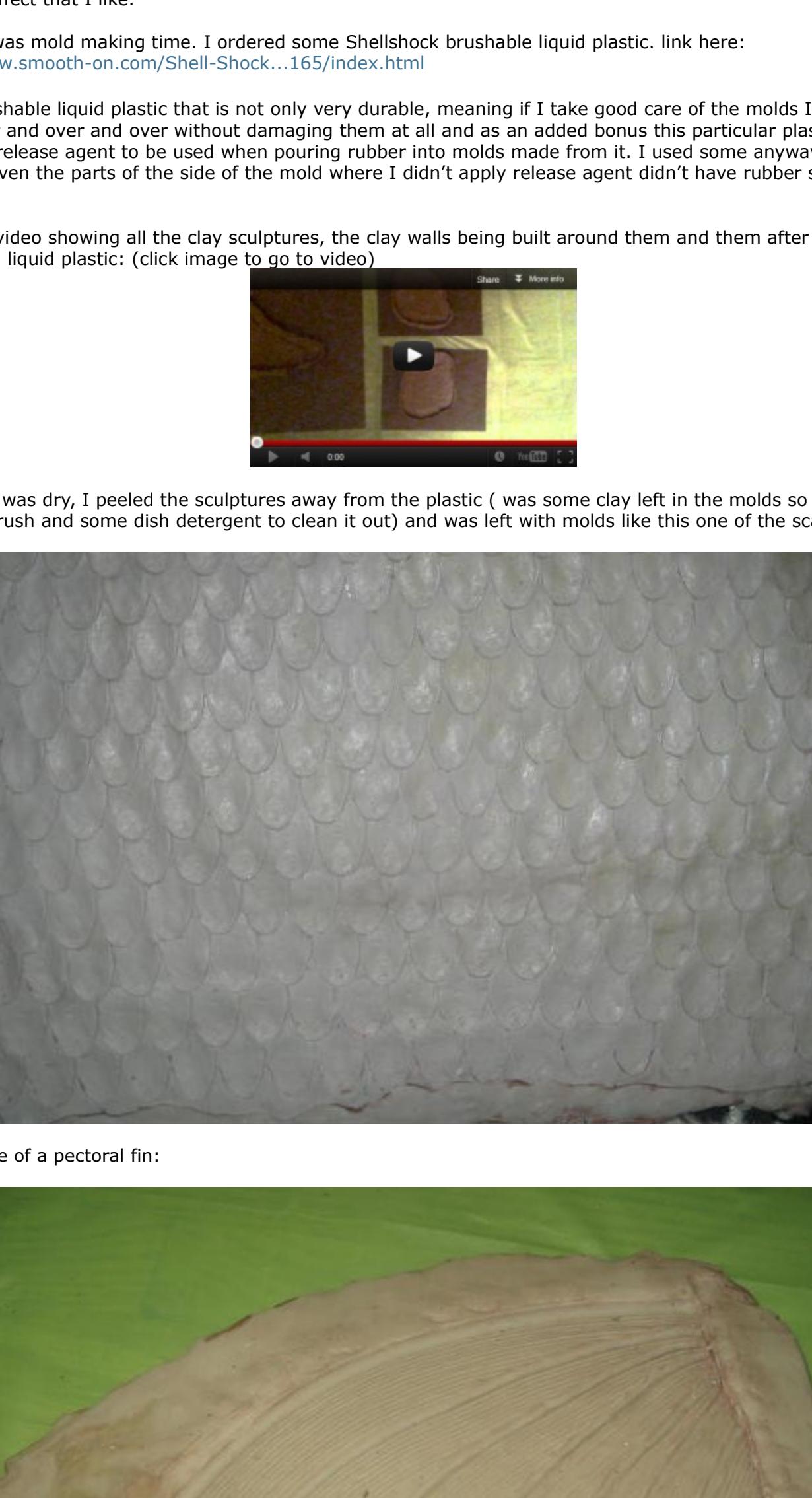
Left: a simple push mold of a single seed. Right: A bottle of Weld-Bond.

I filled the styrofoam cup piece with the 2 MM of glue, sprayed the seed with Pam cooking spray(so It could be easily removed), laid the roasted melon seed into the glue so it was only half submerged in the glue. after a couple days the glue was rock hard and I peeled out the seed, leaving the impression of itself in the glue.

With that finished I took out a large sheet of styrofoam and laid it down as a base for my scales. I began picking small pieces of the clay off and pushing them into the push mold I had made, then peeling out individual scales. I laid them in rows on the sheet of styrofoam until it was covered. This is a corner of that sheet of scales done in clay:

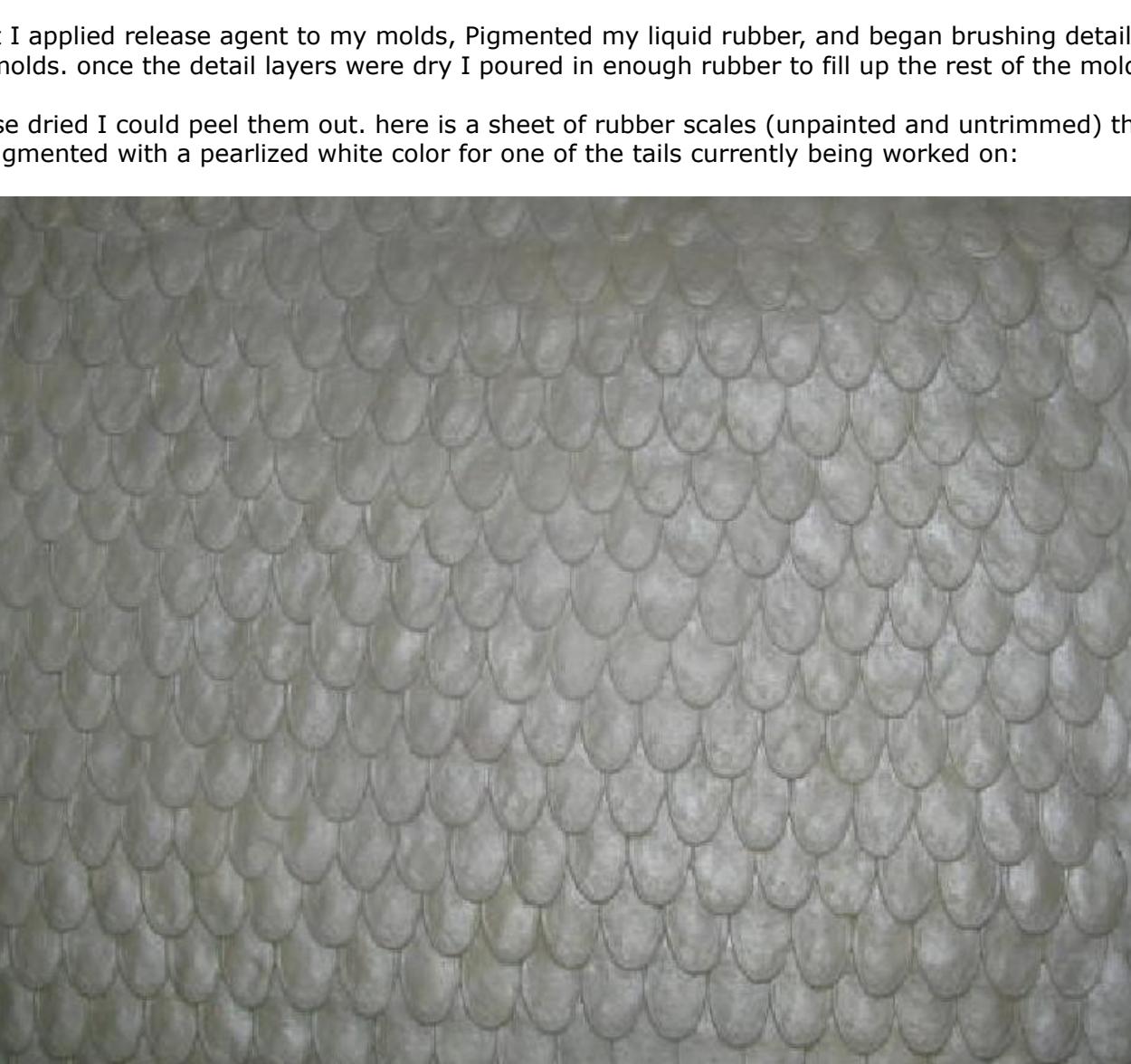


With those done, I began sculpting the extra fins. First I drew the shape of the fin I wanted on a piece of paper, as seen here for a pectoral fin:



To get started sculpting the fins I went out and got a clay extruder. Link here: <http://www.walnuthollow.com/2830/clayextruderset.aspx>

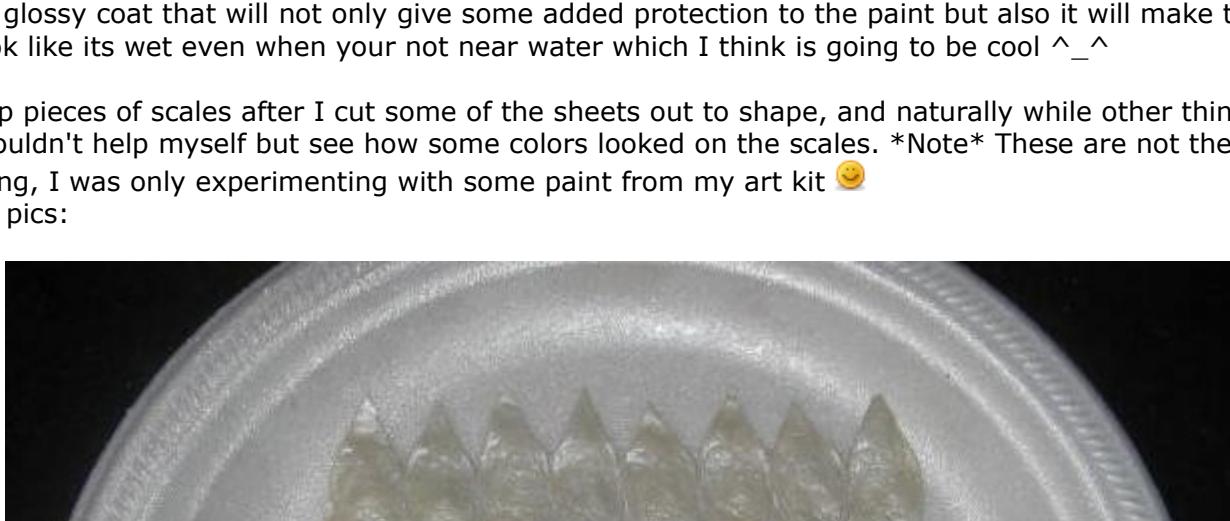
basically it allows you to make long tubes of clay among other shapes. I made a bunch of tubes and started covering my styrofoam cut out fins in the tubes of clay, once the extra fins were sculpted I slid them off of the styrofoam piece underneath and put them aside so I could build clay walls around them later. here's a picture of some of the extra fins once they were sculpted:



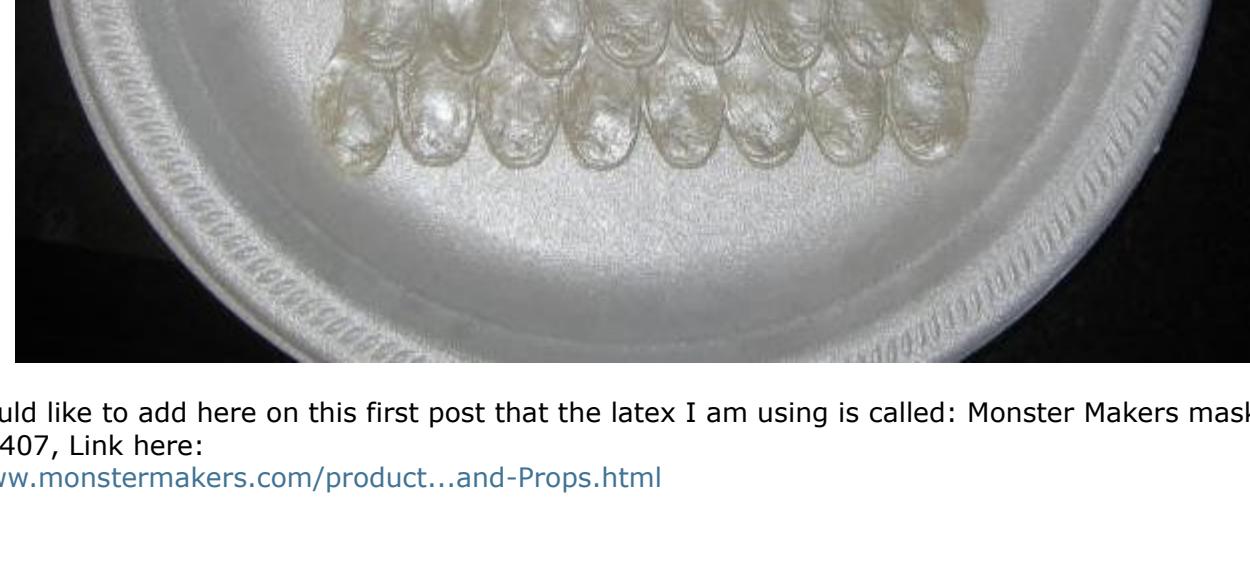
Next it was onto the Fluke. I took an image of a real fish fluke and went to blockposter.com (basically a website that allows you to take any image you want and print it out to whatever dimensions you choose. It prints the image off in pieces on several different pages and you can tape them together to put the image together) link to site here: <http://www.blockposters.com/>



After that was dry, I peeled the image onto yet another sheet of styrofoam and traced it. took the image away and began laying tubes of clay down again to fill in the tracing, when I was done I had this:



Or this one of a pectoral fin:



This was before the last bit of clay was scrubbed out.

After that I applied release agent to my molds, Pigmented my liquid rubber, and began brushing detail layers into the molds. once the detail layers were dry I poured in enough rubber to fill up the rest of the molds:



After those dried I could peel them out, here is a sheet of rubber scales (unpainted and untrimmed) they are slightly pigmented with a pearlized white color for one of the tails currently being worked on:



Its a clear glossy coat that will not only give some added protection to the paint but also it will make the tail always look like its wet even when your not near water which I think is going to be cool ^\_^

I had scrap pieces of scales after I cut some of the sheets out to shape, and naturally while other things were drying I couldn't help myself but see how some colors looked on the scales. \*Note\* These are not the colors I will be using, I was only experimenting with some paint from my art kit 😊



Details will be painted onto the pigmented rubber scales/fluke etc. after the detail layers are painted on I will coat the entire tail in Perma Wet. link here: <http://www.monstermakers.com/product...s-coating.html>

Its a clear glossy coat that will not only give some added protection to the paint but also it will make the tail always look like its wet even when your not near water which I think is going to be cool ^\_^\n



I had scrap pieces of scales after I cut some of the sheets out to shape, and naturally while other things were drying I couldn't help myself but see how some colors looked on the scales. \*Note\* These are not the colors I will be using, I was only experimenting with some paint from my art kit 😊

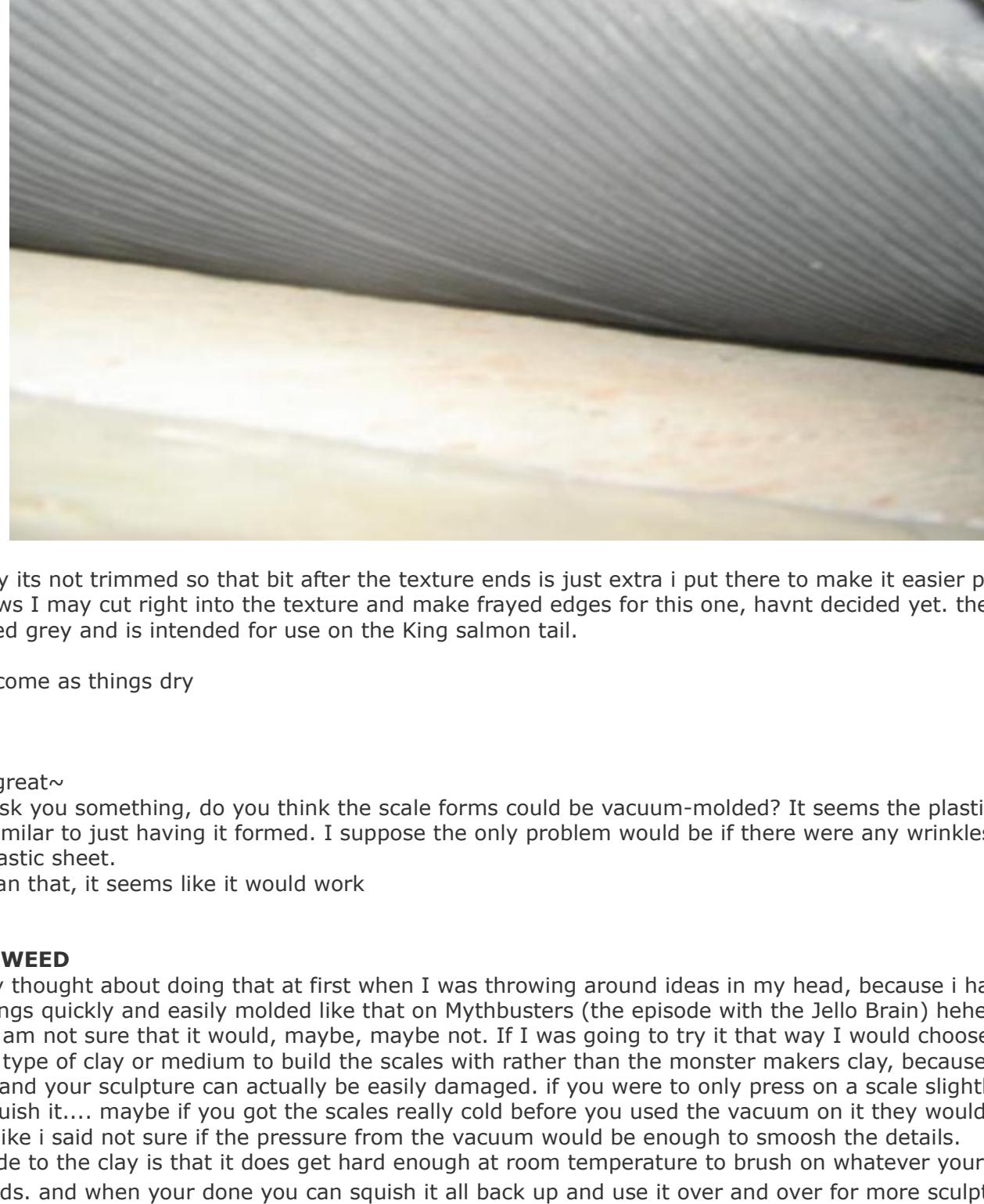


Also I would like to add here on this first post that the latex I am using is called: Monster Makers mask making latex RD-407, Link here: <http://www.monstermakers.com/product...and-Props.html>

## Part 2: The Thread Continues

### **DR. SEAWEED**

The side of the fluke I want to show at the moment still is wet in some of the deeper areas. But I couldn't help peeling one of the dry parts up a bit to peek. (there is some residual clay still in the nooks and crannies and you can see the rubber picking it out but that comes right off with a paper towel) This is a bit of the rubber fluke texture you see being peeled out:



Obviously its not trimmed so that bit after the texture ends is just extra i put there to make it easier pulling out. who knows I may cut right into the texture and make frayed edges for this one, havnt decided yet. the rubber is pigmented grey and is intended for use on the King salmon tail.

More to come as things dry

### **KANTI**

It looks great~

Let me ask you something, do you think the scale forms could be vacuum-molded? It seems the plastic process is very similar to just having it formed. I suppose the only problem would be if there were any wrinkles in the actual plastic sheet.

Other than that, it seems like it would work

### **DR. SEAWEED**

I actually thought about doing that at first when I was throwing around ideas in my head, because i had seen other things quickly and easily molded like that on Mythbusters (the episode with the Jello Brain) hehe. I honestly am not sure that it would, maybe, maybe not. If I was going to try it that way I would choose a different type of clay or medium to build the scales with rather than the monster makers clay, because it never hardens and your sculpture can actually be easily damaged. if you were to only press on a scale slightly then they would be ok though, like i said not sure if the pressure from the vacuum would be enough to smoosh the details.

The upside to the clay is that it does get hard enough at room temperature to brush on whatever your using for your molds. and when your done you can squish it all back up and use it over and over for more sculptures 😊

\*edit\* like you said though about the wrinkles, I have no idea how those things really work but it may be difficult at least to keep wrinkles out of everywhere .

### **KANTI**

Yea, I've actually seen many instances where if the plastic isn't heated up enough or is not put on evenly enough, it tends to form wrinkles that get sucked down onto the mold. It looks crummy and can ruin your piece. I've seen people make great molds with VERY intricate patterns, though, you just have to practice making it go down right.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

the clay will easily melt with only a small amount of heat even in your hands.... so i dunno if hot plastic would completely ruin the monster makers clay.

### **KANTI**

Oh yea, I forgot you mentioned that xD

You would have to get something that could withstand being vacuumed. Probably a harder clay or maybe even just the pumpkin seeds themselves.

I don't know, I've been considering purchasing a vacuum former recently anyway so I might try something out with it soon. But at least the idea you have done works so if anything that's a good fallback method :)

### **DR. SEAWEED**

@Kanti, Yeah , I looked at clays that hardened at first but I dont personally have an oven I could use to put something so large as a scale sheet in so that i could bake it and turn it hard, unless i made it smaller ... but i wanted it as big as possible for fewer castings hehe.

And as far as seeds Go I didnt have the patience to sit and pick through melon seeds to seperate them into ones that were all relatively the same size and shape, I tried at first but it ended up looking too crowded and was hard to place them because of the bottom half of the seed , unless u remove the bottom half of them all. thats why when i made the push mold of the single melon seed I only pressed it into the glue halfway so i would have the detail on one side and be flat on the opposite side so it was easier to place without looking too crowded.

### **KANTI**

Ohh I see.

I didn't really account for the fact that the seeds could come in many different sizes.

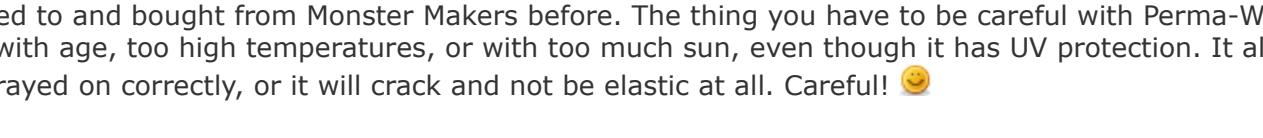
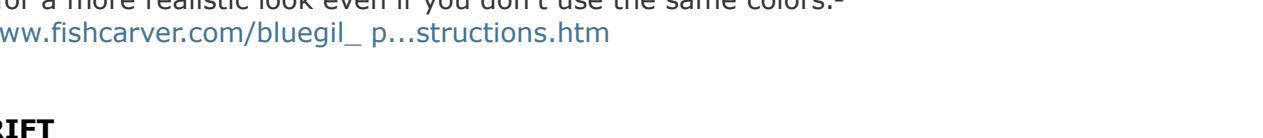
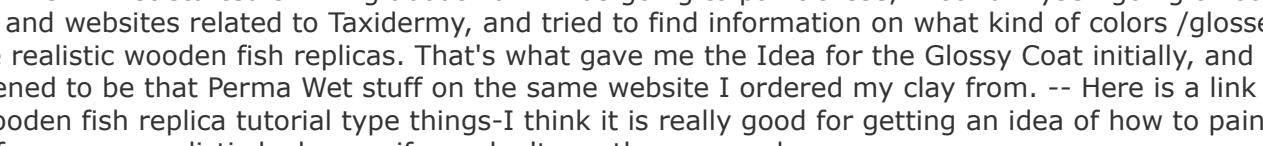
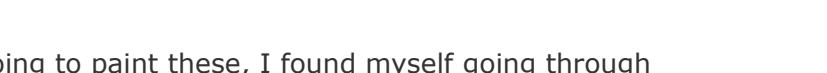
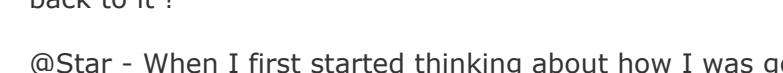
I guess that would be annoying after a while lol.

Either way, if you're willing to sell me a sheet of your latex scales when/if I get the vacuum former, I'll be glad to make some thin plastic stencils for you.

And, honestly, I'd like to make some myself xD

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Finally pulled out one side of the fluke texture today... keep in mind these are untrimmed (the extra rubber after the texture ends hasn't been cut off yet still debating whether or not to fray the edges.) and no details have been painted on, no metallic colors or shiny glosses yet. just pigmented rubber, and again this one is grey as a base because its going to end up on a salmon tail.



### **DR. SEAWEED**

I would expect a tail ( Perma-Wet or not) to get damaged in some way if you left it in the sun or somewhere too hot like in the car on a blistering day. that being said I appreciate your insight into the matter Spindrift and will be careful.

### **SPINDRIFT**

I've talked to and bought from Monster Makers before. The thing you have to be careful with Perma-Wet is that it yellows with age, too high temperatures, or with too much sun, even though it has UV protection. It also needs to be sprayed on correctly, or it will crack and not be elastic at all. Careful! 😊

### **DR. SEAWEED**

I would expect a tail ( Perma-Wet or not) to get damaged in some way if you left it in the sun or somewhere too hot like in the car on a blistering day. that being said I appreciate your insight into the matter Spindrift and will be careful.

### **Part 3: A Mini-Tutorial on Fin Sculpting**

#### **DR. SEAWEED**

Ok so here is my mini-tutorial on how I did my fin sculpting... I know a pro sculptor would probably laugh at my method, but it works just fine for the way I am doing things. I only used 1 size of tubing as I'm busy and tried to crank this out quickly.. so here we go:

Materials:  
-paper & pen  
-styrofoam sheet  
-clay  
-Extruder  
-Clay/Pasta machine  
-scissors  
-knife  
-fork

Step#1: Get your fluke shape drawn on a piece of paper and cut it out like this:

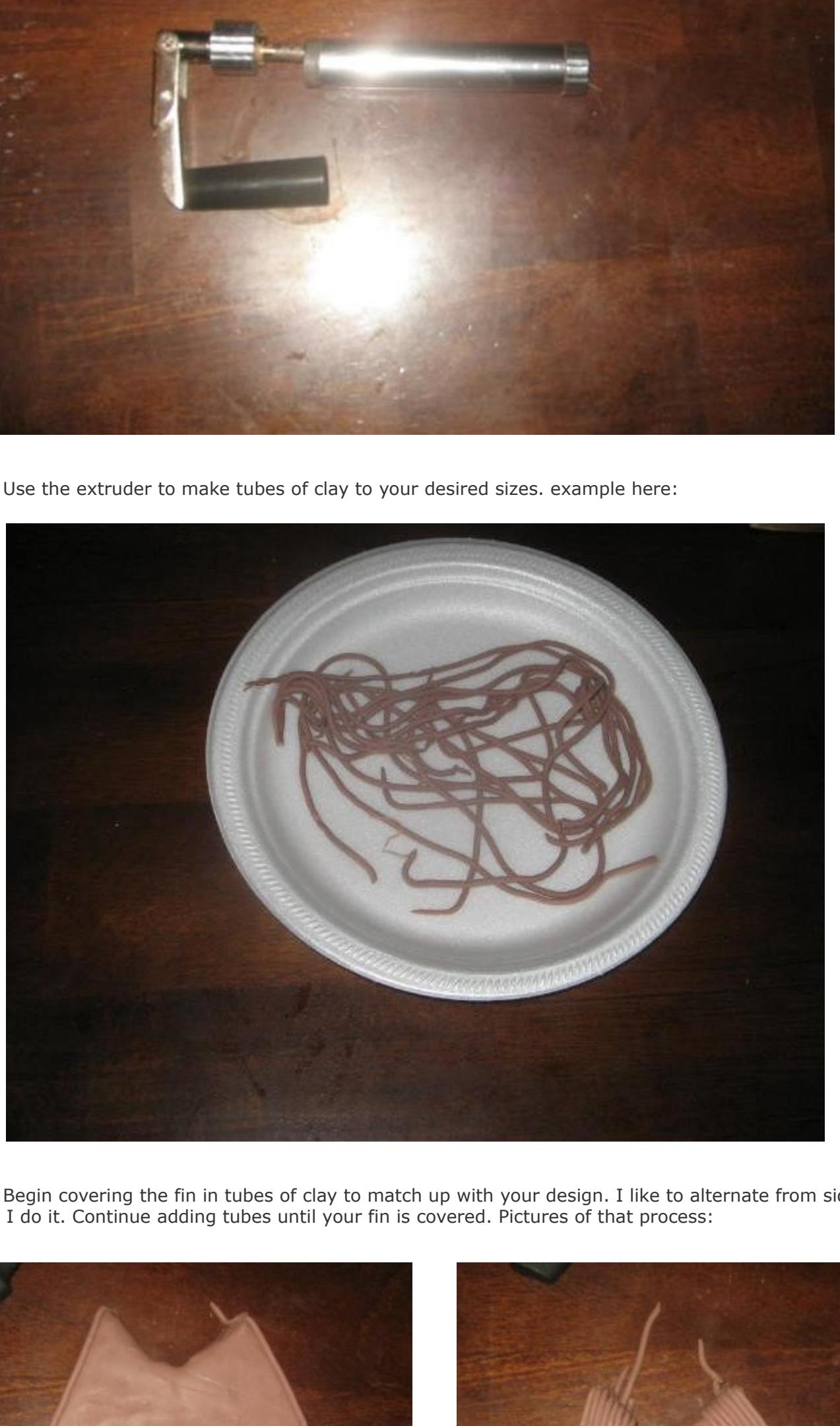


Step#2: Lay your drawing onto your sheet of styrofoam and use a fork to poke holes through the paper and into the styrofoam along the lines of your drawing, like this:

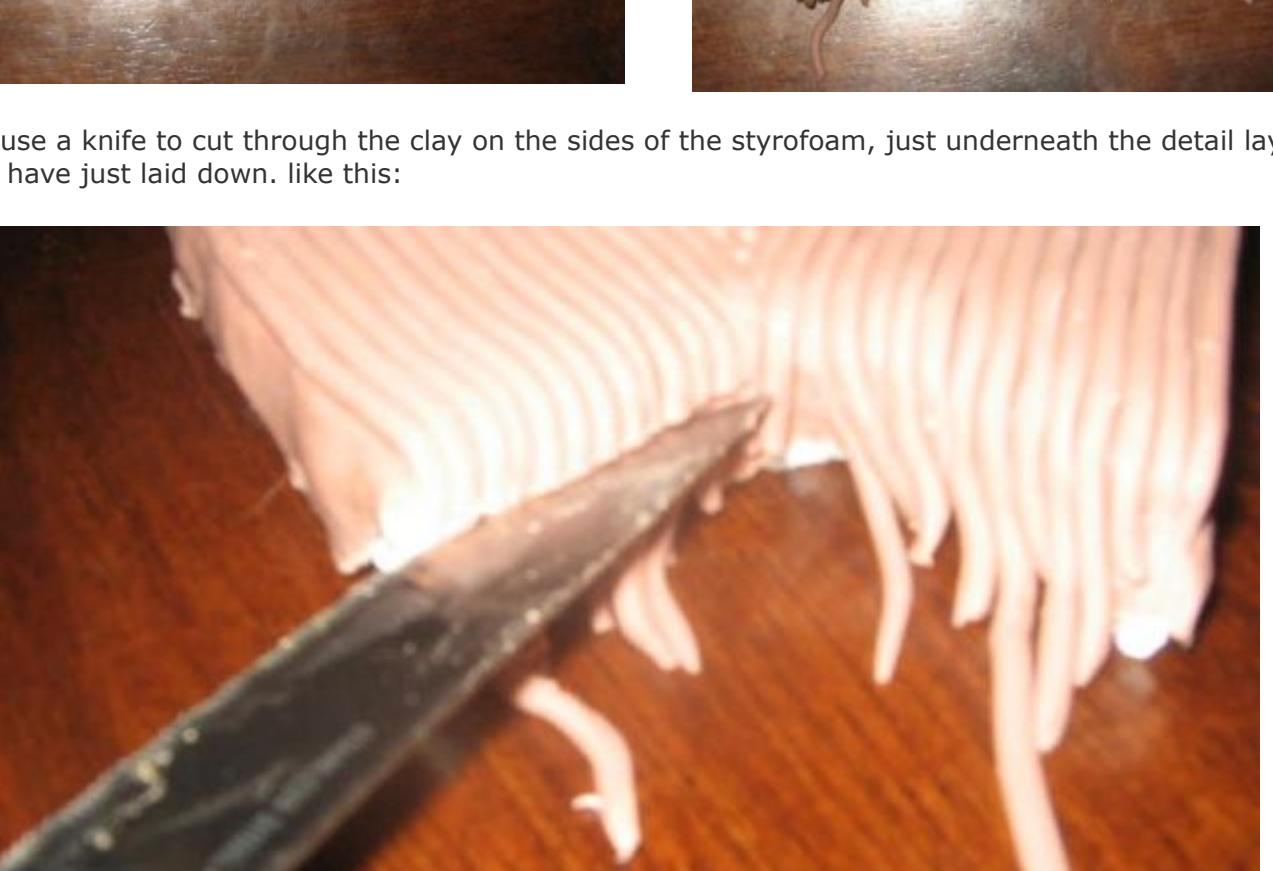


Step#3: Take the drawing away and you will be left with holes showing your design on the styrofoam sheet.

Step#4: Use the holes in the styrofoam as a guide and cut out your fin shape, like this:



Step#5: Get out a Clay/Pasta machine like this one:



(it allows you to make flat sheets of clay)

Step#6: Make some sheets of clay with your pasta machine like this:



Step#7: Use the sheets of clay to cover your styrofoam cut out fin like this:



(you will have to use more than one sheet so pinch the seams together and smooth them out)

Step#8: Cut off the extra clay until you are left with this:



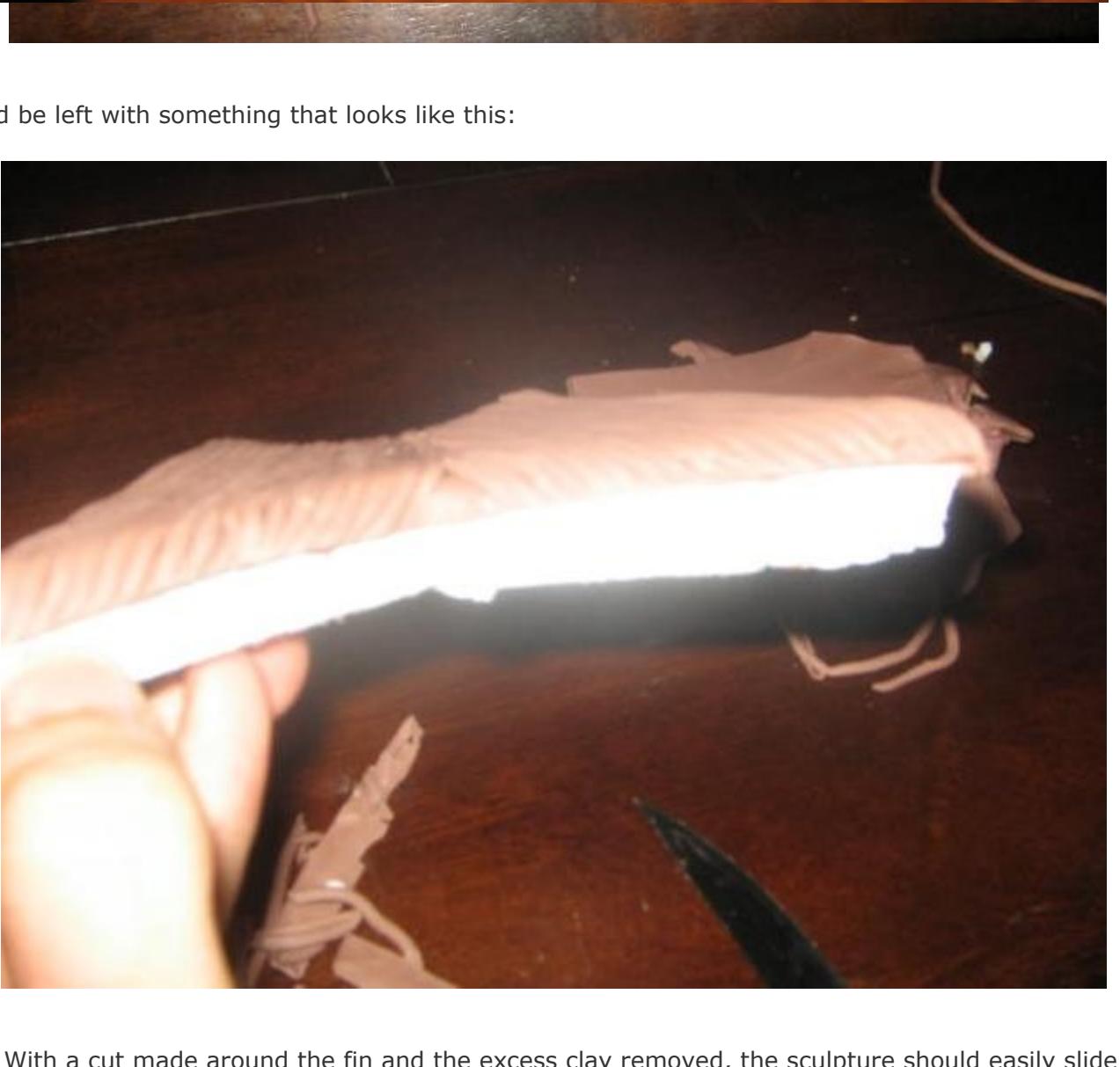
You should be left with something that looks like this:



Step#9: Take out your Clay extruder, like this one:



Step#10: Use the extruder to make tubes of clay to your desired sizes, example here:



Step#11: Begin covering the fin in tubes of clay to match up with your design. I like to alternate from side to side when I do it. Continue adding tubes until your fin is covered. Pictures of that process:



Step#12: use a knife to cut through the clay on the sides of the styrofoam, just underneath the detail layer of tubes you have just laid down. like this:



You should be left with something that looks like this:



Step#13: With a cut made around the fin and the excess clay removed, the sculpture should easily slide off of the styrofoam like this:



and then onto the clay walls etc like in the video.

I hope this clears up any questions on how exactly I did the sculpting portion of the project but if anyone isn't clear on something still, feel free to ask me.

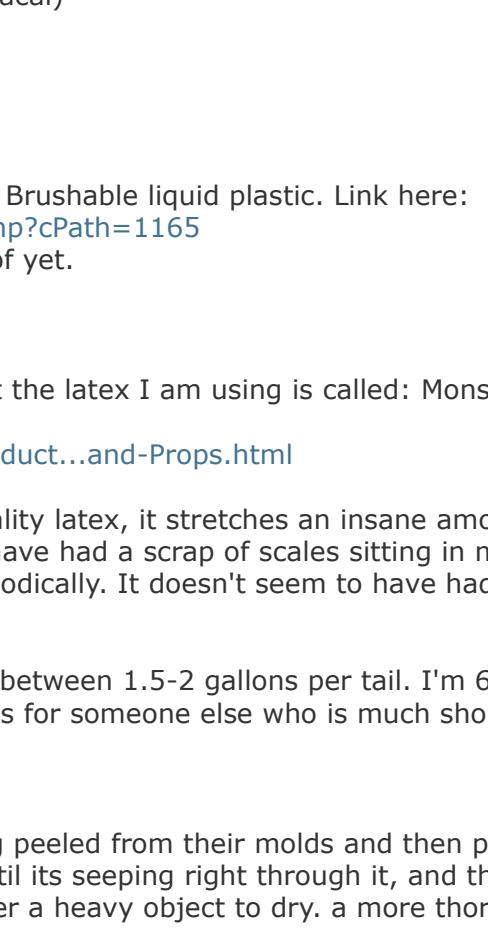
\*\*Side Note\*\*  
I applied the Perma-Wet onto some of the scales and honestly I cannot see any difference on the ones I did apply it to compared to the ones I did not. So I will do some more playing around with it but it's looking like I may have to just leave that part of the process out for now. I still think it was a fabulous idea though!

\*\*Also, I tossed a couple scale scraps into my heavily chlorinated pool. will leave them in there a couple days and do before and after pics to make sure they hold up.

## Part 4: The Thread Continues

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Threw this video together to show a sheet of scales being taken out of the mold:



### **STAR**

What material are you using for your mother mold? I am planning on using the ultracal-30 that is sitting in my back room right now but I am a little nervous about using it as I have not used it before and requires some exact measuring by weight. I think I have it figured out. But I was wondering what yours is made out of. It looks nice and clean. Also did you have any trouble with undercuts or did you just smooth those out before you molded your scales?

(I am getting closer to getting mine molded. I just have to wait until the polyurethane dries in 24 hours and then get the nerve up to mix the ultracal)

Happy casting! ☺

### **DR. SEAWEED**

The mold is made out of Shell Shock Brushable liquid plastic. Link here:

<http://www.smooth-on.com/index.php?cPath=1165>

And no problems with undercuts as of yet.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Not sure how I left this detail out but the latex I am using is called: Monster Makers mask making latex RD-407. Link here:

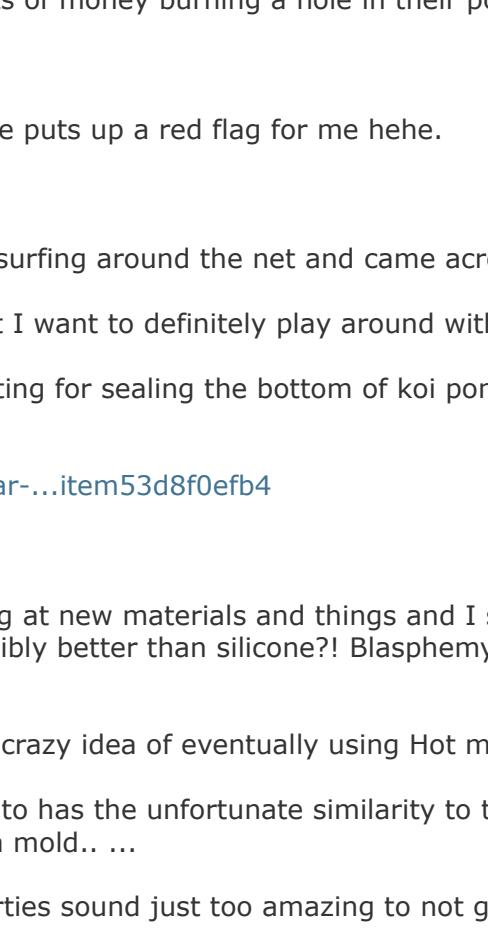
<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...and-Props.html>

So far it seems like a really good quality latex, it stretches an insane amount, and then reverts right back to its original shape. And on top of that I have had a scrap of scales sitting in my chlorine pool for several days now and have taken it out to check it periodically. It doesn't seem to have had any degradation and still stretches just like before.

With the method I am using it takes between 1.5-2 gallons per tail. I'm 6'1 so I needed a lot of scale sheets for myself, obviously it may be much less for someone else who is much shorter.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Put together a video of the fins being peeled from their molds and then put together. Basically a piece of neoprene is soaked in liquid latex until its seeping right through it, and then the 2 texture pieces are pressed onto the neoprene and then left under a heavy object to dry. a more thorough explanation/visual in the video here:



### **\*\*Note\*\***

It is important that the fins are fused to the neoprene soon after demolding before they delaminate, basically while they are dry enough to demold but still very sticky. If they do delaminate not all is lost you can just rough up the backside of the latex with a piece of sandpaper and it should help it stick better.

### **WINGED MERMAID**

Progress is looking awesome! Although I'd like to suggest something. I know you said you'd put in more latex to cover up the seam of the neoprene showing between the fins. What if you cut out the neoprene to shape then took a little off all around the outer edge? Then the fins would adhere mostly to the neoprene, but around the edges you could adhere them straight to each other instead of the neoprene so it would look more seamless.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

That's a great idea Winged mermaid, thank you for the suggestion, You live, you learn right? ☺

### **DR. SEAWEED**

I wanted to show a little stretching test I did with some scales I had taken out of the pool. These particular ones are just white regular latex scales, and they haven't been fused to neoprene yet (which will take away some stretch but add some tear strength combined with the extra latex used to fuse it to the neoprene.) anyways here's the video :



### **STAR**

Um yeah! That stretch test just sold me on the RD407. I was looking into some others (mostly silicone) but it is so expensive! Over \$150 a gallon! But this stuff is only \$44 a gallon! Whoop!!! Bonus!!! Thank you for supplying that stretch and chlorine test. You took a leap with this stuff and it was a good jump! As soon as I get paid from a gig I did last week, I am taking my alex back to the store and getting some of this stuff! ☺ Thank you so much for sharing! It is taking forever for me to get my scales moulded. I think I am just going to start my thread ahead of time. LOL. Thanks again!!!! I will be sure to reference you in my thread so people know where I got my info from! ☺

### **STAR**

Dr. SeaWeed, I am guessing you are doing a two part mould, placing the monofin into the mould and then injecting the mould so it will adhere to the monofin itself? When you said injection I was thinking of doing it this way, but I don't have a fluke buck yet so I am not sure if I will be able to do it. Is this what you are thinking?

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Nope not a two part mold, I was talking about injection molding because the rubber footpockets of the monofin are injection molded onto the stiff blade. I know a lot of monofins have metal bolts etc in them but I would like to avoid that, so at the part of the blade where the footpockets go, holes are drilled so the rubber can in a way "bolt" itself in there.

### **STAR**

Ah I see what you are saying. Well eventually (crosses fingers) I will be able to show you what I am talking about with this. I thought you were talking about the fins themselves rather than the monofin. (That is a really cool idea by the way) I was thinking for my tail to create a two part mold for my fluke and then inserting the monofin inside the mold and then pour the latex around it so it is fused into the fluke itself. What do you think? ☺

### **DR. SEAWEED**

That is also a great idea, I believe a couple tail makers do that already. I got some great tips on an SPFX site called SPFX lab from a kind man I forgot his name though, it was specifically about doing that. You should drill holes in strategic places on your fin before you do what you are saying. That way you will create a seal throughout the entire thing.

### **STAR**

Oh! Thanks! ☺ I wouldn't have thought of that! SPFX Lab... I will have to go check that out! ☺ Thank you again

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Hmm seems I got the name wrong, sorry! this is the right one:

<http://www.thefeffectslab.com/>

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Star, you were talking about how the silicone is 150\$ plus a gallon and it makes me think, what's the major wow factor of silicone besides its stretch? that it can be made transparent right? Well I have not bought or tested any of this stuff but I wanted to point it out to the community in case anyone else felt like taking a plunge testwise, otherwise im sure I will end up trying it out at some point down the line.

Its liquid latex but it cures crystal clear and is 95\$ a gallon, anyways here's the link:

<http://www.graftobian.com/commerce/p...578&catId=2158>

### **WINGED MERMAID**

Wow, that's expensive! Usually casting latex is around \$40-\$50 a gallon. Then again it's not clear.

With silicone like it's a lot more: stretchy, durable, long lasting. Latex tails break down over time. Silicone tails take a LOT longer and can take a lot more abuse than latex in general. Plus it's far more realistic feeling and won't cause allergies to come up over time and exposure.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Yeah I agree with you, and I'm sure I will end up with a silicone line eventually but this RD-407 stuff seems good enough to start out with ☺ and mistakes are much less costly ☺

I have the crazy idea to eventually try to use Hot melt Plastisols..... which are transparent as well, and are 40\$ a gallon but they have to be heated to 350 degrees to pour into a mold. but I worked with really hot liquid sugar pouring into molds before... so I dunno I maybe ☺ the plastisols can have shiny foils etc embedded into them as well without the layers peeling away, and they are used in making rubber faux fish for lures! its actually a type of vinyl or plastic I guess but it seems exactly like rubber to me., so you know it can handle being in water

### **STAR**

Oops! I thought it was silicone but it is a urethane called Clear flex. It is amazingly clear but it is \$250 a gallon found here. Though it says it is not for home use. Just thought I would throw it out there in case someone had experience with this stuff and has lots of money burning a hole in their pocket .

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Yeah I saw that, the not for home use puts up a red flag for me hehe.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Sorry nothing new today , but I was surfing around the net and came across something i think is very interesting.

not for trying right now of course but I want to definitely play around with it in the future... Herco fish pond coating.

Its a brushable neoprene rubber coating for sealing the bottom of koi ponds etc. and comes in black, grey, clear, or white.

anyhoo here's the link:

<http://www.ebay.com/itm/1-Gal-Clear...item53d8f0efb4>

### **DR. SEAWEED**

I am always searching around looking at new materials and things and I stumbled onto yet another material that I think is very interesting ! possibly better than silicone? Blasphemy i know i know but the description sounds pretty amazing.

Earlier in the thread I mentioned my crazy idea of eventually using Hot melt Plastisols for tail making at some point in the future....

Well this next material I stumbled onto has the unfortunate similarity to the plastisols, that it has to be heated 350 degrees in order to pour it into a mold. ...

However some of the physical properties sound just too amazing to not give it a second look....

-Clear rubber.

-2800% stretch with complete memory return as opposed to dragonskin silicone with 1000%.

-High tear strength beyond any silicone.

-140\$ for 10 pounds of it.

Its called Elastigel, here is a little part of the description put on the product:

Elastigel is one of the most lifelike, synthetic polymer gel. Elastigel stretches up to 2800% with complete memory return and has a super high tear strength that is beyond anything we have seen in silicone.

Here's a link:

<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...-polymelt.html>

Anyways just another thing I thought I would point out to everyone. I really hope to end up using this stuff someday !

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Hey guys, sorry I have been MIA , having too much fun at with family, and extended my trip. Out in the middle of nowhere with dial up so I havent online much at all. anyways, when I went to do my swim video, I am

wondering about the strength test from a previous video, that it might just stretch or slip off one's feet. Also, how do the small holes in the lexan, filled with silicone hold up? Did you need to file down and round out the edges to prevent ripping?

### **DR. SEAWEED**

changed my painting method a little and wanted to share with everyone. I'm using

<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...aint-base.html>

In the meantime here are some clips I put together of what the bare skeleton of a tail looks like (the neoprene/monofin)



### **MERMAID LORELEI**

Wow! How much does that bend and does it have any of the same cracking and snapping problems that some homemade monofins do? It looks perfect as long as it wouldn't crack and cause jagged edges that could tear the silicone (or flesh).

### **DR. SEAWEED**

@Mermaid Lorelei -That monofin in the video is for my tail, I wanted it a little more stiff so I went with 3/16" thickness, it still bends but its much stiffer than say a freediving fin.. personally I don't do any of that, I am

more interested in being able to exert a lot of energy and sprint around underwater. but I can just use different thicknesses for peoples preferences.

As for the jagged edges cutting the silicon or flesh I dont think lexan does that? I think that's only an issue with acrylic or similar materials. still will be testing things for a while so plenty of time to make that sure nothing like that happens anyways.

I have some backup plans just in case this one didn't work out anyways but I'm confident this is going to be ok.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Speaking of backup plans..... I am very tempted to experiment with this stuff at some point.:)

[http://www.poltek.com/cart/index.php...category\\_id=263](http://www.poltek.com/cart/index.php...category_id=263)

could possibly make the entire fluke in one piece(minus the footpockets) out of it and just paint it. I know some people like really floppy flukes but that's just not my preference.

### **MERMAID LORELEI**

I personally prefer a more flexible, life-like fluke, which is why I was curious about the flexibility of the lexan. It does sound like it will work just as you want it to though, which is wonderful!

As for the polyflex, it's very interesting looking stuff. Who knows, maybe it would make a great tail material. It certainly seems like it would reduce the amount of knee and ankle creases just because it looks like stiffer stuff.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

If you get thinner lexan its really really flexible. like I said its just a matter of preference. when I get pictures taken and I'm laying on my stomach with my tail up in the air , I don't like how some tails the 2 points of the fluke fold over on themselves so that's why I went with the thicker stuff as well...

As for the polyflex, I don't think it would be suitable for scales, I meant making the entire fluke out of it since its stiff enough to offer propulsion but still has a slight flex to it. so I'm thinking there wouldn't be a need for a monofin inside that stuff at all.

### **DR. SEAWEED**

Yeah so I managed to get a somewhat coherent explanation of what I did to make the monofin edited. I am severely sleep deprived so I will keep it short for now and head off for a power nap, here is the video:



### **STAR**

Um yeah! That stretch test just sold me on the RD407. I was looking into some others (mostly silicone) but it is so expensive! Over \$150 a gallon! But this stuff is only \$44 a gallon! Whoop!!! Bonus!!! Thank you for supplying that stretch and chlorine test. You took a leap with this stuff and it was a good jump! As soon as I get paid from a gig I did last week, I am taking my alex back to the store and getting some of this stuff! ☺ Thank you so much for sharing! It is taking forever for me to get my scales moulded. I think I am just going to start my thread ahead of time. LOL. Thanks again!!!! I will be sure to reference you in my thread so people know where I got my info from! ☺

### **STAR**

Dr. SeaWeed what paint/pigment do you use if you don't mind me asking ☺

### **DR. SEAWEED**

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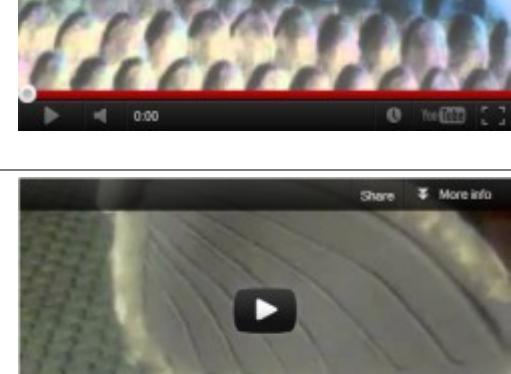
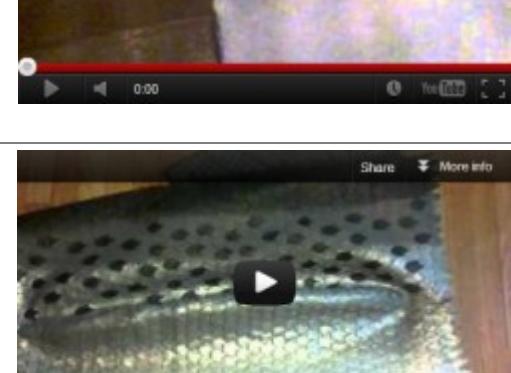
### **DR. SEAWEED**

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### **DR. SEAWEED**

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## Appendix A: All of the Video Clips That Appear in This Guide

<u>Molding-</u> (4:00)	
<u>Peeling out scales-</u> (2:20)	
<u>Fin Construction-</u> (7:48)	
<u>Scale Stretch test-</u> (1:44)	
<u>Start of monofin-</u> (2:11)	
<u>Monofin construction</u> (this process has been modified and will be updated eventually)- (10:36)	
<u>The bare skeleton of a tail-</u> (1:18)	
<u>Teaser vid of the salmon tail #1-</u> (0:28)	
<u>Teaser vid of the salmon tail #2-</u> (0:52)	
<u>Teaser vid of the salmon tail #3-</u> (1:23)	
<u>Swimming in the tail-</u> (0:14)	
<u>Making the new push mold-</u> (3:06)	
<u>The "push mold" after the clay scales are removed-</u> (0:41)	
<u>Molding a starfish-</u> (0:32)	

## Appendix B: All of the Links That Appear in This Guide

I started out with some MonsterMakers Premium grade clay. link here:

<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...ard-grade-html>

To get started sculpting the fins I went out and got a clay extruder. Link here:

<http://www.walnuthollow.com/28301clayextruderset.aspx>

I took an image of a real fish fluke and went to blockposter.com (basically a website that allows you to take any image you want and print it out to whatever dimensions you choose. It prints the image off in pieces on several different pages and you can tape them together to put the image together) link to site here:

<http://www.blockposters.com/>

Finally it was mold making time. I ordered some Shellshock brushable liquid plastic. link here:

<http://www.smooth-on.com/Shell-Shock...165/index.html>

Details will be painted onto the pigmented rubber scales/fluke etc. after the details are painted on I will coat the entire tail in Perma Wet. link here:

<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...s-coating.html>

Also I would like to add here on this first post that the latex I am using is called: Monster Makers mask making latex RD-407, Link here:

<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...and-Props.html>

Here is a link to one of those wooden fish replica tutorial type things-I think it is really good for getting an idea of how to paint scales in general for a more realistic look even if you don't use the same colors.-

[http://www.fishcarver.com/bluegil\\_p...structions.htm](http://www.fishcarver.com/bluegil_p...structions.htm)

Its liquid latex but it cures crystal clear and is 95\$ a gallon. anyways here's the link:

<http://www.graftobian.com/commerce/p...578&catId=2158>

(Posted by Star) Oops! I thought it was silicone but it is a urethane called Clear flex. It is amazingly clear but it is \$250 a gallon found here:

[http://www.smooth-on.com/Urethane-Rubber-an/c6\\_1117\\_1153/index.html](http://www.smooth-on.com/Urethane-Rubber-an/c6_1117_1153/index.html)

I want to definitely play around with it in the future... Herco fish pond coating. Its a brushable neoprene rubber coating for sealing the bottom of koi ponds etc. and comes in black, grey, clear, or white.

<http://www.ebay.com/itm/1-Gal-Clear-...item53d8f0efb4>

Elastigel is one of the most lifelike, synthetic flesh compounds to come along in a great while. This is actually a water clear, hot melt, elastomeric polymer gel. Elastigel stretches up to 2800% with complete memory return and has a super high tear strength that is beyond anything we have seen in silicone.

<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...-polymelt.html>

I am very tempted to experiment with this stuff at some point:

[http://www.polytek.com/cart/index.ph...ategory\\_id=263](http://www.polytek.com/cart/index.ph...ategory_id=263)

Changed my painting method a little and wanted to share with everyone. I'm using:

<http://www.monstermakers.com/product...aint-base.html>