



California Department of Fish and Game
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2010 Salmon Seasons Determined for California

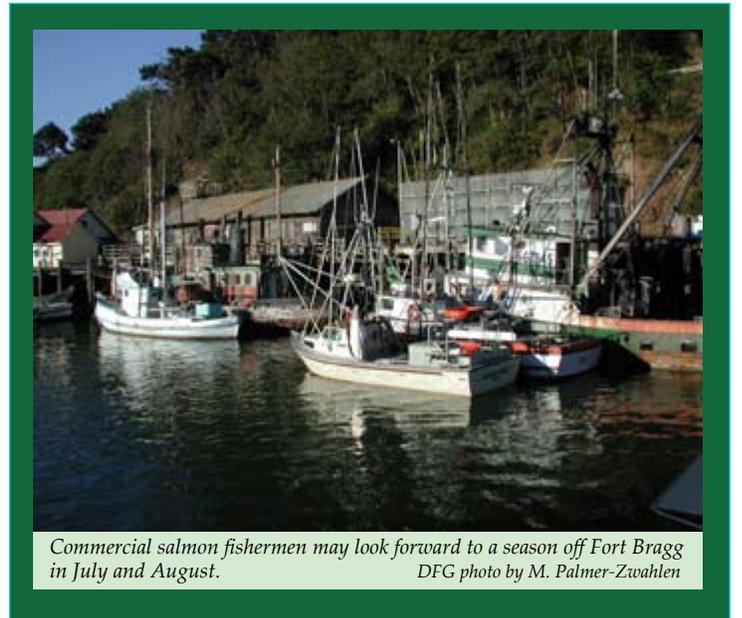
by Mary Patyten, Research Writer

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) and the California Fish and Game Commission adopted recreational and commercial salmon fishing seasons this past April for ocean waters along the California coast. According to the PFMC, the ocean abundance index forecast for Sacramento River fall Chinook in 2010 is 245,500 adults, which is expected to meet the spawner escapement goal of 180,000 adults while providing approximately 65,000 fish for limited recreational and commercial fisheries.

The 2010 recreational salmon season for ocean waters off California is as follows:

- Oregon border to Horse Mt. (the Klamath Management Zone) will be open from May 29 through

"Salmon" continued on page 2



Commercial salmon fishermen may look forward to a season off Fort Bragg in July and August.
 DFG photo by M. Palmer-Zwahlen

DFG Reviews First Half-Season of Recreational Lobster Report Cards

by Travis Buck, Marine Biologist

The recreational fishery for California spiny lobster spans roughly five coastal counties in southern California, from Point Conception south to the U.S.-Mexico border. Until recently, relatively little information has been available on the catch and effort in the recreational fishery, yet this information is needed to assess the health of the spiny lobster population.

To fill the recreational information gap, the Fish and Game Commission required recreational lobster fishermen to fill out lobster report cards starting with the 2008/2009 fishing season. The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Invertebrate Management Project has released

a preliminary review of the data from the lobster report cards for the first half of the 2008/2009 recreational lobster fishing season (October, November and December 2008).

Report cards, like fishing licenses, are issued for a calendar year, so the 2008 lobster report cards only covered the first half of the 2008/2009 season. The 2009 lobster report cards, which cover the second half of the 2008/2009 season and the first half of the 2009/2010 season, were not due back to the DFG until January 31, 2010. Thus the January, February, and March 2009 data (the second half of the 2008/2009 season) will not be analyzed until later in 2010. Some early estimates presented here may change as data from the second half of the 2008/2009 season is incorporated into this ongoing review.

Approximately 27,500 fishermen bought lobster report cards in 2008 (compared to approximately 31,000 cards sold in 2009). A total of about 5,800 report cards for 2008 were returned to the DFG, a return rate of 21 percent. This return rate is statistically large enough to generate estimates on the total catch, total effort (number of

"Lobster" continued on page 8

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Points of Reference for the Ocean Salmon Fishery



"Salmon" continued from page 1

DFG

The PFMC also set limited commercial seasons off some areas of the California coast. The 2010 commercial salmon season for ocean waters off California is as follows:

Horse Mt. to Pt. Arena is open:

- July 1 through July 4, and July 8 through July 11
- July 15 through the earlier of July 29 or an 18,000 Chinook quota
- Aug. 1 through the earlier of Aug. 31 or a 9,375 Chinook pre-season quota
- All fish must be offloaded within the open area and within 24 hours of any closure during the quotas. Chinook remaining from the July quota may be transferred to the August quota on a fishery-impact equivalent basis.

Pt. Arena to the U.S.-Mexico border is open:

- July 1 through July 4, and July 8 through July 11.

Sept. 6. Minimum size is 24 inches total length.

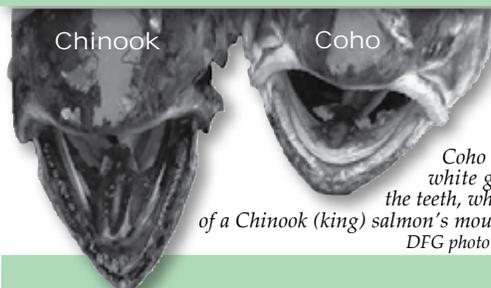
- Horse Mt to Pt Arena will remain open through Sept. 6. Minimum size is 24 in. total length beginning May 1.
- Pt. Arena to the United States/Mexico border is open through Sept. 6. From May 1 through Sept. 6, fishing will be allowed only from Thursday through Monday (closed Tuesday and Wednesday each week). Minimum size is 24 in. total length beginning May 1.

The statewide daily bag and possession limit is two salmon per day, for all species except coho. The retention of coho salmon is prohibited in all fisheries.

The PFMC develops ocean salmon seasons for federal waters (3-200 miles offshore) with input from State representatives. The California Fish and Game Commission usually adopts similar seasons for state waters (0-3 miles offshore).

More information on seasons, quotas, minimum size and gear restrictions can be found on the PFMC Web site at www.pcouncil.org and on the DFG Web site at www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/oceansalmon.asp.

Anglers can review ocean salmon regulations in the Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations booklet, available free of charge wherever sport fishing licenses are sold, at DFG offices and on the DFG Web site at www.dfg.ca.gov/regulations, or call the Ocean Salmon Hotline at (707) 576-3429.



Coho salmon have white gums around the teeth, while the inside of a Chinook (king) salmon's mouth is all dark.
DFG photo by B. Aldrich

Sport Fishing Special Alert for California Salmon Fisheries

The California coastal coho (silver) salmon has been designated as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act. It is unlawful to fish for, capture, keep or possess under any circumstances a California coastal coho salmon. Please take the time to correctly identify each salmon before removing it from the water.

Marine Management News Fish Identification Quiz!

by Mary Patyten, Research Writer



Welcome to the Marine Management News Fish Identification Quiz for May 2010! Here's your chance to show off your fish identification knowledge and win an official Department of Fish and Game (DFG) fish tagging cap. To qualify for the drawing, simply send the correct answers via e-mail to AskMarine@dfg.ca.gov by June 15, 2010 correctly identifying:

- The species of the fish pictured below (scientific name and an accepted common name), and
- The current daily bag limits, as given in the 2010-2011 recreational fishing regulations for California!

Be sure to type "May 2010 MMN Fish Quiz" as the "Subject" of your e-mail. The winner will be selected during a random drawing from all correct answers received by June 15, 2010.

This fish hatches from free-drifting eggs after an incubation period of around two to three days. Females may spawn year-round; most eggs are found in water less than 250 feet deep and within four miles of shore. The newly hatched young drift with the currents for less than a month, after which they begin to settle on the bottom and move closer to shore.

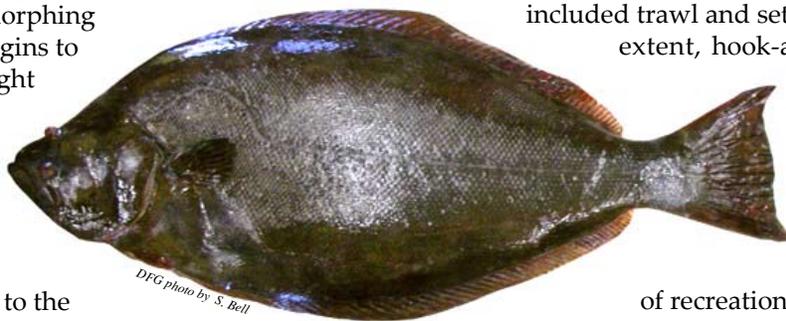
The young of this species start life with one eye on each side of the body, the same as many other fishes. Their bodies begin to change shape as they migrate closer to shore, becoming flatter and broader. During this morphing period, one eye also begins to migrate to either the right or left side of the body to join the other eye. Young fish prefer shallow, plant-free bays, however fluctuations in nearshore currents may sweep them to the open coast and other habitats.

In bay nursery areas, young fish feed upon the abundant food sources there, beginning with small shrimp-like crustaceans. When the young fish reach about 2½ inches long, they graduate to eating small fishes such as gobies. As they grow and migrate into open coastal waters, their diet begins to include a greater percentage of fish. When fully grown, these ambush predators prefer squid, Pacific sardine, northern anchovy, and other nearshore fish species that swim in the water column.

This species ranges from Washington state to south-

ern Baja California. Adults of this species inhabit soft-bottom habitats in coastal waters generally less than 300 feet deep, most often at depths of less than 100 feet. They may live to 30 years and reach 60 in. long, with a maximum recorded weight of 72 pounds. Males mature at two to three years and 8 to 9 inches long, whereas females mature at four to five years and 15 to 17 inches long. Females reach the minimum recreational size limit at five to six years of age, about a year before males.

Both commercial and recreational fisheries exist for this fish. Commercial fishing gear for this species has included trawl and set nets and, to a lesser extent, hook-and line gear. The largest

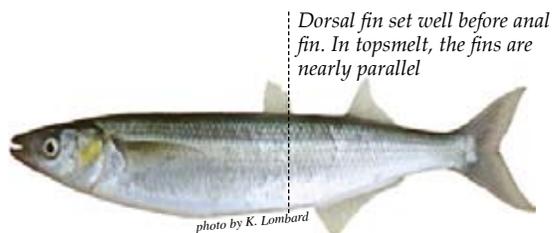


recorded commercial catch was 4.7 million pounds in 1919. Landings have averaged a little more than 1 million pounds annually since 1980. Estimates

of recreational landings since 1980, by anglers using hook-and-line gear, have approached commercial landings with an annual average of 976,000 pounds. A stock assessment is currently being conducted for the first time for this species.

If you think you know this species of fish, enter the prize drawing by sending an e-mail to the DFG at AskMarine@dfg.ca.gov by June 15 with the correct scientific and a common name, and the current daily bag limits. Again, be sure to type "May 2010 MMN Fish Quiz" in the "Subject" portion of your e-mail. Answers to the quiz and the winner's name will be published in the next issue of *Marine Management News*. 🐟🎉

January 2010 "Mystery" Fish: Jacksmelt



Out of the many entries in January's quiz, congratulations go out to Manuel T. Planessi of Redwood City, California for correctly identifying last issue's mystery fish as a jacksmelt, *Athernopsis californiensis*. This is one of the few fishes for which there is no bag limit (per Title 14, CCR, Section 27.60[b]).

Manuel was a fabricator journeyman welder for forty years. Retired now, he likes to metal detect, fish, and hunt, especially for wild pigs. Congratulations again on winning the drawing, Manuel! 🐟🎉

TRACKING DOWN THE DATA

Two New Studies Help Scientists Estimate Fishing Effort from Private Boats



DFG Scientific Aid, Molly Roberts, interviews anglers returning to Harbor Island West marinas in San Diego Bay to verify observations made by land-based samplers.
DFG photo by A. Vejar

by Ashok Sadrozinski, Marine Biologist

Do you launch a sport boat from a public launch ramp like the one at Dana Point, while your neighbor moors his boat inside the private Dana Point Marina? To what extent do you each catch the same species of fish or take the same number of trips?

Recently, fishery scientists from DFG's Recreational Fishery Data Project asked anglers to help them find an answer to this question, in hopes that it might improve our understanding of California's sport fisheries.

The challenge

The California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) collects fishery information that is essential for sustaining economic and recreational benefits to Californians, as required by the state's Marine Life Management Act. Currently, samplers are employed by the CRFS to interview anglers along the entire 1,100 miles of California's coast. The interviews, along with a telephone survey of anglers, provide primary information for determining the total number of marine fish taken in California each year.

However, the CRFS faces one big challenge: In Southern California there are more than 30,000 slips and moorings inside private marinas. The many sport anglers who dock their boats behind locked gates

in these marinas or behind private homes are not available to CRFS samplers for interviews. So how can CRFS scientists find out how frequently these anglers fish and what they catch?

The current approach uses telephone surveys to estimate the number of trips these anglers take, and
"CRFS" continued on page 5



A young angler proudly displays her catch

DFG photo by M. Horeczko

information about fishing trips gathered at public launch ramps to estimate average catch-per-trip for private-access anglers.

But how well is this approach working? To find out, two recent studies tested the telephone survey's ability to provide valid estimates of fishing effort, and the validity of using public launch ramp catch-rate data to estimate private-access anglers' catch rates.

Study results

The first study was conducted at seven southern California marinas from October 2008 to August 2009. At these sites, samplers observed boats returning to the harbors and counted the number of boats and anglers returning from sport fishing trips. The results of this study validated the telephone survey effort, and demonstrated the possibility of using field surveys to estimate fishing effort at private marinas in the future.

The second study was to determine if anglers who fish from boats that depart from and return to public-access and private-access sites catch the same species and numbers of fish. This study, which ran from November 2008 to November 2009, involved over 1,000 volunteer anglers who completed logs for each fishing trip they took. The anglers recorded information such as their primary target species, number of fish caught, length of trip, and number of anglers on board. While the results of this study are still being analyzed, the data already show that private-access anglers may take longer trips and target different species than public-access anglers.

Thanks in large part to the volunteer efforts of private-access anglers, state scientists now have a better understanding of the fishing habits of people who keep boats in private marinas, and a clearer vision for how



DFG/A. Vejar

Above Logbook Study volunteer Don Moore displays his fishing log binder of material on his boat at Coronado Yacht Club, San Diego. **Right:** Logbook Study volunteer John Christie and his fishing logs on his boat returning to Ventura Harbor. **Below** "Thank you" lapel pin, designed by the author.



DFG/S. Owen



to improve private/rental boat estimates overall.

For more information about these studies and the Recreational Fishing Data Project, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/recfishingdata.

Red Abalone and the New North-Central Coast Marine Protected Areas

by Jerry Kashiwada, Associate Marine Biologist

Some of California's North-Central Coast Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), which went into effect May 1, 2010 between the mouth of San Francisco Bay and Alder Creek, protect abalone populations by prohibiting their take. These areas could eventually allow people to view large red abalone at low tide. The MPAs will also benefit abalone populations by enabling more abalone to cluster together densely, resulting in a greater chance for successful reproduction and increased production of larvae. Some of the larvae produced within these MPAs could provide a boost to abalone populations in nearby fishable zones.

The new MPA closures will probably not have much effect on the red abalone fishery in the areas

that remain open. During the process that determined the placement of the new MPAs, sites with very high catches were avoided. The amount of effort shifting away from the new MPAs is not expected to be great. The MPA closures could cause increases in population declines in areas which remain open but are unlikely to create new problems where none currently exist. Prior to implementation of the new MPAs, DFG biologists documented declines in abalone densities at many of the index sites identified in the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan. For more information about abalone fishery management and the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/invertebrate/management_rec.asp#abalone.



UPDATES

Marine Management News

Selected “snapshots” of current Marine Region projects *by DFG Staff*

California halibut

The DFG's State Finfish Management Project is continuing to collect and summarize recent and historical data for its statewide California halibut stock assessment, which began in 2009. The stock assessment will be the first-ever statewide evaluation of the California halibut resource and will include a total population estimate. The assessment is scheduled for completion by November 30, 2010. After completion, a series of public meeting dates will be scheduled in selected coastal locations in central and southern California to inform interested parties about the content of the assessment and to answer questions. To learn more about the State Finfish Management Project, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/sfmp/halibut-studies.asp.

Spiny lobster

The DFG's Invertebrate Management Project held a spiny lobster stock assessment and data needs workshop in December 2009, and is currently working on a stock assessment. A draft assessment is scheduled to be ready for peer review in December, 2010. At this time, DFG does not have the resources to start work on a spiny lobster fishery management plan. To learn more about the Invertebrate Management Project, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/invertebrate/spinylobster.asp.

Marine protected area assessment

The DFG's Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Assessment Project is scheduled to conduct its first deep subtidal (20-70 m) surveys of the newly established North Central Coast Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the fall of 2010. Project staff are also scheduled to continue surveys for the fourth consecutive year at the Central Coast MPAs. The ROV Assessment Project began annual surveys at the Channel Islands MPAs in 2003, and continues to collect data statewide on finfish abundance inside and outside of MPAs to evaluate their effectiveness. To learn more about the ROV Assessment Project, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/fir/dss.asp

New marine protected areas

California's North-Central Coast Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) went into effect May 1, 2010 in state waters from Alder Creek, near Point Arena (Mendocino County) to Pigeon Point (San Mateo County). Fishermen especially will want to familiarize themselves with the new MPAs, as many restrict the take of finfish, abalone,

and other living resources. In addition to information presented in the 2010-2011 Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations booklet, the following Web sites contain detailed maps and further information about the new MPAs:

- North-Central Coast Marine Protected Areas
www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/nccmpas_list.asp
Includes maps, regulations, and a printer-friendly brochure
- North-Central Coast Study Region
www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/northcentralhome.asp
Includes a wide variety of information about north-central coast MPAs

Barred sand bass

The DFG's Fisheries Independent/Scuba Assessment Project is wrapping up studies of spawning-related movements and spawning habitat characteristics of barred sand bass. Reports and other products documenting the DFG historical tag and recapture data are under review for publication, and staff is currently preparing a technical report on the spawning habitat characteristics of a historical spawning site in southern California. This summer, staff will assist in the last season of data collection on a 2-year

“Snapshots” continued on page 9

NOTICE: Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations Booklet Error

The print version of the 2010-2011 California Ocean Sport Fishing regulations booklet incorrectly states the allowed and prohibited sport fishing activities within Southeast Farallon Islands State Marine Conservation Area.

On page 61 of the booklet, under San Francisco County, the table incorrectly states that anglers may not take salmon by trolling, but may take marine aquatic plants, invertebrates, and other finfish within Southeast Farallon Islands State Marine Conservation Area. It should state that anglers may take salmon by trolling, but may not take marine aquatic plants, invertebrates, or finfish other than salmon (the allowed and prohibited take were inadvertently switched). Please make a note of it.

This error is not present in the online version of the 2010-2011 Ocean Sport Fishing regulations booklet.

Get Hooked on the Marine Region and MLPA Initiative Web Sites!

by Aaron Del Monte, Assistant Information Systems Analyst and Marine Region Webmaster

For the latest information on fishing regulations, marine resources, and news affecting our California coastline, your first stop should be the Department of Fish and Game Marine Region Web site, located at www.dfg.ca.gov/marine. This comprehensive information source currently contains well over 2,000 Web pages readily available to the public. If you are new to this Web site, we invite you to explore the valuable resources we have created. For those who have already visited the site, be sure to check back regularly, since new features, updates, and press releases are added every week. Here are some recent, noteworthy updates:

Summary of Ocean Salmon Seasons

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/oceansalmon.asp The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) and California Fish and Game Commission have set the 2010 salmon seasons for ocean waters off California. This page provides you with an easy-to-understand summary of salmon regulations, including a printer-friendly flyer you can bring along on your next fishing trip.

Current Marine Region Projects

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/marineregion.asp When visiting our site, one of your very first questions might be: "Where exactly is the Marine Region and what does the Marine Region do?" This page will answer these questions. In addition to an overview of the Marine Region, you will find a description of 14 current projects within the region.

Summary of Recreational Groundfish Fishing Regulations for 2010

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/bfregs2010.asp If you plan to fish for groundfish anytime this year, be sure to visit this page. Easy-to-read tables identify not just the length of the season, but also depth limit, daily bag limit, and minimum size limit for key species. Printer-friendly versions of the tables are available so you can bring this information with you on your next fishing trip.

Here are some of our most popular pages:

California Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations Map

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/fishing_map.asp Going ocean fishing? This should be your first stop. Simply click the marine location where you plan to fish and you will access a compact list of sport fishing regulations for that area. The pages are printer-friendly, so you can print the regulations and take them with you on your next fishing trip. These pages are updated frequently, so you can be assured that they contain the most up-to-date information.

Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/sportfishing_regs2010.asp

This page features the Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations booklet that was printed and distributed in March, 2010. This bookmarked PDF file features bolded, italicized bookmark headings which denote sections that have changed or are new. In addition to the booklet, you will find links to in-season regulations changes, helpful illustrations and more.

California Grunion Facts and Runs

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/grunionschedule.asp Grunion, famous for their spawning behavior, are the object of a unique recreational fishery. This page contains facts about grunion and a list of expected grunion runs on the California coast through August 2010. Links to more expansive information and printable resources are also available.

Status of the Fisheries Reports

www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/status The Marine Life Management Act instructs the Department of Fish and Game to regularly prepare reports on the status of California's fisheries and the effectiveness of management programs. This page contains links to three reports, which include information about hundreds of species.

Thank you for using the Marine Region Web site as a resource for news, information and regulations. We hope you will visit our site again soon! ♣ ♣ ♣

The Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative Web Site

www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa

This partnership between government agencies and private entities is striving to achieve the original MLPA goals. The 1999 MLPA directed the state to design and manage a network of marine protected areas (MPAs) in order to, among other things, protect marine life and habitats, marine ecosystems, and marine natural heritage, as well as improve recreational, educational and study opportunities

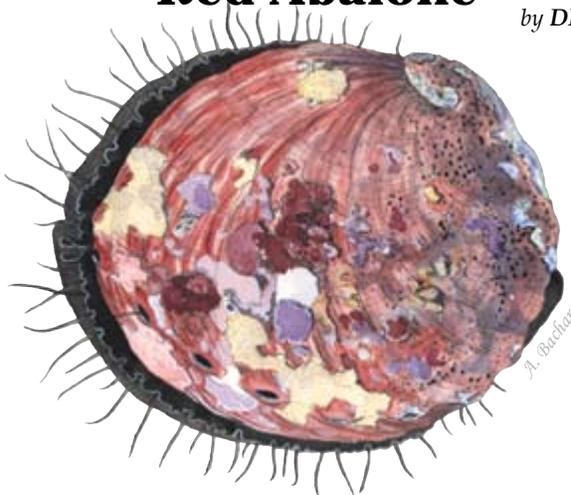
provided by marine ecosystems. This Web site contains up-to-date information about this exciting endeavor, including meeting information, public comments and documents for review. The entire site was recently enhanced, making it even easier to locate specific information. Current popular resources on the site include:

"MLPA" continued on page 10

Creature Feature

Red Abalone

by DFG Staff



Red abalone may be found coastwide off California, however in southern California they keep to cooler, upwelling locations along the mainland coast and the northern Channel Islands. In central and northern California they may be found from the intertidal zone to depths nearing 75 ft. Red abalone prefer rugged, rocky habitat close to kelp beds, which are their primary food source.

Distinguishing Characteristics

- Dull brick-red shell. Surface lumpy, usually covered with encrusting marine growth.
- Inside shell iridescent, highly polished.
- Outer lip of shell usually with narrow red rim.
- Shell holes slightly raised and oval, usually three to four open.
- Body and foot smooth, usually black. Edges of foot scalloped, thin black tentacles extend beyond edge of shell.

Life History & Other Notes

Abalone prefer to feed on drifting blades of kelp, especially giant or bull kelp. Spawning season lasts from October through February in northern California, while in southern California spawning occurs year-round. Male and female abalone release their sperm and eggs into the sea at the same time, and so must be located fairly close together for successful reproduction.

The red abalone fishery is strictly regulated (be sure to check regulations before taking abalone). Abalone are pried from rocks by shore pickers or skin divers using long metal bars known as *abalone irons*.

This Creature Feature is an excerpt from the California Finfish and Shellfish Identification Book available from the DFG Publications Office (contact (916) 322-8978 or publications@dfg.ca.gov). The book was created as part of the California Fishing Passport Program, which showcases different species of fish available to California anglers. The California Fishing Passport, a free fishing journal, is the basis of the program. For more information, visit www.fishingpassport.org.



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"Lobster" continued from page 1

fishermen and the number of fishing trips they made) and geographical distribution of the total catch. It is in fact equivalent to the return rate for abalone report cards. However, due to the nature of the lobster report card data, the return rate is not large enough for estimating catch and effort between types of fishing (diver versus hoop net).

Twelve percent of the returned cards recorded no fishing effort. The remaining cards recorded an average of four trips per card. Thirty-eight percent of the trips ended without any legal lobster caught while about 12 percent resulted in bag limits of seven lobster. The bag size of the remaining trips averaged two to three legal lobster.

Based on these numbers, the DFG estimates approximately 103,000 lobster fishing trips were taken by recreational fishermen during this 3-month period, resulting in the harvest of about 216,000

lobster. Using the average weight for barely legal-sized lobster, estimated from a 2007 DFG creel survey, the recreational fishery landed about 281,000 pounds of lobster, or 49 percent of the total commercial landings during the same period of time. The highest takes of lobster by all methods occurred in the vicinities of Point Loma, San Diego Bay, Catalina Island, and the Palos Verdes Peninsula. The highest takes of lobster by hoop netters

"Lobster" continued on page 9

Red Abalone

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Haliotis rufescens

OTHER COMMON NAMES

red ab

RANGE & HABITAT

Statewide, most common in northern California

LENGTH & WEIGHT

To 12+ in. and 10+ lb.

LIFESPAN

To 30 YEARS

DIET

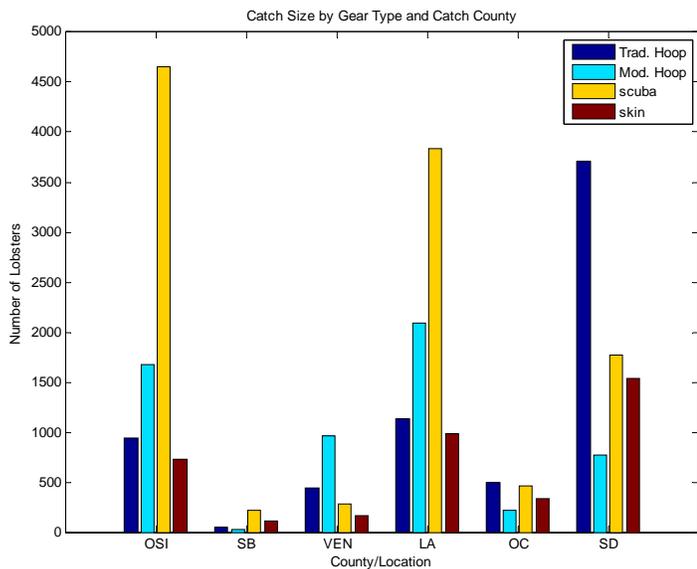
Feeds mostly on bull kelp (northern California) or giant kelp (southern California)

was from the same geographic areas as those noted for all methods. Divers reported their highest takes of lobster at the northern Channel Islands, Catalina Island, Malibu, Palos Verdes Peninsula, and along the San Diego County coastline.

Traditional-style hoop nets were generally more popular than the modified, conical hoop nets. However, the use of conical hoop nets tended to increase from south to north. Traditional-style nets were used more frequently in the southern counties while in Santa Barbara County, conical and traditional hoop nets occurred with about the same frequency. Conical hoop nets were the net of choice around Catalina Island. Scuba diving trips outnumbered skin

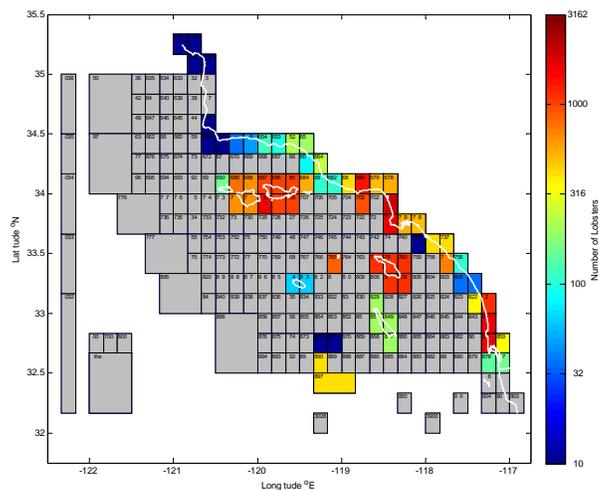
diving trips although San Diego County had a strong showing of skin divers.

For more information about the DFG’s recreational spiny lobster fishery report card review, refer to *A Summary of Preliminary California Spiny Lobster Report Card Data from the First Half of the 2008/2009 Recreational Lobster Season*, available online at www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/lobstercardsummary1011.pdf Note that the online summary was based on the 3,609 report cards available in September 2009, and the figures below are reproduced from that summary. Looking ahead, the DFG will be able to compare trends over time in the recreational lobster fishery as seasons pass and more data are gathered.



Catch size broken down by gear type and county

Note: OSI = Offshore Islands, and refers to all eight Channel Islands, Coles Bank and Tanner Bank. San Luis Obispo County had catch information from less than 10 fishing trips and was not included



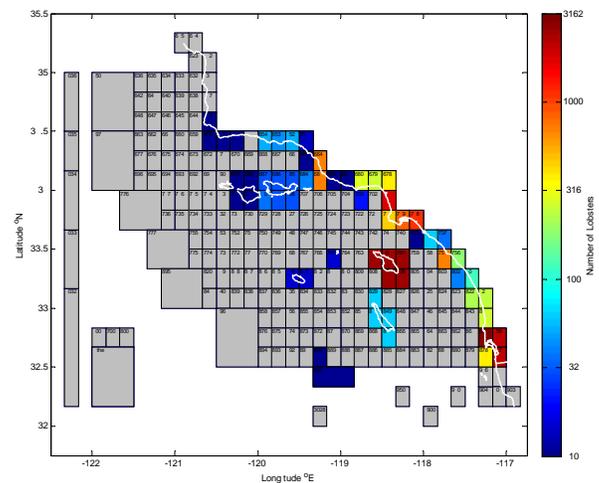
Geographical distribution and quantities of all lobster kept while diving. Report card location codes have been mapped on the DFG's 10 nautical mile fishing-block system.

“Snapshots” continued from page 6

research partnership with Dr. Chris Lowe of California State University Long Beach to examine the fine-scale spawning-related movements of barred sand bass. To learn more about this effort, visit the Fishery Independent/Scuba Assessment Project Web page at www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/scuba/barredsandbass.asp.

Pacific herring

The Aquaculture and Bay Management Project (ABMP) is currently wrapping up the 2009-2010 Pacific herring spawn assessment. The preliminary spawning biomass estimate was 38,409 tons of adult herring, a significant increase over the previous three seasons estimates of 4,833 tons (2008-2009), 11,190 tons (2007-2008) and 10,935 tons (2006-2007). The ABMP team met with the Director’s Herring Advisory Committee on April 21, 2010 to discuss the preliminary estimate and the outlook for the 2010-2011 commercial herring season. After a complete analysis of the data, the Department of Fish and Game will likely recommend re-opening the fishery to the Fish and Game Commission. For more information about California’s commercial herring fishery, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/herring.



Geographical distribution and quantities of all lobster kept while hoopnetting. Report card location codes have been mapped on the DFG's 10 nautical mile fishing-block system.

California Outdoors Q & A: Focus on Red Abalone

by Carrie Wilson, Associate Marine Biologist

Carrie Wilson is a 20-year DFG veteran and an avid outdoor enthusiast, angler and hunter. She is a marine biologist with a strong background of professional experience working in both fisheries and wildlife management. An established award-winning outdoor writer, Carrie enjoys tackling the tough questions from the public and regularly taps into the expertise of DFG's game wardens and many fisheries, wildlife and marine biologists. The column excerpts below from 2009 focus specifically on the recreational red abalone fishery.

Question:

Let's say a free-diver who is looking for abalone and a scuba diver want to dive together. Would it be legal for the scuba diver to help the free-diver find abalone by marking locations so that the free-diver can more easily locate the abalone? I am assuming that the divers do not have scuba and abalone in the same boat. I think this is a breach of the spirit of the law and unsportsmanlike, but I don't think it is covered specifically in the laws.

(Anonymous)

Answer:

It is not legal for scuba to be used in any manner in the pursuit or take of abalone. "Take means hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill," (FGC Section 86) and the use of scuba gear or surface-supplied air to take abalone is prohibited (CCR Title 14 Section 29.15[e]).



A nice limit of red abalone.

DFG photo by T. Buck

Thus, according to Lt. Dennis McKiver, this means a scuba diver may not assist another in the pursuit and take of abalone. If someone is using scuba gear to find ("hunt or pursue or attempt to hunt or pursue") abalone and then marking those abalone with a physical buoy or Global Positioning System location so that a diver can more easily return to the location to take

the abalone, this falls under the definition of "take."

It doesn't matter if the scuba diver is marking the location with a surface marker buoy, scuba air bubbles or is coming to the surface to point out the location to his free-diving buddy; it would all still fall under the definition of "take." Scuba cannot be used to aid in the take of abalone in any way other than for the diver to come ashore and say, "Hey, I saw a lot of big abalone out there!"

"Abalone" continued on page 11

"MLPA" continued from page 6

North Coast Region

www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/northcoast.asp

The planning process for the North Coast Region (California/Oregon border to Alder Creek near Point Arena in Mendocino County) is currently underway. The Web site features eight external proposed MPA arrays that were developed by north coast community groups, as well as the Regional Profile for the North Coast Region. Public meetings and workshops in this region throughout 2010 provide opportunities to become involved in the process.

South Coast Region

www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/southcoast.asp

The planning process for the South Coast Region (Point Conception to the California-Mexico border) has been completed. An MPA proposal known as the MLPA South Coast Integrated Preferred Alternative (IPA) MPA Proposal was unanimously adopted on Nov. 10, 2009 by the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force. This proposal was presented to the California Fish and Game Commission on Dec. 9, 2009. The regulatory process is now underway.

North-Central Coast MPAs

www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/nccmpas_list.asp

California's North-Central Coast MPAs took effect May 1, 2010. From Alder Creek near Point Arena in Mendocino County, to Pigeon Point in San Mateo County, the series of 24 MPAs cover approximately 153 square miles of state waters. This page contains descriptions of all 24 MPAs, including maps and a link to a printer-friendly brochure.

Central Coast MPAs

www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/ccmpas_list.asp

California's Central Coast MPAs took effect September 21, 2007. From Pigeon Point (San Mateo County) south to Point Conception (Santa Barbara County), the series of 29 MPAs represent approximately 204 square miles of state waters. This page contains descriptions of all 29 MPAs, including maps, and also contains links to a printer-friendly guide and brochure.

Question:

I would like to make my own abalone irons. What are the specifications to do so legally?
(Jim B., Oakdale)

Answer:

Abalone irons must be less than 36 inches long, straight or with a curve having a radius of not less than 18 inches, and must not be less than 3/4 inch wide nor less than 1/16 inch thick. All edges must be rounded and free of sharp edges (FGC Section 29.15[e]).

Question:

While tagging my abalone recently I realized too late that I'd mistakenly recorded my abalone catch on my abalone report card incorrectly. I recorded them out of order in the wrong column and then used the corresponding wrong tags. This meant I skipped three of the lower numbered tags. The tags are still on the report card and corresponding recording fields on the report card are still empty. Can I go back and use those missed tags for my next trip?

(Atsu I.)

Answer:

No, the law says, "Tags shall be used in sequential order, and shall not be removed from the report card until immediately prior to affixing to an abalone. Any tags detached from the report card and not affixed to an abalone shall be considered used and therefore invalid" (CCR, Title 14, Section 29.16[b][4]). According to Lt. Dennis McKiver, you are also required to write "Void" on the Abalone Report Card in the spaces you skipped and then dispose of the three corresponding tags. This is because the law also says, "...[5] No person shall possess any used or otherwise invalid abalone tags not attached to an abalone shell."

Question:

I am the office manager of a San Francisco Bay area restaurant. A customer called asking if they could bring abalone into the restaurant for us to prepare and cook for them and their friends. We are not sure whether this is permissible or not. What are the laws regarding preparing a customer's abalone in our restaurant?
(John P.)

Answer:

Yes, it is legal to prepare and serve abalone provided by your customers, but only under certain conditions. The person who legally harvested the abalone (under the authority of their California sport fishing license) may take their abalone into a restaurant for cooking by the restaurant staff as long as they remain present while it is prepared and served to them and their friends. If the person with the abalone must leave briefly while the abalone are being prepared, they must tag the abalone with a signed statement that includes their name, address, telephone number, the date taken and the total number of abalone belonging to them. Also important, each person bringing abalone to your restaurant for preparation may only legally provide three abalone each (FGC Section 2015).

Bon Appetit! 🍴🍷

To read the latest California Outdoors Q & A columns covering a broad variety of hunting and fishing topics, visit <http://californiaoutdoors.wordpress.com>. If you have a question you would like to see answered in the column, e-mail it to CalOutdoors@dfg.ca.gov.

Upcoming Commission and Council Meetings

2010 Fish and Game Commission
www.fgc.ca.gov/meetings/2010/2010mtgs.asp

May 20
Sacramento
(teleconference)

August 4-5
Santa Barbara

October 20-21
San Diego

June 23-24
Folsom

September 15-16
Greater Sacramento Area

November 17-18
Greater Sacramento Area

2010 Pacific Fishery Management Council
www.pcouncil.org/council-operations/council-meetings/future-meetings/

June 12-17
Foster City CA

September 11-16
Boise ID

November 4-9
Costa Mesa CA

For the latest information on upcoming fishery-related meetings, please go to our Calendar of Events at www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/calendar.asp or contact the Monterey DFG office at (831) 649-2870.

MARINE Management News

Marine Management News is published three times per year by the Marine Region of the California Department of Fish and Game for everyone interested in the management and conservation of California's living marine resources. Through this newsletter we hope to keep all associates and constituents interested in participating in and/or tracking the progress of the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) informed of developments. The MLMA strongly emphasizes an open decision-making process that involves people interested in or affected by management measures.

For more information on the MLMA or to sign up to become more involved, please visit our Web site at www.dfg.ca.gov/marine.

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The Marine Life Management Act

California's Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) of 1998 is an innovative, collaborative, science-based approach to managing all of California's living marine resources. One of its major goals is the long-term sustainability of our resources and our fisheries. The MLMA recognizes and values the non-consumptive benefits of healthy marine life as well as the interests of those who are economically dependent upon them. Implementation and enforcement of the MLMA is the responsibility of the California Department of Fish and Game, whose mission is to conserve wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend through good science and informed citizen involvement. For more information visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine.

DFG Marine Region mission:

"To protect, maintain, enhance, and restore California's marine ecosystems for their ecological values and their use and enjoyment by the public through good science and effective communication."

Alternate communication formats of this document are available upon request. If reasonable accommodation is needed, call DFG at (707) 964-5026. The California Relay Service for the deaf or hearing impaired can be utilized from TDD phones at (800) 733-2929.