MARINE
Management News

A newsletter for everyone interested in the management and conservation of California's living marine resources.

California Department of Fish and Game
20 Lower Ragsdale Drive, Suite 100
Monterey, CA 93940

June 2005
Volume 6 No. 2

Central California Groundfish Season Opens for Boat-Based Sport Anglers on July 1

by Mary Patyten, Research Writer

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has announced that beginning July 1, recreational boat-based anglers will be allowed to fish for groundfish from Cape Mendocino, in Humboldt County, south to Lopez Point, in Monterey County. The area has been closed to the take of groundfish since Jan. 1 to protect certain species of rockfish whose populations are at very low levels. Anglers fishing for groundfish in this area must remain in waters less than 120 ft. (20 fm) deep.

The July 1 opener allows fishing for groundfish in the North-Central and the Monterey South-Central Management Areas. Three other areas, the Northern Management Area to the north, and the Morro Bay South-Central and the Southern Management Areas to the south, are already open to boat-based anglers seeking groundfish. Check pg. 13 of the 2005 California Freshwater & Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations Supplement for a map of management areas.

"July Groundfish Opener" *continued on page 9*

A happy young fisherman displays his catch of rockfish. *photo by E. Roberts*

Marine Habitats Receive Protection From Bottom Trawling; Channel Islands Marine Protected Areas Extended Into Federal Waters

by Mary Patyten, Research Writer

By a unanimous 14 to 0 vote, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) adopted expansive closures to commercial bottom trawl fishing at its late June 2005 meeting. The agreement will also afford special protection to three marine sanctuaries in California—the Cordell Bank, Monterey Bay, and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuaries.

The PFMC is responsible for management of marine fisheries from 3-200 miles off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. This decision will protect about 200,000 square nautical miles of marine habitat from bottom trawl fishing on the West Coast, amounting to over 75% of the ocean within United States jurisdiction.

The PFMC action, taken to protect the habitat of over 80 species of groundfish, was applauded by both conservation organizations and fishing industry groups alike.

Mr. Pete Leipzig, Director of the Fishermen's Marketing Association, stated "The Council gave the fishing industry a fair shake in this decision. We can now move forward with business plans for productive fisheries. The seafood-consuming public will benefit from this decision."

Mr. Jim Ayres, Fisheries Conservation Director for Oceana, stated "This action will not only make things better for those dependent on current fisheries, but also provides security for future generations, as well. We have worked hard on this proposal for over five years, and this decision makes the money and time spent well worth it."

"Trawling Closures" *continued on page 9*

Inside This Issue

Not Just Another Day on the Job

Being a CRFS fisheries technician is hard work– but Stephanie White wouldn't trade it for anything

by Ed Roberts, Marine Biologist

CRFS sampler Stephanie White interviews an angler aboard the Sport King. *photo by E. Roberts*

On a wonderful spring day in May, Stephanie White receives an assignment to sample a three-quarter-day fishing trip aboard the *Sport King* out of San Pedro. Stephanie is one of over 30 Fisheries Technicians (known as *fish techs*) and biologists working with the California Department of Fish and Game collecting biological data, fishery information, and demographics from saltwater sport fishermen as part of the California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS). Fishery managers use the data to manage and monitor the state's marine recreational fisheries.

As the boat leaves the dock, she begins introducing herself: "Sorry to interrupt you while you're rigging up, my name is Stephanie and I'm conducting a survey on behalf of the California Department of Fish and Game, and I'd like to ask you a few questions…" Before the boat reaches the fishing grounds, she'll have asked about the species the angler intends to target, how often the angler fishes, residence information, and other demographics. This information, along with the catch data she'll collect throughout the trip, will be used in conjunction with other data to produce an estimate of total marine recreational catch and fishing effort.

During the course of these interviews, she's often asked if she's a student, or a volunteer. "No," she replies, "this is my full time job." In fact, like many other CRFS fish techs, Stephanie has already completed her education – she holds a Masters degree in marine biology – and is working in the career field of her choice. The protocols to collect statistically valid data are complicated and demanding; CRFS fish techs are a group of highly-trained and dedicated professionals.

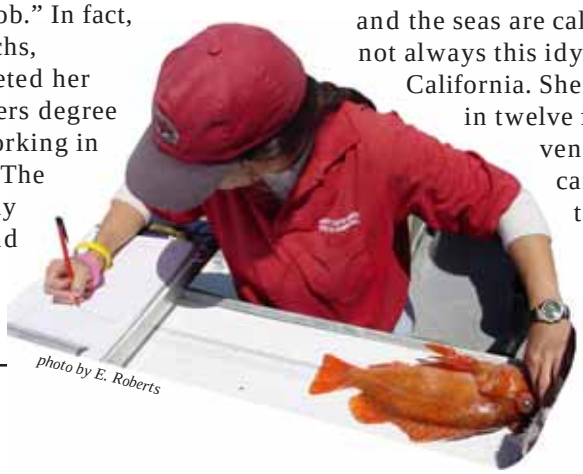


photo by E. Roberts

Another comment she often hears is something along the lines of "Wow, you've got a great job." "Yes, I do," is her response. "I'm outside and at a different location every day, dealing with people that are excited about what they're doing (fishing), and get to work on or near the ocean." What's not to like?

Stephanie spends time educating the angling public about sport fishing regulations and the importance of the survey, as the boat motors northwest towards Rocky Point on the Palos Verdes Peninsula. During the course of a typical day, she'll interact with dozens of fishermen, and answer several questions from each. Today is no different, as several anglers ask about the current lingcod regulations. "Yes, last year the size limit did increase to 30 inches, but new scientific information showed that the higher size limit was no longer needed, so it was reduced back to 24 inches this year," Stephanie explains.

An elderly angler approaches her, and tells her that he's been interviewed four times this year. "And I've cooperated each time, ever since I saw how hard you samplers work, when I was on a trip aboard the *Sea Angler.* We were fishing sanddabs that day, and I'll tell you, that sampler weighed and measured most of the hundreds of 'dabs we caught, in fairly rough seas, too." Stephanie thanks the gentleman for his cooperation, grateful that the majority of the people she deals with are pleasant and happy to see her, or at least not openly hostile. Fish techs do encounter individuals that are not so pleasant to deal with, from time to time. When this happens, Stephanie does her best to calmly address the issues raised by the irate angler. Often, she's successful in helping the person to understand the reasons behind regulations and the fishery management process; occasionally, she has to turn and walk away.

As the boat nears the fishing grounds, Stephanie gets her data collection forms in order, and slathers on the sunscreen. The sun is shining and the seas are calm, but working conditions are not always this idyllic for her, even in southern California. She's measured 30-pound albacore in twelve foot seas, been spined by venomous scorpionfish, and carried heavy gear down hiking trails to interview anglers fishing in the surf at remote beaches. Wherever and whenever people are fishing

"CRFS" *continued on page 10*

Commercial and Recreational Salmon Seasons Finalized for 2005

Fishing a bit slow at season's start due to warm water temperatures and weather

by Mary Patyten, Research Writer

On May 1, 2005 salmon regulations went into effect that greatly reduced the season for commercial fishermen and slightly reduced the season for recreational fishermen. Reductions in the 2005 seasons are meant to protect Klamath River fall chinook in most of Oregon and California as far south as Monterey. However, the Pacific Fishery Management Council predicts that the abundance of Central (Sacramento) Valley fall chinook will be at an all time high, which means that fishing should be better than usual in many areas of Oregon and California.

Commercial salmon fishermen took the brunt of season reductions, with northern California closed much of the year (see table, right). Only the area south of Point Sur will have a full season from May 1 through September 30, as few Klamath River fall chinook are caught that far south. Size limits have also been changed to help protect Klamath River chinook.

The Ft. Bragg area will be closed to recreational fishermen for some periods of time in July (see table, right) but the San Francisco and Monterey areas will see little change in the recreational salmon season from 2004.

The California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) samplers, the folks who pound the docks gathering recreational fishing data, have seen a slow start to central California salmon fishing this April. More often than not, samplers encountered salmon fishermen who had not caught a single fish. "In late April, the water temperature became unseasonably warm in Monterey Bay, which may have contributed to the low catch rate," said CRFS Field Supervisor Todd Phillips. "That doesn't mean the fish weren't there. The cooler water temperatures were deeper, past 300 ft. in some cases, which may have meant the salmon were too deep for recreational anglers."

With the prevalent winds that began in May, however, cooler waters have come to the surface, bringing salmon within the reach of central California recreational fishermen.

In northern California, samplers on San Francisco charter boats have seen variable success for salmon between bouts of rough and/or windy weather. Samplers in Fort Bragg, Shelter Cove, and northward also recorded limited success for salmon due to bad weather in April and May. "During breaks in the weather, skiffs were able to fish, but fishermen reported encountering large numbers of coho salmon, which are protected by law," said Matt Erickson, Department of Fish and Game associate marine biologist. By mid-June, however, the winds had calmed enough to allow northern California fishermen to target salmon with more success.

For more information regarding commercial and recreational salmon fishing, be sure to check the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Ocean Salmon Resources Page at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/oceansalmon.html**. Here you'll find printer-friendly regulations posters, coho salmon identification flyers, technical reports, and more. Detailed information about regulations and fishery impacts are also posted on the Pacific Fishery Management Council website (**www.pcouncil.org**). Don't forget, the latest ocean salmon regulations are also only a phone call away on the Ocean Salmon Regulations Hotline at **(707) 576-3429**.

2005 Commercial Ocean Salmon Regulations[1]

Areas	Season Dates	Min. Size Limits
OR/CA Border to Humboldt South Jetty[2]	Sept 3-30 or 6,000 salmon quota	28 in. TL
Horse Mt. to Pt. Arena	Sept 1-30	27 in. TL
Pt. Arena to Pigeon Pt.	Jul 4-Aug 29; Sept 1-30	Jul-Aug: 28 in. TL; Sept: 27 in. TL
Pt. Reyes to Pt. San Pedro	Oct 3-7; Oct 10-14	26 in. TL
Pigeon Pt. to Pt. Sur	May 1-31; Jul 4-Aug 29; Sept 1-30	May & Sept: 27 in. TL; Jul & Aug: 28 in. TL
Pt. Sur to US/Mexico Border	May 1-Sept 30	May, Jun & Sept: 27 in. TL; Jul & Aug: 28 in TL

[1] No coho (silver) salmon may be taken or possessed

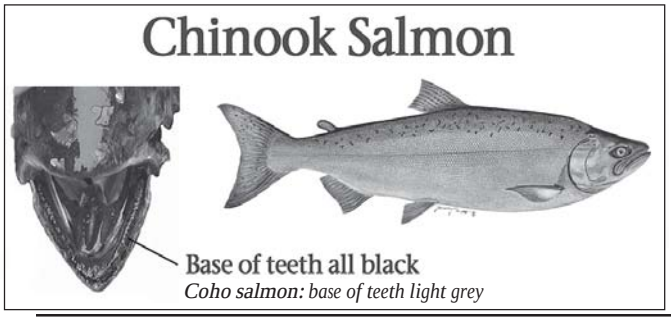
[2] For this area, the possession & landing limit is 30 salmon per day. All salmon caught must be landed within the area. The Klamath Control Zone (a 12-mile square centered on the Klamath River mouth) is closed to fishing.

2005 Recreational Ocean Salmon Regulations[1]

Areas	Season Dates	Bag Limits & Min. Size Limits
Humbug Mt. OR to Horse Mt. CA[2]	May 21-Jul 4; Aug 14-Sept 11	2 salmon/day; 24 in. TL
Horse Mt. to Pt. Arena	Feb 12-Jul 10; July 16-17; Jul 23-Nov 13	2 salmon/day; 20 in. TL
Pt. Arena to Pigeon Pt.	Apr 2-Nov 13	2 salmon/day; 20 in. TL
Pigeon Pt. to US/Mexico Border	Apr 2- Sept 25	2 salmon/day; 20 in. TL

[1] No coho (silver) salmon or steelhead may be taken or possessed

[2] The Klamath Control Zone (a 12-mile square centered on the Klamath River mouth) is closed to fishing in Aug.



Coho salmon: base of teeth light grey

Fishermen, DFG, and University Biologists Collaborate to Obtain the "Best Available Science"

by David Osorio, Marine Biologist

Giovanni Nevoloso pulls traps in the mist off Carmel during the 2003 survey. photo by J. Figurski

How do fishery managers with the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) get the information they need to set fishing regulations? State and federal laws mandate that regulatory actions – from fishing regulations to the institution of marine protected areas — be based on the best available science. But who exactly gathers the "best available science"? More and more, the fishermen themselves are becoming an integral part of the teams that provide scientific information to policymakers.

In the fall of 2003, a research project involving DFG staff, university researchers, and Monterey area fishermen took place in Carmel Bay. It examined two different methods of estimating fish abundance: catch-per-unit-of-effort (CPUE) from fishing, and visual surveys from scuba divers. This summer, a follow-up project is set to take place.

The information from the studies will be used to improve survey techniques, estimates of bycatch (non-targeted fish), and ultimately monitor trends in abundance of nearshore fishes. In addition, the effort will help develop a potential field method for long-term monitoring and stock assessments for use by commercial fishermen themselves.

2003 Review

Marine biologists Rick Starr (UC Sea Grant, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories) and Mark Carr (UC Santa Cruz) led the effort in 2003. They acknowledged mixed results, but several of their findings met expectations:

- Divers counted more species (38) than were caught with fishing gear (20)

The F/V Dolphin deploys a handline during the 2003 survey. photo by J. Figurski

- The number of species and the number of fish caught varied with gear type (sticks, traps, handline), and the way it was deployed
- More cryptic (camouflaged) species, such as cabezon, were caught by fishing gear than were detected by divers
- Fewer numbers and species of fish were observed and caught on days when waves were higher
- While working side-by-side on the fishing boats, fishermen caught more fish than the scientists using the same gear!

However, one result was not expected:

Basic stick gear configuration. DFG artwork

Basic trap gear configuration. DFG artwork

- The number of fish seen by divers did not correspond well to the number caught by fishing gear.

Why was it that when divers saw a lot of fish, fishermen caught fewer, or many more, or even the same relative numbers? One explanation may simply be that the number of daily deployments (the number of replicate samples) of each gear type, including dive surveys, was inadequate to provide a clear trend.

Planned 2005 Surveys

The 2003 survey shows that results from fishing and diving surveys can be quite variable. To gain a better understanding of the relationship between fishing surveys and diver surveys, this summer's project will focus on intensively sampling one area rather than the four separate areas sampled in 2003.

In addition, while the 2003 results hinted at how the fishing and visual surveys differed in relative effectiveness, neither provided a more accurate estimate of the actual numbers of individual fish in an area. To that end, the research planned for this July and August will also incorporate a tag-and-release component to estimate the total number of fish at the site (see box, below).

As before, commercial fishermen will provide vessels and expertise to capture the fishes. All fish caught will be measured, tagged, and released at their location of catch. Data will again be taken on CPUE for different gear types and, as before, divers will conduct visual surveys. This time, however, after one month, the crew will return and conduct fishing and diving surveys a second time. In addition to providing another measure of CPUE, fishermen and divers will look for fish tagged during the earlier effort. Comparing the number of newly-captured fish to recaptured fish will allow biologists to estimate the actual population of the reef instead of the simple catch and encounter rates provided by the 2003 survey. These results will serve as a baseline from which to gauge the results obtained from the other sampling methods. The information from the studies will be used to further refine tools and techniques for managing the nearshore fishery.

This project's collaboration among agency, academic, and industry personnel has been both effective and instructive for all involved. For more information, please contact Mr. David Osorio, DFG marine biologist, at (831) 649-7195, or e-mail *dosorio@dfg.ca.gov*.

Electronic Tagging and Tracking of Nearshore Fishes

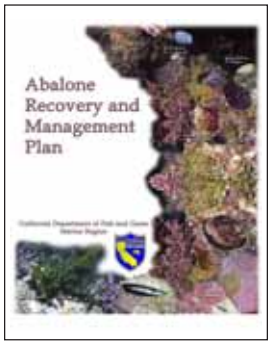
The black-and-yellow rockfish is one of many nearshore fishes that may benefit from these collaborative studies. Black-and-yellow rockfish may live to 30 years of age off central California. Most mature by 7 years of age, at about 9 inches in length. photo by D. Gotshall

A portion of the study's tagging effort will be directed toward tracking the daily movements of fish within their habitat. By inserting small, acoustic transmitters into certain reef-dwelling species, students and scientists from Moss Landing Marine Labs will be able to examine their short- and long-term movement patterns. When overlaid on high-resolution bottom maps of the area, the tracking data will provide new information about the habits of nearshore species. While the results from this project will augment what is already known about the travel limits of certain species, it will also provide daily and even hourly insight into the lives of nearshore fishes. Knowing how fishes interact with their habitat and are influenced by season or time of day may allow fishery managers to refine current fishing regulations or area closures.

UPDATES
Marine Management News

Abalone Recovery and Management Plan Adoption Postponed; More Public Comment Meetings Scheduled

by Mary Patyten, Research Writer



The much anticipated final draft of the Abalone Recovery and Management Plan (ARMP) is now available for viewing on the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Web site at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/armp/index.html** and at all DFG Marine Region offices. The public is invited to comment on the plan at five meetings to be held in July and August 2005.

The ARMP was mandated by law in 1997 to plan for the recovery of depleted abalone populations in southern California, and the management of the recreational red abalone fishery in northern California, as well as any future fisheries.

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) received the final draft of the ARMP in May 2005. After reviewing the plan, the Commission decided to hold additional public meetings to give interested constituents an opportunity to comment on the final ARMP. The plan is scheduled for adoption at the Aug. 18-19 Commission meeting in San Luis Obispo.

Meetings will be held in the following cities during the late afternoon or evening hours, on the following dates; exact times and locations are still being finalized:

- **July 12, Santa Barbara**
- **July 19, Oakland**
- **Aug. 4, Santa Rosa**
- **Aug. 9, Eureka**
- **Aug. 16, San Diego**

For exact location and meeting times, check the ARMP website or call Mr. Ian Taniguchi, ARMP coordinator, at 562-342-7182. For further information about abalone, including an identification guide and life history infomation, go to **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/abalone.html.**

Abalone Season Closing for July; Report Card Spurs Questions

by Mary Patyten, Research Writer

The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) reminds abalone divers and shore pickers that it's nearly time to hang up the abalone iron for the month of July. The season will reopen on Aug. 1, and continue through Nov. 30, 2005. July has been off-limits to abalone fishermen since 1976 to reduce the overall catch of red abalone.

Abalone fishermen 16 years or older must possess a valid fishing license and an abalone permit report card. The report card may be returned to the address on the back of the card any time before the end of the year. Regulations require that fishermen return the report card even if no abalone were taken.

The abalone permit report card is a valuable tool that helps DFG manage the northern California red abalone fishery. Data from the report cards are used along with other information to estimate take–information that helps biologists keep tabs on the health of this recreational fishery (see *Abalone Punch Card Data Provide Valuable Insights* in the April 2005 issue of the *Marine Management News*).

Is There Something Different About the 2005 Cards?

Yes. It may take extra effort to punch out holes in the 2005 report card (as required by law), because perforations around the punch holes were inadvertently omitted when the cards were printed. Abalone fishermen may remove the punched section from the report card using scissors, a hole punch, or other suitable means. Fishermen should be sure to cut out and remove the entire "chad" from the hole near the number corresponding to each abalone taken.

Do I Need My Report Card on Free Fishing Days?

No. There is one more free fishing day this year, on Sept. 24. On free fishing days, all regulations apply, but no fishing license or abalone permit report card is required.

Fishermen taking abalone on free fishing days are not required to punch their report card. However, to help DFG biologists monitor abalone

"Abalone" *continued on page 11*

Get Hooked on the Marine Region Web Site!

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/mrd.** This comprehensive information source currently contains over 1,800 Web pages readily available to the public. If you are new to the Marine Region Web site, we invite you to see what a truly valuable resource we have created. For those of you who have already visited our Web site, be sure to check back regularly, since new features, updates, and press releases are added every week. Here are a few recent, noteworthy additions to our Web site:

Abalone Recovery and Management Plan (ARMP): **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/armp**: The ARMP provides a cohesive framework for the recovery of depleted abalone populations in southern California, and for the management of the northern California fishery and future fisheries. The latest version of the ARMP (June 2005) has recently been added to our Web site. The site allows you to download the entire ARMP, or you can easily view a specific chapter, table, figure, or appendix.

Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative: www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/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 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, which includes many recent additions, contains up-to-date information about this exciting endeavor.

Market Squid Fishery Information: **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/marketsquid**: This portion of our site is a wonderful resource if you are looking for information about the market squid fishery. There have been a number of recent additions and changes to these pages, including new links to the market squid harvest status, market squid fishery provisions, and specific parts of the 2005 California Commercial Fishing Digest relating to market squid.

Final California Commercial Landings for 2003: **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/landings03.html**: This information has been recently released to the public

"Web Site Update" *continued on page 11*

2005 Ocean and Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations Supplement Now Available

by Mary Patyten, Research Writer

Ready for salmon season? Have your 2005 Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations booklet in hand? Not so fast! If you haven't read the regulations *supplement*, now available on the Department's Marine Region Web site and wherever fishing licenses are sold, you may not be as ready as you believe!

Every year in April, the Pacific Fisheries Management Council finalizes the recreational and commercial salmon seasons for the remainder of the year. And every year, California Freshwater and Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations Supplements are printed in May or June. The supplement provides both freshwater and ocean anglers with regulations for the recreational salmon season for the remainder of 2005, along with any freshwater and ocean fishing regulations that may have changed since the first of the year.

Features of the 2005 supplement include:

- Ocean and riverine salmon season regulations for the remainder of the year
- Information about abalone permit report cards: this year, perforations were inadvertently omitted when the cards were printed. It will take a bit more effort for abalone fishermen to punch the required holes in their abalone permit report cards.
- A review of April in-season changes to recreational groundfish regulations, including an updated groundfish management area map and updated groundfish regulation summary tables
- Salmon and steelhead ID illustrations
- Canary rockfish vs. vermilion rockfish ID illustration
- Information about coded-wire salmon tag recovery
- New gear, size, and bag limit restrictions for the Klamath River salmon and steelhead fishery
- Updated maps of the Klamath River Special Regulation Waters showing specific areas affected by regulation

The 2005 supplement may be found online at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/oceanfish2005supp.pdf**. For more information about ocean salmon fishing go to **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/oceansalmon.html**. For more information about groundfish regulations, go to **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/bfregs2005.html**.

So... You Think You Know Your Rockfishes?

Take the Department's Fish ID Quiz and Test Your Knowledge! *by Mary Patyten, Research Writer*

Rockfish can be difficult to identify. No one disputes that, not even scientists who have spent their lives studying the genus *Sebastes*! How good are you at identifying different species of rockfish? The rockfishes pictured below represent some of the more common species you might see on a typical day of fishing off the central or southern California coast, although many species are also found further north. Take the rockfish quiz below, and see how well you know your rockfishes! (Answers can be found on page 10)

This fish is something of a celebrity. Caught on April 3, 2003 near Carrington Point at Santa Rosa Island, it was tagged, released, and then recaptured over a year and a half later at the same location! Biologists call this tendency to stay in one area "residential" behavior. This species is thought to stake out a home territory of about 110 square feet on rocky sea floor, although this can vary in different areas. The color of the fish in this photograph is a bit unusual, but don't let that fool you. What species of rockfish is it?

No. 1

photo by E. Roberts

No. 2

photo by E. Roberts

This fish was taken in 190 ft. of water at Short Bank in Santa Monica Bay. This dwarf species (yes, that's a hint!) of rockfish is a common sight for recreational fishermen in southern California, and has also made inroads into the area's live fish markets. What species of rockfish is it?

This fish, another dwarf species that nibbles on recreational fishermen's hooks, was taken off Santa Barbara. Due to its very small size, it's often discarded by recreational fishermen and is not even found in live fish markets. What species of rockfish is it?

No. 3

photo by E. Roberts

No. 4

Photo courtesy T. Burgess

This fish, although small, is not a dwarf: it's a young rockfish, taken off Goleta Pier in southern California. Its grown-up counterparts are much sought-after by both recreational and commercial fishermen. South of Cape Mendocino, adults of this species have a recreational daily bag limit of one fish and a minimum size limit of 10 inches total length (that's a BIG hint! But, then, immature rockfishes aren't exactly easy to identify!). What species of rockfish is it?

And finally this fish, taken off Santa Rosa Island in approximately 120 ft of water. It has been very popular with recreational fishermen. Catch rates plummeted between 1980 and 1996 due to fishing pressure and oceanographic changes that did not favor the survival of young fish. What species of rockfish is it?

No. 5

photo by E. Roberts

Look on page 10 to find the answers!

For more information about California's marine fish, go to the Fish Identification Guide Web page on the DFG Marine Region Web site at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/fishid.html**.

"July Groundfish Opener" *continued from page 1*

The group of fishes known as "groundfish" includes bottom-dwelling species such as rockfishes, lingcod, cabezon, and kelp greenlings. For a complete list of federally-designated groundfish, go to the DFG Marine Region Web site at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/groundfish_fedlist.html**.

Special regulations exist for some species, including lingcod, California scorpionfish, and leopard shark. Current tables summarizing groundfish regulations by management area are available at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/bfregs2005.html**, and in the Sport Fishing Regulations Supplement, available on the Marine Region Web site and wherever fishing licenses are sold. The Recreational Groundfish Fishing Regulations Hotline at **(831) 649-2801** also provides fishermen with the latest groundfish fishing regulations.

Only boat-based anglers (fishermen who fish from boats or vessels of any size, or any other type of floating object, including kayaks and float tubes) were restricted from fishing for groundfish along the central Calfornia coast during the first half of 2005. Divers and shore-based anglers (who fish from beaches, banks, piers, jetties, or other man-made structures connected to shore) were allowed to fish, as they take a lot fewer groundfish.

The recreational groundfish season is scheduled to continue through December, 2005. Fishermen should note, however, that fishing opportunities could be restricted in the future if new California Recreational Fisheries Survey data show that recreational fishermen are exceeding catch levels specified by law.

For further information about groundfish, be sure to visit the DFG Marine Region Web site at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd**.

Have a question?

Need help identifying a fish?

sargo (golden variant)
Anisotremus davidsonii
photo by E. Roberts

Send your e-mail questions to:

AskMarine@dfg.ca.gov

Upcoming MLPA Meetings

The development of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) is guided by the advice of scientists, resource managers, experts, stakeholders and members of the public. The public is encouraged to attend MLPA meetings, or watch meetings live over the Internet (go to **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/mlpa/meetings.html**). Public comment periods will be held at the meetings as appropriate. Upcoming meetings include the following:

Science Advisory Team Meeting
July 6, 2005,
Ludwig Community Center
864 Santa Rosa Street
San Luis Obispo, CA

Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
July 7-8, 2005
Morro Bay Veterans Hall
209 Surf Street
Morro Bay, CA

Visit the MLPA Web site at www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/mlpa/index.html for more information!

"Trawling Closures" *continued from page 1*

In the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, the action provides for a network of eight marine protected areas in waters three to six miles offshore. Ms. Marija Vojkovich, acting for the Department of Fish and Game director in this decision, said "This action, in combination with complimentary landing laws that the State of California will enact, will ultimately complete the network of marine protected areas we envisioned in late 2002 with regard to fishing impacts. We expect that National Marine Sanctuary authorities will add the necessary protection from non-fishing impacts."

In addition to closing areas to bottom trawl fishing, the PFMC took action to formally identify essential fish habitat for groundfish, establish habitat areas of particular concern for future management considerations, and institute research and monitoring mechanisms.

Actions adopted by the PFMC will be incorporated in a final Environmental Impact Statement being completed by NOAA Fisheries (National Marine Fisheries Service) and implemented by May 2006. Details of the actions, including maps of the areas closed to bottom trawling, will be available on the Council website in the near future. For more information, contact PFMC Executive Director Don McIsaac at 503-820-2280 or visit the PFMC Web site at **www.pcouncil.org/**.

"CRFS" *continued from page 2*

in the ocean, a CRFS fish tech is expected to endure the same conditions as the anglers.

As fishing begins, Stephanie makes observations on the catch rate, the species composition of the catch, and the fishing location and conditions. She also collects biological information from fish that the anglers do not keep. A nice vermilion rockfish is brought aboard, and the deckhand places the fish in the angler's burlap sack hung on the central live bait tank. She notes the catch on her species composition form, and will collect biological data about the fish at the end of the day.

Each time the boat pulls anchor and moves to a new location, Stephanie notes the location and gets the depth and temperature readings from Captain Bruce Root. She answers questions on fish identification, talks more about sport fishing regulations, and helps an angler to remove a scorpionfish from his hook. She even finds time to order and eat a cheeseburger from the boat's galley, all the while making her observations and recording her data.

As the fishing day draws to a close, Stephanie coordinates with the deckhand, Danny Walter, to collect the rest of the data she needs to complete the survey. She works fast– while the data she's collecting is important, she doesn't want to inconvenience the deckhand by slowing him up as he starts to fillet the catch on the way back to the dock. She carefully measures and weighs each fish, and records these measurements on the angler's interview form. It takes coordination to do this on a gently rolling boat, while avoiding the backcast of an angler lobbing a heavy iron jig with a wicked treble hook, hoping to catch one last barracuda.

While measuring and recording data, Stephanie notices that an angler is over-limit– he's got three bocaccio (a rockfish), and the regulations allow him to possess only one. After she completes her work, she approaches the angler and carefully explains the situation, assuring him that it is not her job, nor the intent of the survey, to enforce fishing regulations. She shows him how to identify bocaccio so that he can avoid similar situations in the future, and suggests distributing the two over-limit bocaccio to passangers who did not catch any, before they reach land. This way, he'll avoid disembarking with too many bocaccio in-hand: a good way to get cited for an over-limit of a protected species. Relieved and reassured, the angler follows her advice, ensuring that the fish won't go to waste.

Stephanie asks each angler a few more questions before the boat reaches the dock and everyone goes their separate ways. As a deckhand secures the bow line, she thanks Captain Root and Deckhand Walter for accommodating her, and debarks with the rest of the passengers, gear in tow. On the way through the parking lot to her car, anglers thank Stephanie for her time and assistance. She smiles in return. It's all in a day's work.

Answers to the Rockfish Quiz on page 8

1. Copper rockfish, *Sebastes caurinus.* Common names include *chucklehead*, and *whitebelly rockfish*. This fish is often an olive/dark brown/coppery pink color. If the red color had you thinking 'vermilion rockfish', look at the dorsal fin: long spines, deeply incised (compared to a vermilion rockfish), and none of the fins are edged in black, as you often find in the vermilion. According to rockfish authorities, bright-red copper rockfish are common off of California. Daily recreational bag limit: not more than 10 in combination with other RCG Complex* species. Maximum recorded length: 26 in. Range: Gulf of Alaska to Baja California.

2. Honeycomb rockfish, *Sebastes umbrosus.* Common names include *crotch cricket*, and *starry-eye*. The green edging on the scales produces a distinctive honeycomb pattern. Daily recreational bag limit: not more than 10 in combination with other RCG Complex* species. Maximum recorded length: 11.22 in. Range: central California to southern Baja California.

3. Calico rockfish, *Sebastes dalli*. Named after the Smithsonian zoologist William H. Dall. Identified by reddish-brown bars slanting obliquely on a brown or yellowish-green body. The tail shows brown bars that run alongside the fin rays. Daily recreational bag limit: not more than 10 in combination with other RCG Complex* species. Maximum recorded length: 8 in. Range: San Francisco to central Baja California, more common south of Pt. Arguello.

4. Bocaccio, *Sebastes paucispinis*. Common names include *salmon grouper*, and *mini-grouper*. Young bocaccio are frequently taken in significant numbers off piers in central California. The large mouth extending almost past the eye is one characteristic that identifies this fish as a bocaccio. Daily recreational bag limit - North of 40°10' N. latitude: 2 fish. South of 40°10' N. latitude: 1 fish. Maximum recorded length: 36 in. Range: Alaskan Peninsula to Punta Blanca, Baja California.

5. Olive rockfish, *Sebastes serranoides.* Common names include *johnny bass*, and *jonathon*. This species is often confused with yellowtail rockfish and kelp bass. Olive rockfish may be distinguished by the lack of dark speckling on the sides, and an often more elongate, bass-shaped body. Daily recreational bag limit: not more than 10 in combination with other RCG Complex* species. Maximum recorded length: 24 in. Range: southern Oregon to San Benitos Is., Baja California.

**RCG Complex: Includes all species of rockfish, cabezon and greenlings*

"Abalone" *continued from page 6*

populations, the DFG encourages fishermen to document their abalone catch on free fishing days (including date, location where taken, number taken and your name and address).

When and Where Do I Send My Abalone Permit Report Card?

Send in your card after you finish your last diving or shorepicking trip of the year for abalone, even if you did not take any abalone. Cards should be mailed in by Dec 30, 2005 at the latest, to:

Department of Fish and Game
19160 South Harbor Drive
Fort Bragg, CA 95437-5798

Do I Record the Abalone I've Given Away on My Report Card ?

Yes. Fishermen are legally able to give sport-caught abalone to another person who does not have a fishing license or report card. These abalone must be recorded on your report card, however, and count towards your annual limit of 24 abalone. Also, remember that you are only allowed to take and/or possess up to three abalone per day– if you take your three and give them away, you'll have to wait until the next day to take three more for yourself.

Red abalone may be taken from April through June, and from August through November this year. The bag limit is the same as last year: three abalone per day, with an annual limit of 24 abalone. The size limit for abalone is seven inches or greater in diameter.

The current state record abalone, taken by John Pepper in 1993, measured twelve and one-third inches across. Additional information about California abalone is available on the DFG's Web site at **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/abalone**.

"Web Site" *continued from page 7*

through our Web site. The page contains links to 25 tables containing a wealth of statistical information on commercial landings. The information covers the entire state, often focusing on specific geographical areas.

Here are some of our most popular pages:

California Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations Map **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/fishing_map.html**: 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.

Record Ocean Sportfish **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/faqtrph3.html**: Would you like to learn about some of the largest California ocean fish that have ever been caught? Go no further! The page contains links to lists of record ocean sport fish, as well as some impressive photos. If you are a potential record holder, the page also contains information about how you can send information to DFG to become a record holder.

Laws and Regulations Page **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/regulations.html**: This page is your main source for information concerning commercial and sport fishing regulations. Over 30 links connect you to a variety of information concerning current regulations.

A-to-Z Directory **www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/index_directory.html**: We receive frequent comments letting us know how easy it is to find information on our Web site. Can't seem to find what you're looking for? Don't worry! Just visit our A-to-Z Directory, and there you will see an alphabetized list of resources available to you on our Web site.

Fishery Management Meetings

2005 Fish and Game Commission
www.fgc.ca.gov/2005/2005mtgs.html

June 23-24
Bishop

August 18-19
San Luis Obispo

September 29-30
Susanville

November 3-4
Santa Barbara

December 8-9
Concord

2005 Pacific Fishery Management Council
www.pcouncil.org/events/future.html

June 12-17
Foster City, CA

September 18-23
Portland, OR

Oct. 30-Nov. 4
San Diego, CA

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

MARINE
Management News

Marine Management News is published quarterly 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/mrd.**

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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/mrd.**

DFG Marine Region's mission:
"To protect, maintain, enhance, and restore California's marine ecosystems for their ecological values and their use and enjoyment by the public."