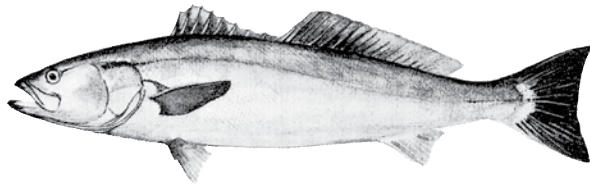




White Seabass Facts



White Seabass Illustration by P. Johnson

Family	Sciaenidae (croakers)
Scientific Name	<i>Atractoscion nobilis</i>
Common Name	sea trout (for juveniles) <i>NOTE: white seabass are not trout</i>
Identification	Bluish-gray above with dark speckling, silvery below; young have dark vertical bars. Distinguishable from other croakers by a ridge running along the belly.
Prey	Market squid, Pacific sardine, northern anchovy, and pelagic red crab
Diving Record (Free)	93 lb. 4 oz. (Bill Ernst, 2007)
Angling Record	78 lb. 0 oz. (D.L. Sternberg, 2002)
Sport Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum length: 28 in. total length or 21.5 in. alternate length Statewide bag and possession limit: 3 fish per day * EXCEPTION *

check your Ocean Sport Fishing regulations booklet or www.dfg.ca.gov/regulations for current fishing regulations.




On The Cover: Spearfisherman Bill Ernst with his 93 lb 4 oz record white seabass

Public Participation

Public input is a critical component of marine resource management. Interested individuals are encouraged to participate in the DFG's management of white seabass. You can become involved by writing to the Fish and Game Commission or the DFG to express your views or request additional information. In addition, you can contribute to white seabass recovery through conscientious angling and boating.


How Anglers Can Help Protect The Resource

 White seabass do not survive catch and release well. If you intend to release the fish, keep it in the water and try to remove the hook from the fish's mouth at the side of the boat. Fish that flop around on the deck have a much higher chance of dying shortly after release.


Don't use treble hooks - use barbless hooks or circle hooks instead.

 Stop fishing when you've caught your limit.

Use a knotless mesh landing net made of rubber or a soft material to land white seabass.

 If a fish is hooked in the gullet (throat area) cut the line close to the hook and release the fish.

Juvenile white seabass are commonly caught around piers and bait docks and can be confused with other near shore species. Know how to identify and release juvenile white seabass (*see Identifying White Seabass*).

 Save (freeze) your adult white seabass heads and take them to your local drop-off station. The heads provide valuable information to help facilitate and continue the OREHP hatchery program, which enhances wild stocks. To find the nearest drop-off station visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/abmp/seabassheads.asp.

Help Fish and Game Wardens Put an End to Poaching

If you witness poaching or polluting, call

1-888-DFG-CALTIP
(1-888-334-2258)



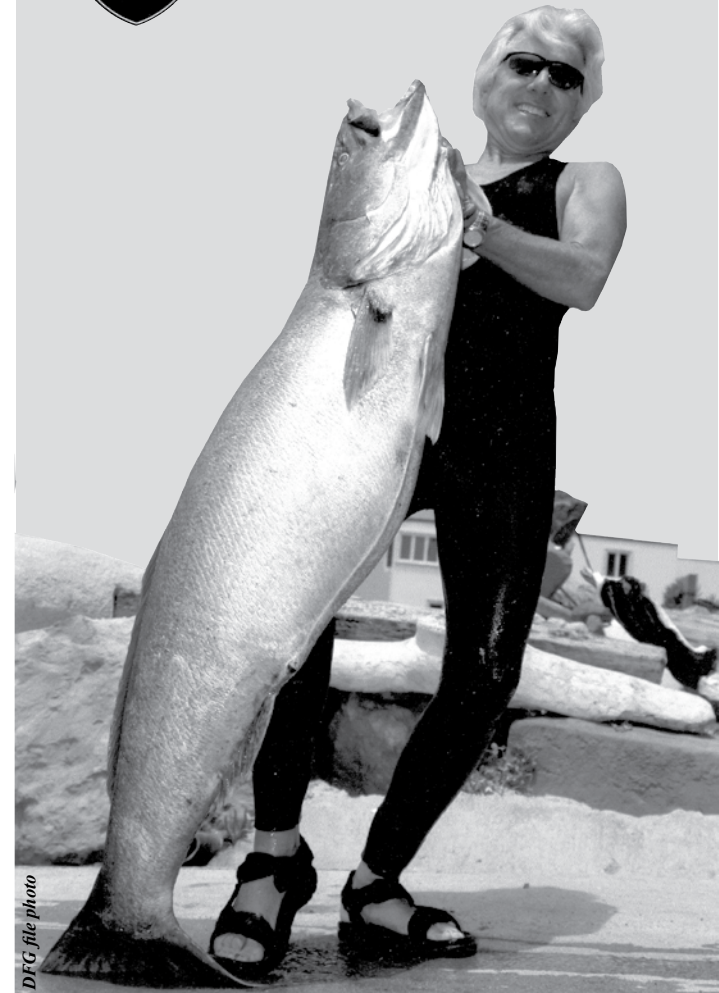
Alternate communication formats of this document are available upon request. If reasonable accommodation is needed, call DFG at (707) 964-5026. The California Relay Service for the deaf or hearing-impaired can be utilized from TDD phones at (800) 735-2929.

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California Department of Fish and Game

White Seabass Fishing



DFG file photo

White Seabass Information

Life History
Management

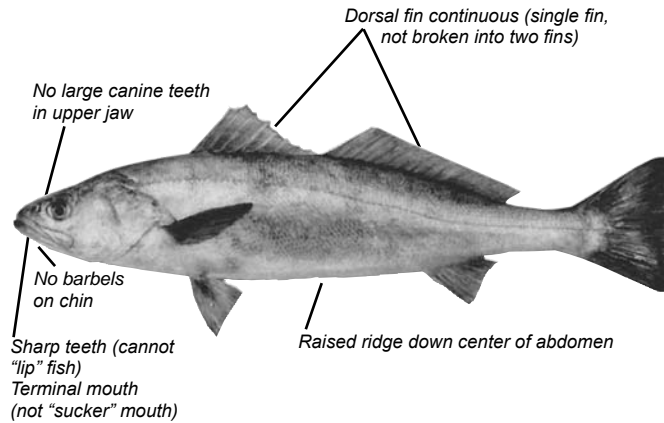
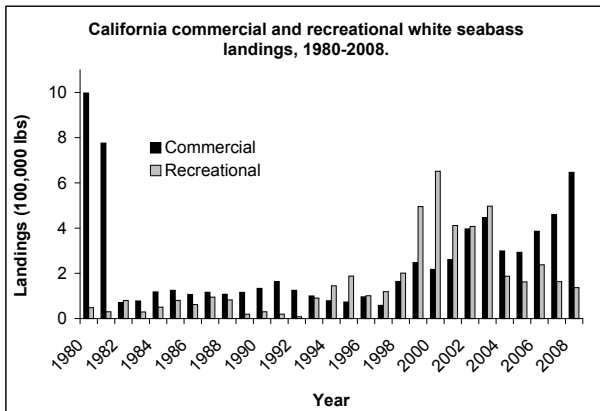
Fishing
Identification



White seabass are highly prized fish in California's sport and commercial fisheries. The resource has been shared by sport and commercial fishermen since the late 1890s. The commercial fishery is comprised of a small group of fishermen who use set and drift gill nets or hook-and-line gear. Sport fishermen also catch white seabass using hook-and-line gear, although spearfishing white seabass has grown in popularity in the last 15 years. Most sport-caught white seabass are taken by anglers and divers from private boats and party boats.

In 2002 the California Fish and Game Commission adopted the White Seabass Fishery Management Plan (WSFMP), which established a total annual harvest guideline of 1.2 million pounds of fish. This level of harvest promotes growth of the white seabass stock off California without impacting the fisheries, since current and expected future harvests are below the harvest guideline. The WSFMP is available for viewing at selected public libraries, DFG offices, and online at www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/wsfmp/index.asp.

The Ocean Resources Enhancement and Hatchery Program (OREHP) has supplemented white seabass stocks since 1986, funded through the federal Sport Fish Restoration Act and sales of the Sport Fishing Ocean Enhancement Stamp. Since 2001, more than 100,000 internally tagged white seabass have been released every year. To date, approximately 150 tagged adult fish have been recovered in recreational and commercial fisheries. For more information visit www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/abmp.



ADULT WHITE SEABASS

JUVENILE WHITE SEABASS

Juveniles often have 3 to 6 dark vertical bars on sides, which fade with age

Juvenile white seabass are often mistaken for other small silvery fish such as queenfish (aka *sea trout*). Here are some pointers that will help to tell the difference between juvenile white seabass and queenfish:

QUEENFISH
AKA "SEA TROUT"

Juvenile white seabass may also be mistaken for shortfin corvina, California corvina, and other members of the croaker family.

DFG file photos

The white seabass is the largest member of the croaker family in California. Fish weighing over 90 pounds and up to five ft long have been recorded, although fish over 60 pounds are rare. White seabass range over the continental shelf of the eastern north Pacific from Juneau, Alaska to Magdalena Bay, Baja California, and inhabit the northern portion of the Gulf of California in Mexico.

White seabass occur primarily between San Diego and Point Conception off California. They become sexually mature at about three to four years old. White seabass reach "keeper" size (28 in. length) at around five years old, which allows each fish to reproduce for at least one to two years before capture. Spawning in southern California occurs from April through August, peaking in May and June. During this period, mature white seabass appear to congregate near shore over rocky habitat and near kelp beds. Females are believed to spawn several times each season.

White seabass eggs are buoyant, and drift with the ocean currents. The eggs develop into darkly colored larvae, and settle out into coastal areas. Young-of-the-year white seabass may be found near drifting debris and algae in shallow areas just outside the surf zone. Older juveniles can be found in kelp beds and in protected bays, often near eel-grass beds.

As white seabass mature, they are commonly found schooling near rocky bottom features and around kelp beds along the coast and offshore islands. Adults are also known to school several miles offshore.

Approximate Length and Weight at Age for White Seabass		
Age (years)	Weight	Length
1	6 oz	5 in
3	2 lb 12 oz	20 in
5	7 lb 6 oz	28 in
7	13 lb 14 oz	35 in
9	20 lb 13 oz	40 in
11	27 lb 8 oz	44 in
13	33 lb 5 oz	47 in
15	37 lb 12 oz	49 in