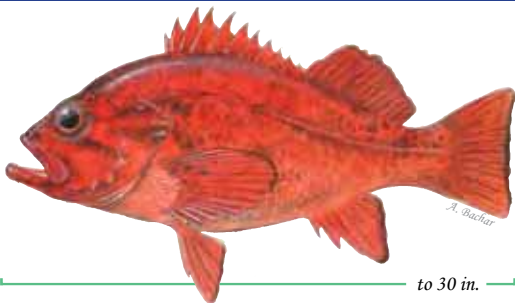


Vermilion Rockfish



Vermilion rockfish

are found throughout California waters near rugged, rocky areas and towards the bottom of oil platforms near shell mounds and pipelines. They may be caught at depths of 50 to 500 ft. (usually less than 100 ft. off central California), although they have been taken from depths as great as 900 ft.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Bright red on body and fins, black and gray mottling on young fish.

Fish less than 12 inches long may have black-edged fins. Body moderately deep. Upper profile of head moderately curved, large mouth, lower jaw slightly projecting. Weak head spines. Eyes not yellow. Underside of jaw feels rough when rubbed from tail to head.

Life History & Other Notes

Vermilion rockfish feed almost exclusively on fishes, squid and octopus.

Vermilion rockfish appear to mature and spawn for the first time when they are 3 to 4 years old. Fertilization is internal and they give birth to live young. A female measuring 20 inches long was estimated to contain 282,000 eggs. By this measure, a 30-inch fish may contain as many as half a million eggs. Most spawning takes place from December through March.

The vermilion rockfish is a very popular and highly sought-after fish. The usual fishing rig consists of baited hooks above a sinker heavy enough to take the line to the bottom on a fairly straight course. A lot of rebaiting time can be saved by using a tough, difficult-to-steal bait such as a piece of squid or salted mackerel.

Vermilion Rockfish

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Sebastes miniatus

OTHER COMMON NAMES

red snapper, red rock cod

RANGE & HABITAT

*Statewide over rocky reefs
or other structure*

LENGTH & WEIGHT

To 30 in. and 15+ lb.

LIFE SPAN

To 60 years

DIET & SUGGESTED BAIT

*Feeds on fishes, squid and octopus.
Try using live squid and anchovies,
or salted mackerel for bait, and
artificial lures such as leadhead jigs,
swimbait, and diamond bars.*