8th Annual
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Marine Resources Program

Sport Bottomfish Newsletter

April 2026

What's Inside

Visit Our Website

myodfw.com/sport-bottomfish-seasons

Bottomfish by the Numbers

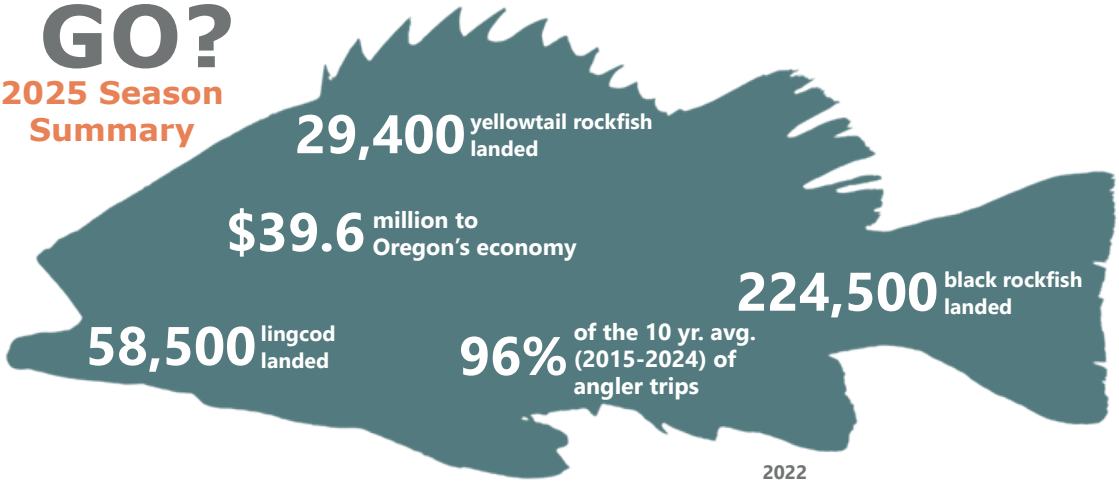
The recreational (sport) bottomfish season drew strong interest once again in 2025. There were just under 100,000 angler trips along the Oregon coast, following the 10 year average of 103,900 trips annually (2015-2024). Prior to 2015, the average number of angler trips was around 76,300 trips annually (Figure 1).

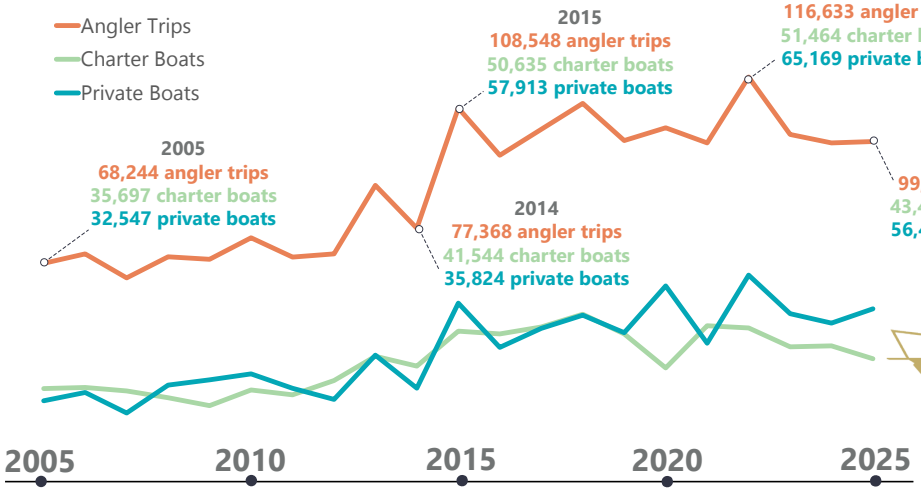
Newport had the highest bottomfish effort of any Oregon port in 2025, with roughly 24 percent of the total effort. Depoe Bay closely followed with a little over 20 percent of the total effort. Garibaldi, Charleston, and Brookings each had between nine and 17 percent of the effort. All other ports each had five percent or less of the total effort.

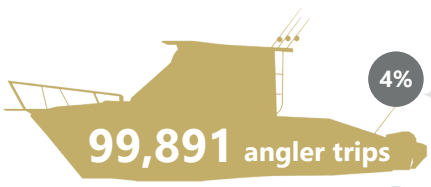
The recreational bottomfish fishery is made up of many different species, including all rockfish species, cabezon, lingcod, greenlings, skates, and sablefish. *(cont'd on p. 2)*

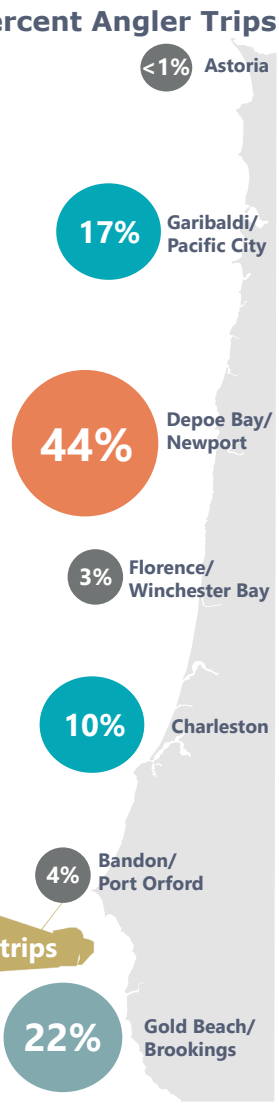
HOW'D IT GO?

2025 Season Summary









Note: Private boats include guided trips.

2025 Season Summary (cont'd)

Black rockfish are the most popular species with about 224,500 fish or 240 metric tons (mt) landed from bottomfish trips. There were 44,300 (32 mt) blue and deacon rockfishes landed, combined. The catch of nearshore rockfish species (e.g., China and copper rockfishes) was 9,500 (11 mt). Anglers landed 58,500 (176 mt) lingcod and 3,600 (9 mt) cabezon.

There were an estimated 29,400 (30 mt) yellowtail rockfish and 16,300 (18 mt) canary rockfish landed in the offshore long-leader and traditional bottomfish fisheries combined.

The 2025 recreational bottomfish season generated approximately $39.6 million to Oregon's economy. See page 3 for more information.

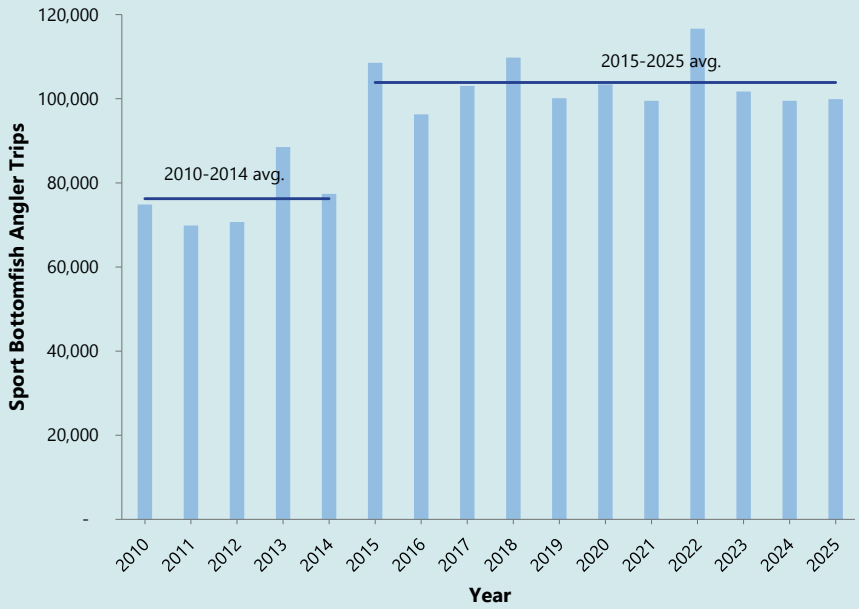


Figure 1: *Sport bottomfish angler trips and averages, 2010-2025.*

Monitoring Sport Bottomfish

ODFW's Marine Resources Program (MRP) has a monitoring program to collect information on the recreational bottomfish fishery to inform management decisions and provide valuable data for stock assessors. Sampling is conducted by ODFW's Ocean Recreational Boat Survey (ORBS) port samplers.

ORBS port samplers estimate the total effort by counting the number of ocean sport boat trips by the type of boat (i.e., charter or private vessels).

Samplers randomly conduct dockside boat interviews and collect information on trip target species, total catch, number of anglers on the boat, general fishing location, and the number of released fish.

Lengths are collected from a portion of the sampled catch to convert numbers of fish into weight.

2025 Monitoring Update

30 ORBS port samplers

11,375 bottomfish trip interviews

11 ports sampled

162,339 bottomfish counted

32,186 bottomfish bio samples

49 species identified

Visit www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish_sport/management.asp for more info on ORBS and the sport bottomfish fishery.

Picture: *ORBS sampler weighing fish. Photo courtesy of ODFW's ORBS program.*

Managing Sport Bottomfish

For most recreationally encountered species, there is a federal or state annual quota, which is the amount of fish ODFW has to work with in setting season structures and bag limits. Exceeding quotas could lead to overfishing or have an impact on other fisheries. Note that lingcod does not currently have a quota in Oregon's recreational fishery because all fisheries combined (commercial and recreational) are taking far less than the total allowable catch amount for the West Coast north of Cape Mendocino, CA.

The quota for recreational bottomfish species in Oregon for 2025 and 2026 is shown in Table 1.

The yelloweye rockfish bycatch quota is similar for 2025 and 2026. The yelloweye rockfish stock size has improved, though not enough to allow anglers to retain them.

The 2025 and 2026 black rockfish quotas are also similar but reduced by about 33 percent compared to the 2024 quota. Thanks to an **emergency groundfish rule by NOAA Fisheries**, the canary rockfish quota will increase slightly in 2026. See page **5** for more details.

Species	2025 Quota (mt)	2026 Quota (mt)
Black Rockfish	**261.1**	**266.3**
Blue/Deacon Rockfish	64.9	63.2
Cabezon	17.2	16.9
Canary Rockfish	**26.0**	**28.6**
Greenlings	32.0	31.6
Lingcod	No Quota for OR Sport	
Nearshore Rockfish Complex	14.7	14.3
Yelloweye Rockfish	6.9	7.0

Table 1: *Quota for recreational bottomfish species in Oregon for 2025 and 2026.*

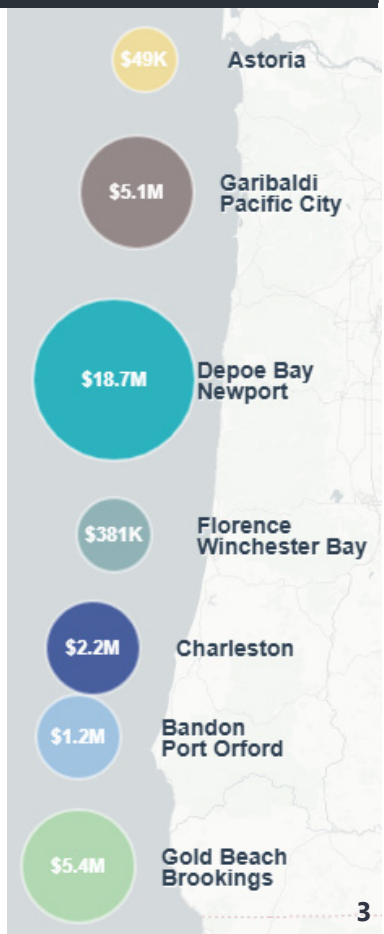
Economic Impact

The recreational bottomfish fishery contributed approximately $39.6 million to Oregon's economy in 2025 through fishing-related costs such as gas, bait, gear, moorage, food, and hotels. This translates to about 684 full-time jobs.[1]

Coastal communities capture a majority of the economic benefits, accounting for 82 percent of the income generated and 97 percent of the jobs throughout the state. Newport and Depoe Bay remain the largest share of the bottomfish recreational activity, contributing about $18.7 million to the coastal economy (Figure 2).[2]

Figure 2 (right): *Approximate coastal economic contribution from sport bottomfish anglers by port in 2025.*[2]

Picture (left): *Boats in Depoe Bay harbor. Photo courtesy of ODFW Marine Reserves.*



[1]Economic impact includes all wages and salaries, while jobs represent estimated positions supported by fisheries. The estimates are produced using NOAA Input-Output Model for Pacific Coast Fisheries (IOPAC) multipliers from the current available data on recreational expenditures from the 2022 National Marine Recreation Expenditure Survey. Adjustments for inflation are applied using the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) gross domestic product (GDP) deflator.

[2]Direct coastal impacts are lower than statewide totals because some economic activity "leaks" out of coastal communities when businesses or residents purchase goods and services from outside the region.

Bottomfish Identification

Bottomfish, or groundfish, refers to several groups of fish that are generally associated with the ocean bottom. Off Oregon, this includes rockfish, flatfish, lingcod, cabezon, greenlings, sablefish, skates and rays, along with three species of sharks. With all of those species of fish, it can be difficult to know what you have caught.

The ODFW website has a variety of tools to help anglers with fish identification, including: rockfish identification tips, rockfish and flatfish species information, and "What can I keep and how many?". The following quizzes will test your identification skills: Common Bottomfish Species, Yelloweye Rockfish or Not?, and Black Rockfish or Not?.

Correctly identifying fish is important for following species harvest and size regulations and to accurately report species caught and released to the ODFW dockside sampler. It is also important to know your fish ID to avoid keeping an illegal fish. Retention of quillback rockfish and yelloweye rockfish remains prohibited. See page 7 for identification tips for these species.

Enforcement

Three agencies patrol on land and at sea to enforce marine fishing regulations: the Oregon State Police (OSP) Fish and Wildlife Division and specifically the Marine Fisheries Team, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement. Regulations keep fisheries sustainable, and enforcement is a necessary piece of fisheries management.

Common issues cited are fishing without a license, not immediately tagging landed Pacific halibut or salmon, exceeding the bag limit, keeping prohibited species (such as yelloweye or quillback rockfishes), and fishing in closed areas such as Marine Reserves or the Stonewall Bank Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA).

2025 OSP Bottomfish Contacts and Stories

Extra Fish, Extra Trouble
During a patrol of the Depoe Bay boat launch, a Trooper came across an angler speaking with an ORBS sampler. The Trooper learned that the angler was in possession of five marine fish when the daily bag limit was only four. The angler was cited for Exceeding the Daily Bag Limit and the additional fish was donated to charity.

Identification Error Ends in Citation and Fish Donation
A Trooper received a report of an angler in Depoe Bay in possession of a yelloweye rockfish which is prohibited year-round. The angler stated he misidentified the fish and was educated on how to correctly identify fish in the future. A citation was issued for Take/Possession of a Fish During a Closed Season and the fish was donated to charity.

Canary Bag Limit Exceeded
A Senior Trooper was advised of a subject living in Sherwood who had exceeded his daily limit of canary rockfish. The Senior Trooper contacted the subject at his residence and issued a citation for Exceeding the Daily Bag Limit.

Fish Identification App Error
A Coos Bay Fish and Wildlife Trooper responded to a report from ODFW regarding two quillback rockfish that were retained in Charleston. The anglers utilized a paid app to identify the fish, however the identification that the app gave was not correct. The subjects were warned for Take/Possession of a Fish During a Closed Season and the fish were donated to a local charity.

Allocation Changes for 2025/2026

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) finalized the annual catch limits (ACL) for all bottomfish species for 2025 and 2026 as well as season structures and regulations at its June 2024 meeting.

In 2025, the Oregon black rockfish ACL decreased by about 33 percent. The stock is considered "healthy," but the estimate of the scale of the total biomass has decreased, prompting the decrease in allowable catch.

The coastwide (Washington, Oregon, and California) canary rockfish ACL decreased by about 52 percent in 2025. These rockfish are in the "precautionary zone," meaning the current estimate biomass is below 40 percent of the estimated unfished biomass. Therefore, reductions are necessary to get the stock back above that 40 percent target threshold and out of the precautionary zone. In early 2026, NOAA Fisheries published an emergency rule to increase the ACL for canary rockfish by 9.5 percent.

Both of these reductions were due to new assessments that say the scale of the overall biomass is lower than what was estimated during the previous assessments. See below for a summary of the most recent black rockfish stock assessment. For more information, visit: www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish_sport/management.asp
The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission set the 2026 season in December 2025.

Black Rockfish Stock Assessment

An Oregon black rockfish stock assessment (a model that uses fishery and survey information to create a population estimate) was completed in 2023, updating population status and overfishing limits from the previous 2015 assessment. The 2023 model includes new and updated data and is structured around using the first fishery independent **black rockfish survey** completed in 2021 along Oregon's entire coast.

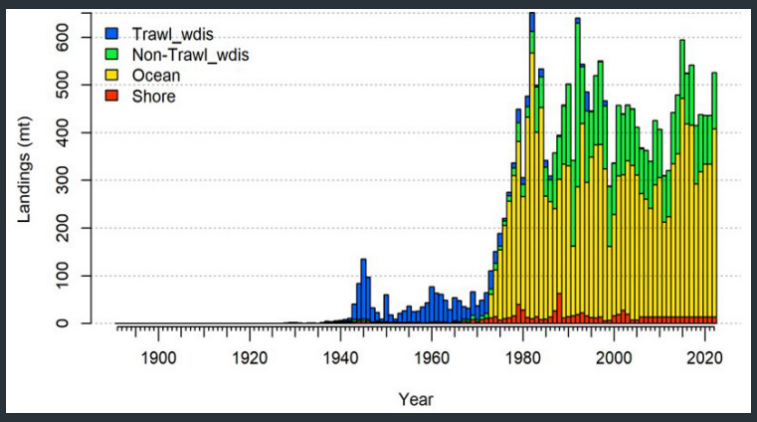


Figure 3: *Catch data used in the 2023 black rockfish assessment.*

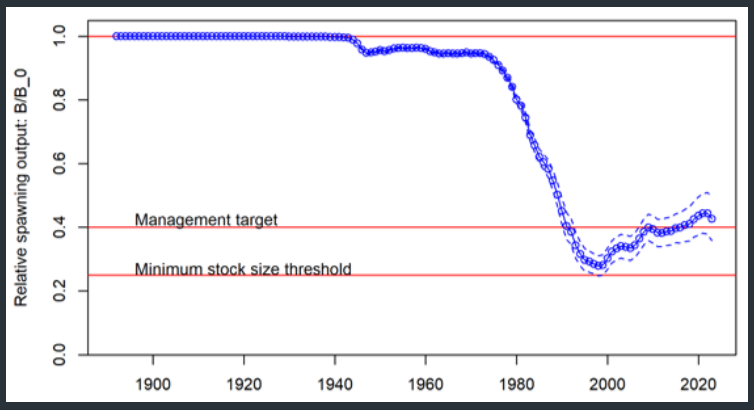


Figure 4: *Results from the 2023 assessment showing relative spawning output over time.*

This **survey** provides an estimate of the absolute biomass, anchoring the scale of the population in the model, which was a critical request following the previous assessment. The 2021 survey used a scientific fish finder with an underwater camera (shown on the right) to effectively count black rockfish.

The **2023 assessment** used a wide range of fisheries data, including length, age, and reproductive information. These were from the commercial non-trawl fleet, the recreational fleet, the marine reserves hook and line survey, a tagging study of black rockfish off the central Oregon coast, and the 2021 coastwide black rockfish survey as shown in Figure 3.

Results from the assessment model indicate that the stock size of black rockfish are at 45 percent which is just above the management target stock size of 40 percent (Figure 4). The stock status could drop below the management target without a reduction in catch prior to the next assessment.

Recreational Bottomfish Impacts

Throughout the season, ODFW staff carefully monitor catch of sport bottomfish to ensure quotas are not reached. When a sport bottomfish quota is reached or is projected to be reached prior to the end of the season, in-season adjustments to sport fishing regulations may be necessary in order to slow or stop fishing-related impacts on that species or species group. The estimates below are by species or species group and show monthly and cumulative catch in 2025, including the previous two years for comparison.
To see the current quota status, visit www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish_sport/estimates.asp

Black Rockfish

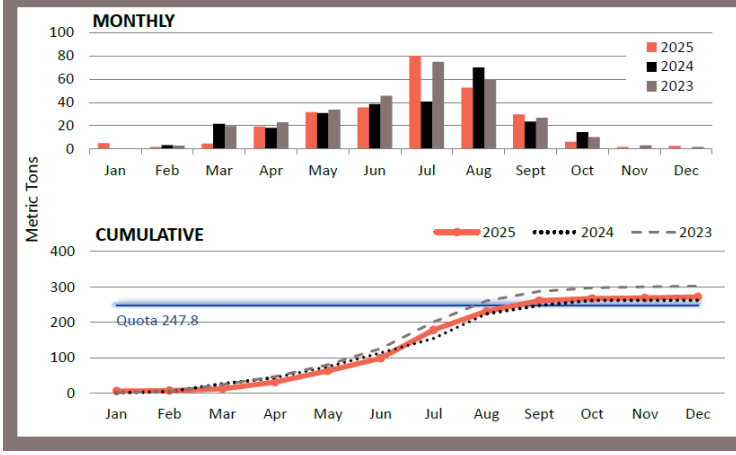


Figure 5: *Black rockfish catch, monthly and cumulative, 2023-2025.*

As mentioned above, the black rockfish quota was reduced for 2025, and since black rockfish are the most commonly caught species in the recreational fishery, this resulted in a general marine species bag limit reduction. The bag limit started at four fish in January and increased to five fish July 1 by regulation, as planned pre-season. Excellent weather and high effort in July and August meant higher than normal catch of black rockfish and led to an in-season change to reduce the bag limit back to four fish on August 18. Despite this change, the black rockfish quota was expected to be reached and led to an additional in-season change to reduce the bag limit to three fish on September 18. The black rockfish quota was reached in late September/early October (Figure 5), however, the fishery was able to stay open through the end of the year due to quota remaining in other sectors.

Because the canary rockfish quota was reduced for 2025, there was a one-fish sub-bag limit of canary rockfish in the traditional bottomfish fishery and the offshore long-leader fishery. This meant that out of the general marine species bag limit or the offshore long-leader bag limit, only one fish could be a canary rockfish. Even with the reduced bag limit, the canary rockfish quota was reached in late 2025 (Figure 6). However, the fishery was able to stay open due to quota remaining in other sectors.

Canary Rockfish

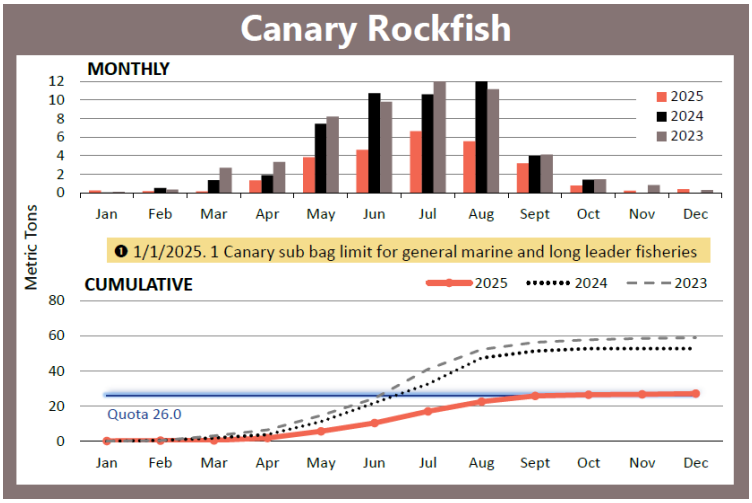


Figure 6: *Canary rockfish catch, monthly and cumulative, 2023-2025.*

There were no major changes to the 2025 quota for minor nearshore rockfishes which includes China, copper, and quillback rockfishes. Retention of quillback rockfish has been prohibited since 2022, but there are some impacts because not all fish survive after being released. See page 7 for more information on rockfish recompression. The minor nearshore rockfishes quota was reached in late 2025 (Figure 7). However, the fishery was able to stay open due to quota remaining in other sectors.

Minor Nearshore Rockfishes

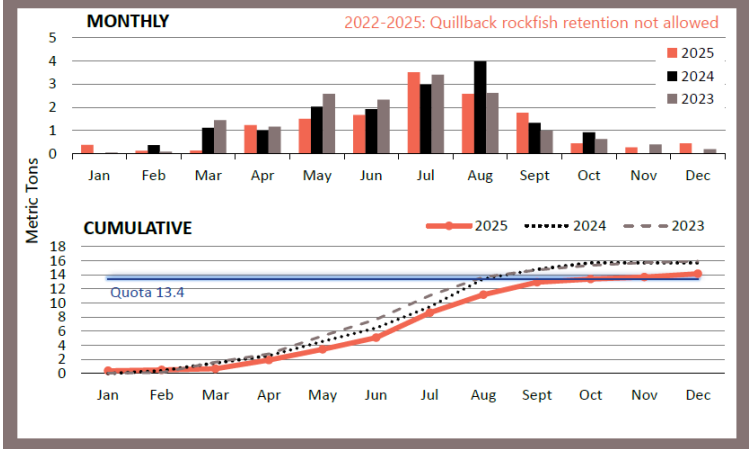


Figure 7: *Minor nearshore rockfish catch, monthly and cumulative, 2023-2025.*

Note: Quotas in the figures above do not include the quotas set aside for shore and estuary catch.

Other Updates and Reminders

Want More Information?

Visit Our Website

For current information about sport bottomfish & in-season changes please visit:

myodfw.com/sport-bottomfish-seasons

Or scan this QR code with your device

We are always interested in hearing from you about your fishery and the issues that are important to you.

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Rockfish Recompression

When a rockfish is brought to the surface, gas in its swim bladder expands. A fish suffering from barotrauma, an injury caused by a change in air pressure, will have a swollen body or stomach, esophagus protruding into its mouth, and/or bulging eyes. The expanded gas can make the fish too buoyant to swim back down to depth on its own.

Research shows that rockfish released near the depth of capture have a higher survival rate than those released at the surface. PFMC incorporates this into management for rockfish species. For yelloweye rockfish, releasing at depth has helped prevent additional fishery restrictions and reduced the chance of a recreational fishery closure due to bycatch.

It is mandatory to have a descending device onboard the vessel when fishing for bottomfish or Pacific halibut and to use the descending device when releasing rockfish outside (seaward) of the 30-fathom regulatory line.

Types of Descending Devices
A variety of commercially available and homemade devices are used.
Find what works for your vessel and set up.

The three most common are:


Seaqualizer


Shelton


Fish Gripper

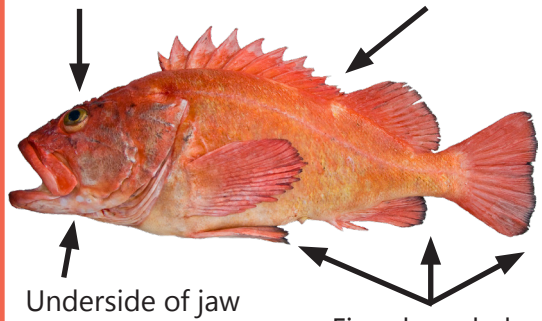
For additional information, see ODFW's Rockfish Recompression webpage:
myodfw.com/articles/rockfish-recompression

NO RETENTION ALLOWED

Yelloweye Rockfish

Bright yellow eyes; Two raspy ridges on head

Body orange red to orange yellow; may have a white lateral line



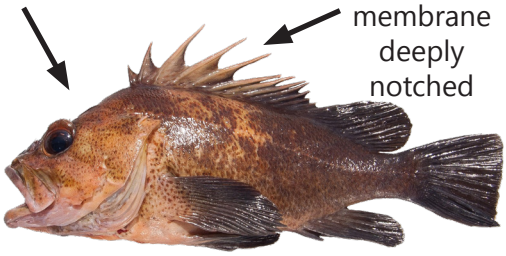
Underside of jaw smooth, no scales

Fin edges dark

Quillback Rockfish

Front of body marked with light brown or yellow, rear half is gray, brown, or black

Dorsal fin membrane deeply notched



Freckles on head and gill cover