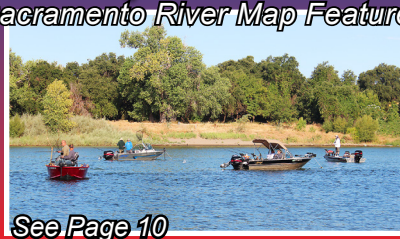


Up-To-Date and Published Locally... By Sportsmen... For Sportsmen!

Sacramento River Map Feature



# Fish Sniffer



See Page 10

## 40 Years Serving Sportsmen

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"The Magazine for West Coast Sportsmen!"

## INSIDE Area Reports

### FRESHWATER REPORTS

Lake Almanor - American Basin.....	6
Lake Amador - Berryessa Lake .....	7
Bullards Bar/Englebright Lakes .....	8
Collins Lake - Davis Lake .....	9
Don Pedro/New Hogan Lakes - Los Vaqueros...	12
Lake Oroville - Pardee/Camanche Lakes .....	13
Delta/Rio Vista .....	15
Shasta Lake - Stampede Reservoir.....	17

### SALTWATER REPORTS

Bodega Bay - Fisherman's Wharf//Berkeley .....	21
Half Moon Bay - Monterey Bay.....	22

## FEATURES

### Where...When...How...

GO FOR IT: Staff .....	4
MAP FEATURE: Dan Bacher.....	10-11
SPOTLIGHT ON CONSERVATION: Dan Bacher.....	20

## STAFF TACKLE

### What We're Using



**Ernie Marlan** - trolled the ocean for king salmon with Delta Pro Fishing. The ocean was flat calm and they caught 5 hefty salmon for three anglers. They trolled anchovies and used Phenix rods teamed up with a Penn reels spooled up with 65lb braid.



**Paul Kneeland** - fished Bullards Bar reservoir with Gary Caruso of Auburn in The Fish Sniffer Rogue Jet Coastal 21. They caught limits of kokanee to 14 1/2 inches using an 7'9" ultralight Lamiglas Fish Sniffer special kokanee rod with a Abu Garcia Revo level wind reel loaded with 6 pound test Yozuri fluorocarbon line. They trolled pink/silver Arrow Flash dodgers with pink micro hoochies and watermelon Vance's dodgers with green Bottom Line Tackle spinners with shoe peg corn 80 to 90 feet deep off the Cannon Downriggers at 1.2 mph.



**Dan Bacher** - fished for rainbow trout at Lake Alpine. He used a Berkley Ugly Stik GX2 6' 6" medium action spinning rod, teamed up with a Shakespeare GX235 spinning reel filled with 6 lb. test P-Line CX Premium Fluorocarbon Coated Line. He fished with rainbow glitter Berkley PowerBait and nightcrawlers on sliding sinker rigs with Size #4 and #6 Gamakatsu baitholder hooks.

## CDFW Solicits Input on New Slot Limit Proposal for Striped Bass

Striped bass fishing has been surprisingly productive all summer in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Savvy anglers willing to endure the wind have been catching good numbers of stripers while trolling on both the Sacramento and San Joaquin River sides of the Delta.

For example, Clyde Wands of Sacramento reported top-notch action while fishing with Mike Steer and Mark Wilson on the Delta on August 11.

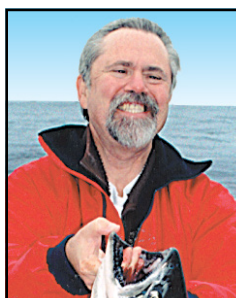
"We caught a total of 29 keepers to 8 pounds," he reported. "After going to the Sacramento side first and having problems with grass, we went over to the San Joaquin and fished shallow water by the Antioch Bridge on the last of the incoming tide. We then went back to Sacramento at the start of outgoing tide. The grass was gone and the fish were there."

They anglers kept their six fish



CDFW photo of an employee holding a striped bass.

Photo Courtesy of Devin Tafoya



### GONE FISHING by Dan Bacher

and released the rest back into the river. They found the top action while trolling with silver Rat-L-Traps on the San Joaquin and with rainbow trout Yo-Zuris on the West Bank of the Sacramento from the "sheep barn" to the "vineyard."

Yet the striped bass this year are largely absent from the San Francisco Bay and ocean waters where for decades they roamed in huge numbers to feed on anchovies and other forage.

CONTINUED ON PG 14

## Fun & Fillets: Welcome to the California Rockfishing Party Boat Scene

For one reason or another, I find that fishing onboard California party boats for rockfish is really pleasurable. I am not alone, as these prosperous fishing boats line ports up and down the coast of the Golden State.

When I first heard the term 'Party Boat' I thought it was a type of booze cruise or something along those lines. However, when applied to rockfishing, the term simply refers to a public boat that takes paying customers out fishing for the day. They typically take between fifteen and sixty anglers, and run half, three-quarter, or full day trips off the coast. So why are these rockfishing trips so fun?

Rockfish aren't typically big, and won't put up a huge fight. In fact, I was using a bass fishing setup during my latest trip. However, there is always the chance of getting a big lingcod or halibut on your next drift. Perhaps variety is one of the pieces of the puzzle that makes these trips so fun.

On any given party boat trip, you typically will see over a dozen different species of rockfish, plus lingcod, cabezon, halibut, and maybe even something rare like a white seabass. I even saw an angler outside of San Francisco get spooled by something massive. The captain figured was a great white shark!



### WHAT'S HOT by Jack Naves



**Captain Kyle Dyerly** (left) of the Phenix poses with the author with a double-digit lingcod on the gaff. This toothy leviathan grabbed a 'red crab' Hookup Bait jigged in only 40 feet of water. The action took place off the California Central Coast near Purisima Point on July 30.

Photo Courtesy of Dustin Miles, Phenix Sportsfishing

You don't have to be a pro to fish onboard a party boat. Beginners and experienced anglers alike line the rails of these public boats. Eager anglers plunge weighted offerings in anticipation of the 'TAP-TAP-TAP' feeling of something grabbing at their lines. After a long break from the saltwater scene, I was finally able to get back onto a party boat during a recent family vacation to Pismo Beach.

On Saturday, June 30th, I had the opportunity to fish

CONTINUED ON PG 18

## GONE FISHING

continued from page 2



Captain Dustin Miles, deckhand and relief skipper onboard the Phenix, makes quick work of a fresh stack of rockfish, cabezon, and lingcod. Watching pro knife skills up close is one of the benefits of jumping onboard a California party boat.

*Photo Courtesy of Jack Naves*



Local angler Joel Snyder poses with two stunningly-colored vermilion rockfish onboard the Phenix on July 30. One of the rewards of fishing onboard public party boats like the Phenix is the chance to meet new people, and maybe even kick back with a cigar on the way back to port.

*Photo Courtesy of Dustin Miles, Phenix Sportfishing*



Party boat fisherman Timothy Snyder hoists a quality vermilion rockfish on the deck of the Phenix on July 30. The prized fillets of California rockfish like this provide excellent table fare after they make their way to the kitchen.

*Photo Courtesy of Jack Naves*

onboard one of my favorite California party boats, the Phenix. The Phenix is operated by Captain Kyle Dyerly out of Port San Luis near Pismo Beach. The boat typically runs south to areas like Point Sal in search of brown or vermilion rockfish. On full-day trips, they typically run over two hours south to Purisima Point to fish prized rockfishing grounds off the Central Coast.

On our first drift, I slung my rig off the starboard bow and thumbed the spool down until I felt the telltale 'THUD' of the bottom greeting my lure. After a few pumps of the rod, I was hooked up and had a nice vermilion rockfish in the sack. On my next drop, Captain Kyle was on deck when I tied into something more substantial.

"I have something bigger on here!" I relayed to Kyle, and just then the fish peeled a bunch of line off of my low-profile bass reel. One of the great aspects of fishing off the Central Coast is that the shallow fishing

grounds allow you to fish lighter setups.

Kyle whipped the gaff out of a tube off the starboard helm. Seconds later, a hefty lingcod came flying over the rail and was soon on ice in my fish sack. Guys on party boats usually give me a hard time, as I'm typically the only angler obsessive enough to pack a 20 pound bag of ice in my gunny sack. Although I get a lot of ribbing, my fillets are always ice-cold all the way to the pan!

We were fishing really shallow during this trip, as shallow as 40 feet deep at times. With a consistent small ocean swell leading up to the trip, the fishing action was lights out. One thing that I've learned is that a big or increasing swell can really turn the rockfishing bite off like a light switch. This trip was just the opposite, with anglers catching fish just as fast as they could lower their offerings. There was quite a variety of fish coming over the rails.

Captain Kyle suggested that brown

rockfish are tops for table quality. I caught my limits of browns, but I shared a few so I could hold onto a few black-and-yellow rockfish since I had never tried them before. In addition to my own fish sack, I saw plenty of lingcod and cabezon hitting the decks. The boat limited by 11:00 am, so I made my way to the stern to get a front row seat at the cleaning table.

I find that part of the therapeutic value of a party boat trip is watching the deck hands fillet fish on the way back to harbor. It's almost like watching a good sales pitch. I can sit back, relax, and watch them perform their mastery for hours. Part of the fun is the anticipation. I can't wait to see the mystery catch that will flop out of each soggy brown gunny sack.

Captain Dustin Miles is the relief skipper onboard the Phenix, but he serves as its deckhand while Kyle is operating the boat. Anybody who has been on a party boat has seen the quick work that deckhands make of filleting rockfish. Having your limit sliced up and bagged in under five minutes is well worth the price of some extra tip money sent their way.

After watching Dustin during several

trips, I can honestly say that he has the best knife-skills I have ever seen onboard a boat. Not only is he fast, but he gets every ounce of white meat off the fish before sending the carcasses back to the depths. Best of all, he leaves no bones at all, not even the little ends of rib bones that most knife-slingers leave behind. He even sliced the thin strip of pin bones out of my lingcod, which is something that I usually deal with after returning home.

I planned my fishing trip on the last full day of our vacation, which made it possible to keep my fillets on ice until we returned home. With loads of fresh fillets on hand, I hosted a big family fish fry a few days later. We delivered some hot fish 'n' chips plates to a few of our neighbors, while the rest was enjoyed by family with homemade tartar sauce and wedge fries.

The next time you feel up to a fun ocean adventure, look up a California party boat. The inexpensive trip will be worth its price in fresh fillets alone. The adventure will be the icing on the cake. You can book a trip onboard the Phenix at PatriotSportfishing.com or by contacting them at 1-805-595-7200.

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