

# Volunteer Newsletter

A Summary of the 2025 Sampling Season



California Collaborative  
Fisheries Research Program –  
North Coast Collaborative  
Fisheries Research



## ***Hello Volunteers!***

The time has arrived for the much anticipated, 2025 Humboldt CCFRP newsletter! The 2025 season was jam packed with exciting new opportunities and of course, FISH! As always, we extend our gratitude for another successful season to our strong support system of community members that care about the research we do.

## ***Check out these stats:***

Since 2017, we have:

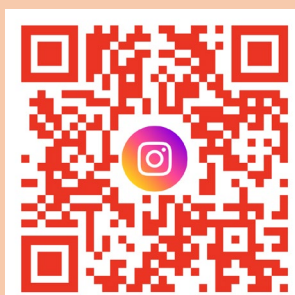
- Conducted **166** hook and line surveys
- Enlisted **142** volunteer anglers
- Caught and released **18,973** fish (**12,528** tagged)
- Captured a total of **32** different species

This season, we:

- Completed **16** trips total
- Caught **2,172** fish (**912** tagged)
- Retained **199** specimens for further data
- Captured **25** different species



You can follow us on Facebook at **NorthCoastCFR** and Instagram **@CCFRP** to stay up to date on MPA monitoring throughout the state! Visit **ccfrp.org** to access all reports and newsletters!



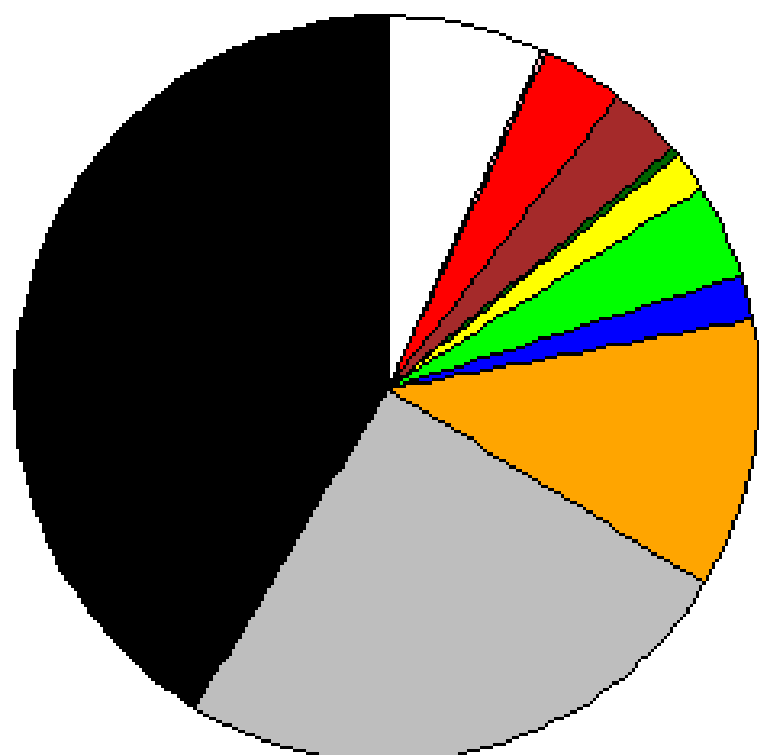
## **Special thanks to:**

- Cal Poly Humboldt - Fisheries Biology Department
- Cal Poly Humboldt - Telonicher Marine Lab

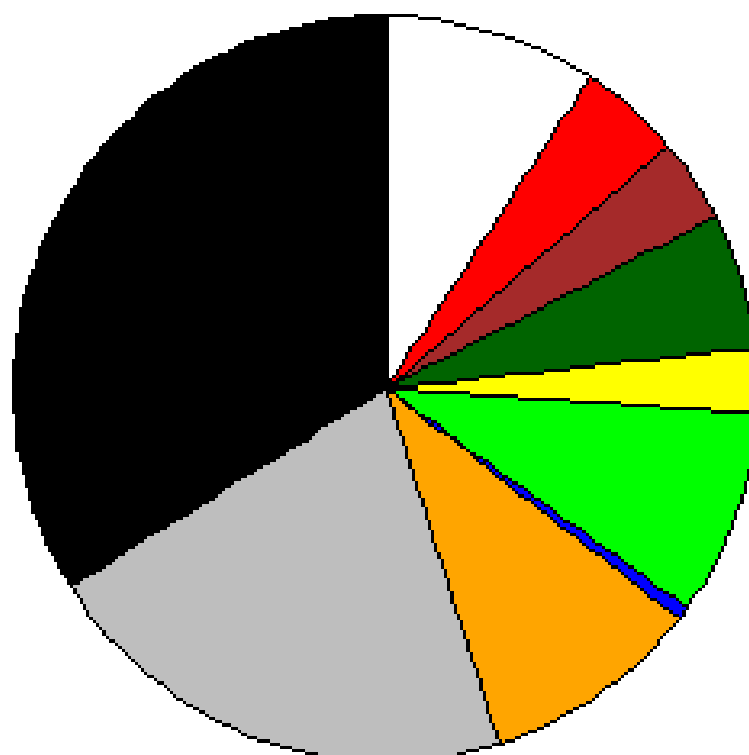
Newsletter compiled by:  
Aris Ownsbey & Claire Stuart

# 2025 Species Composition

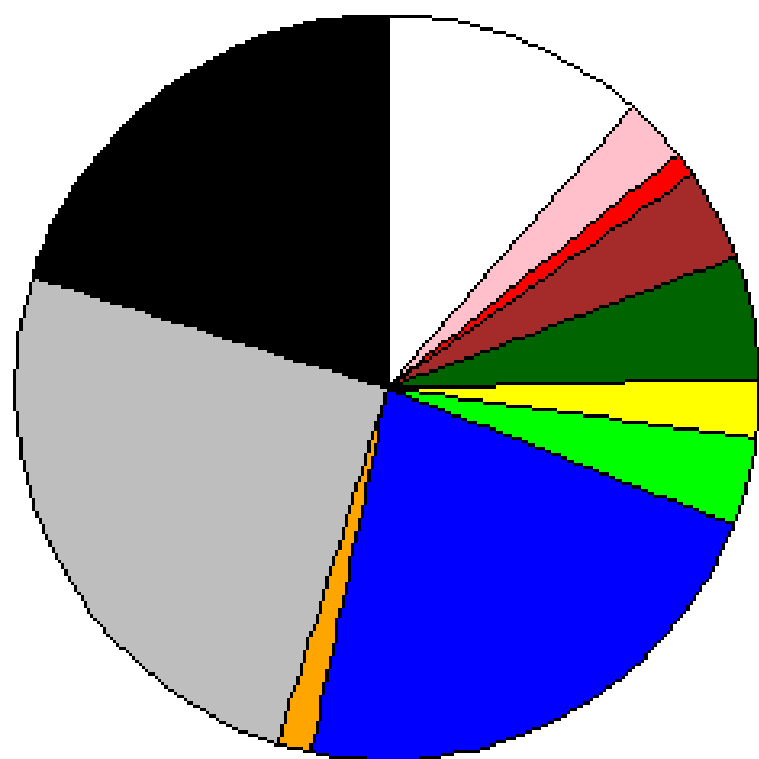
Cape Mendocino MPA



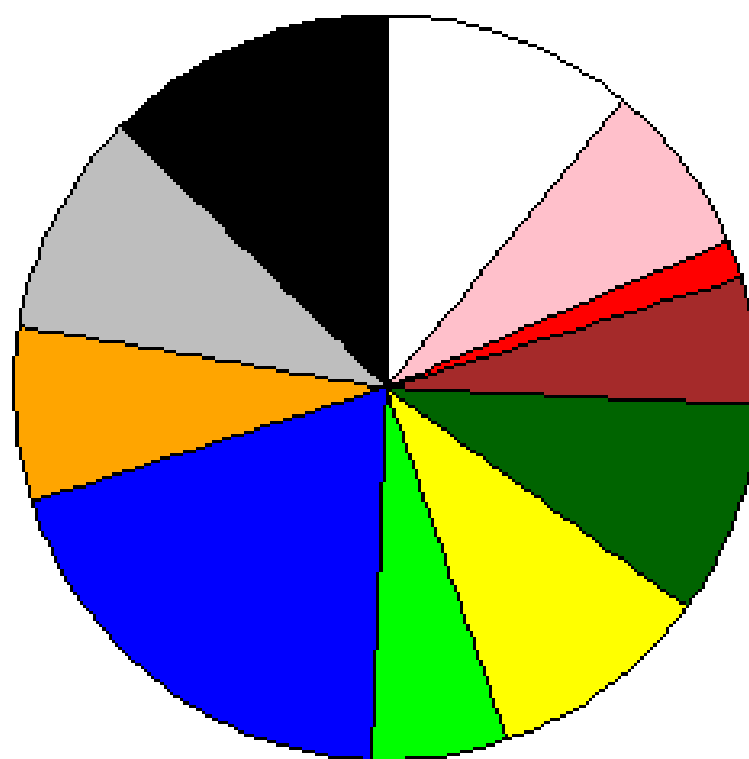
Cape Mendocino REF



Ten Mile MPA



Ten Mile REF



## Species



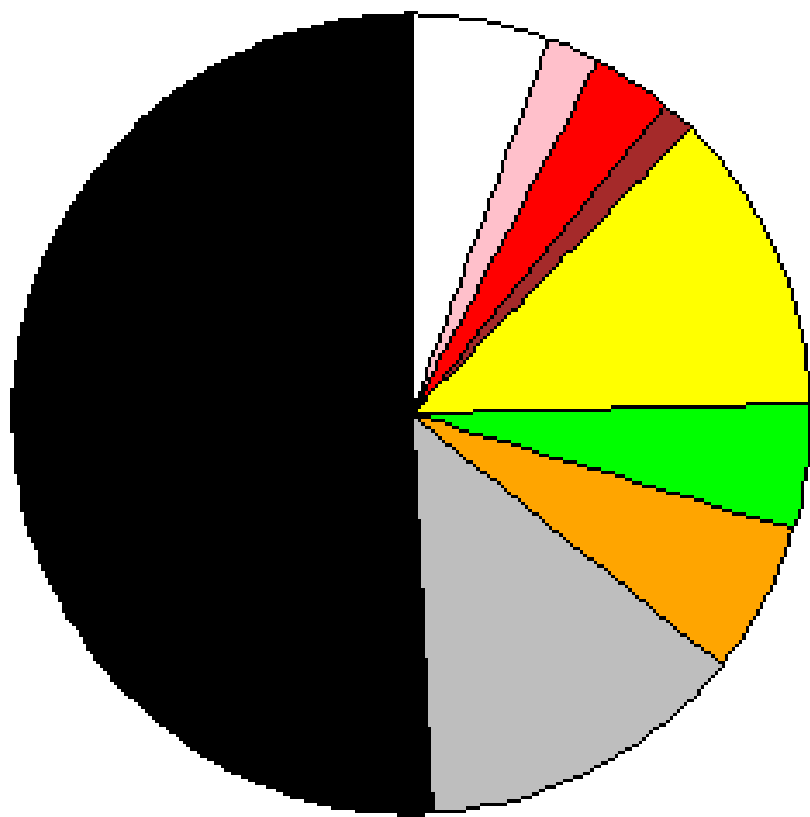
These pie charts show the 2025 species composition of the **top ten species across all survey sites**, with an "OTHER" category for the remaining species observed. Species composition was most similar between paired sites (MPA and reference site). At the Cape Mendocino paired sites, Black and Deacon Rockfish dominated the catch, comprising 55-65% of total catch at both sites. The Cape Mendocino MPA continues to have the highest proportion of Canary Rockfish for the third consecutive year. In contrast, Blue Rockfish made up a much larger proportion of the catch at the Ten Mile paired sites (19-22%), while being relatively rare at Cape Mendocino (<2%). The Ten Mile REF site again showed the highest proportion of Yellowtail Rockfish, consistent with previous years. Both Ten Mile sites had similar proportions of "OTHER" species (~11%), indicating relatively diverse catches compared to the Cape Mendocino sites (~7-9% OTHER).

***New Site Alert!***

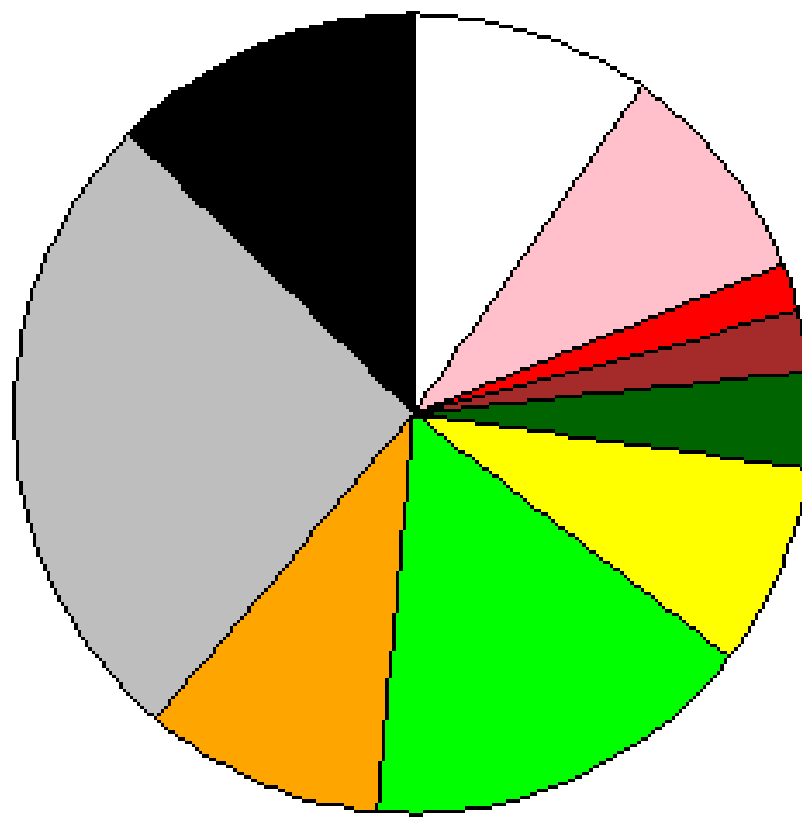
***Reading Rock SMR/SMCA***



**Reading Rock MPA**



**Reading Rock REF**



**Species**

- Black rockfish
- Deacon rockfish
- Canary rockfish
- Blue rockfish
- Lingcod
- Yellowtail rockfish
- China rockfish
- Copper rockfish
- Quillback rockfish
- Rosy rockfish
- Other

The North Coast chapter is excited to announce a new survey site – Reading Rock. After some initial site exploration, we completed two trips this summer with Captain Steve Huber on his vessel Out of the Box. This is the northernmost sampling site in the statewide CCFRP survey range and presents unique challenges and opportunities. While it's exciting to add another site, these initial species ratios should be understood as preliminary data for the Reading Rock locations and might not actually reflect true differences yet. What we saw this year was that the Reading Rock MPA was heavily dominated by Black Rockfish (51% of catch), while the Reading Rock REF showed more balanced species composition with Deacon Rockfish (26%), Lingcod (16%), and Black Rockfish (13%) as the dominant species. Blue Rockfish were absent from both Reading Rock sites, contrasting with their abundance at Ten Mile. China rockfish were also absent from the MPA. The difference in Black Rockfish proportion between the paired sites is also notable. We look forward to collecting more data and exploring this site. Much appreciation to Captain Steve and deckhands, Kai and Tristan!

# Top Fish of 2025

## Lingcod



## Copper Rockfish



## Vermilion Rockfish



Species	Length*	Angler
Black Rockfish	54cm (21in)	Elliot D.
Blue Rockfish	38cm (15in)	Anna N.
Lingcod	92 cm (36in)*	Andre B.
Canary rockfish	59cm (23in)*	Matt D.
Deacon Rockfish	43cm (17in)	Rocco P.
Copper Rockfish	56cm (22in)	Zach A.
China Rockfish	39cm (15in)	Elliot D.
Quillback Rockfish	49cm (19in)	Matt D.
Vermilion Rockfish	57cm (22in)	Matt C.
Yellowtail Rockfish	52cm (21in)	Tyler B.
Kelp Greenling	40cm (16in)	Lloyd P.
Yelloweye Rockfish	69cm (27in)*	Steve H.
Cabezon	55cm (22in)	Richard M.

\*Fork lengths rounded to the nearest centimeter and inch, respectively

\* Shown in photo to the left

\* CCFRP record

# Angler shoutout!

We had a fun and eventful season with our great crew of anglers, including 20 brand new volunteers!

After crunching the numbers, we would like to give a special shoutout to the 2025 angler with the **highest catch in a single day trip at 85 fish: Captain Matt D.** Congrats Matt!

*P.S. If you want to know your catch estimate for a trip you took with us this season, send us a message at [northcoastcfr@gmail.com!](mailto:northcoastcfr@gmail.com)*



## Recaptures



It's always nice to see old friends, isn't it? Particularly if they're fishy!

This year we had 6 recaptures at sea, and 2 angler reported recaptures.



Our longest individual at liberty was a copper rockfish, caught by angler Eugene D. This fish was tagged and released on 7/10/2018 and recaptured on 8/13/25, 0.07 miles from its initial tagging site. It grew 4.5 cm in the 7 years, 1 month, and 3 days at sea since 2018. Nice job Eugene!

# Season Highlights

## Starting with a BANG!

Our 2025 season kicked off strong with some wind, some waves, and a record breaking **292 fish** processed for our first day of surveying. We regularly process between 100 – 200 fish per day so this was a great start to a productive season. Maybe we can hit 300+ in 2026!



## CCFRP In The News!

Local news outlet Redwood News created a great story spotlighting CCFRP here on the north coast. Scan the QR code below to check it out. Big thanks to our seafaring reporter Abraham Navarro!



Lead tech Claire has her Master's Degree! In December she gave her public defense on the "Environmental and spatial drivers of quillback rockfish (*Sebastes maliger*) growth in the Northeast Pacific from California to Alaska" and was awarded a Masters in Science from Cal Poly Humboldt. If you're interested in reading her manuscript or watching the recording, check out the QR code link!



# The Humboldt Team



## Elliot

A fisheries undergrad, our most seasoned technician and expert fish runner. He's a cornerstone of our team and...he knows where all the big lingcod are!



## Tyler

Fisheries undergrad and second season returning CCFRP technician, seen here showing off a 2 for 1 black rockfish special! He really showed up for us this year during some of our longest days at sea and longest nights at the lab.



## Ben

Marine biology undergrad and new 2025 technician, with his proudest catch of the season. He told us at 5 am that morning that he would catch a tiger rockfish. The stoke was high!



## Nathan

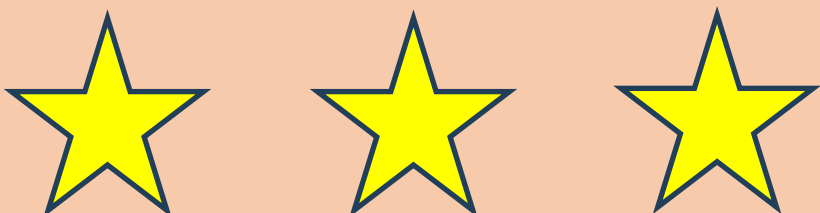
A fisheries undergrad and new 2025 technician. Always shows up ready to work with an awesome attitude and keeps us laughing all day!



## Rylee

Marine biology undergrad and new 2025 technician. She took to CCFRP field work like a fish to water! A seamless addition to our team.

**A huge THANK YOU to all our technicians this year. We appreciate your hard work and the unique aspects you each bring to our team. You rock!**



# Hello?...Who IS this?

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During a June survey trip in the Ten Mile MPA, we encountered this mystery rockfish! We couldn't immediately identify it, so we took pictures, applied a tag and released it safely back into the MPA.

Before we reveal what it could likely be, ***what do you think it is?***

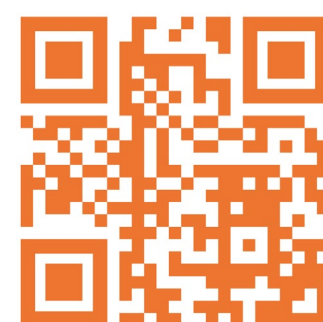
Since we were unable to take a fin clip for DNA analysis we asked around and did some research.

The consensus is that this fish is most likely either a Black and Yellow or Gopher Rockfish that is exhibiting



xanthochromism, a pigment mutation that causes bright yellow/orange pigments, xanthophores, to develop and suppresses melanophores, or darker pigments. Xanthic coloration has been observed in rockfish species, sharks, and even birds. Though beautiful and intriguing, this bright coloration is thought to make individuals more susceptible to predation, potentially reducing survival rates to adulthood. The whole crew felt very lucky to witness this marine oddity!

Scan the QR code to read about xanthic coloration in rockfish in Central California!



Thank you volunteers for another amazing season!  
*See you on the water in 2026!*

