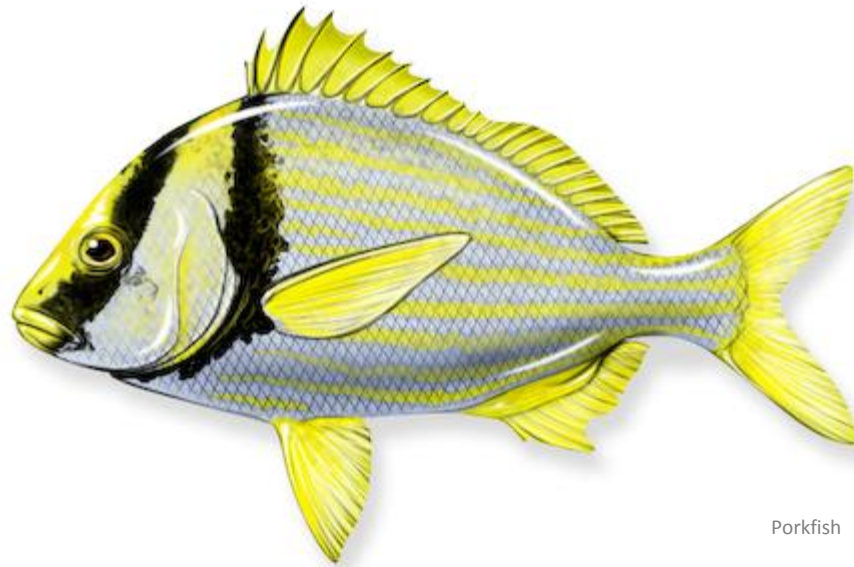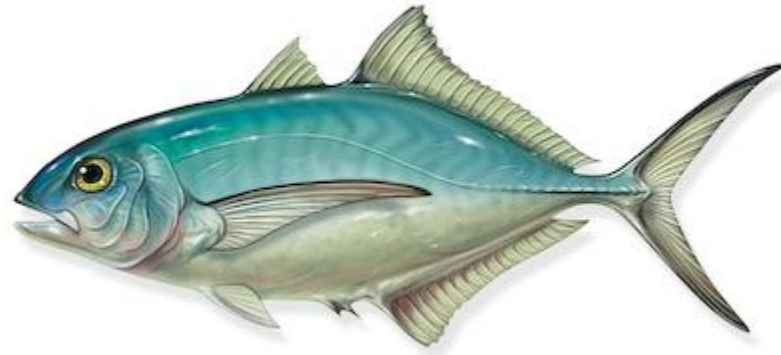# 10 Usability Lessons

from
Steve Krug's Don't Make Me Think

Porkfish

1. Usability Means…

Usability means making sure something works well, and that a person of average ability or experience can use it for its intended purpose without getting hopelessly frustrated.

Yellow Jack

## 2. Web applications should explain themselves

As far as humanly possible, when I look at a web page it should be self-evident. Obvious. Self-explanatory.

Banded Butterflyfish

3. Don't Make Me Think

As a rule, people don't like to puzzle over how to do things. If people who build a site don't care enough to make things obvious it can erode confidence in the site and its publishers.
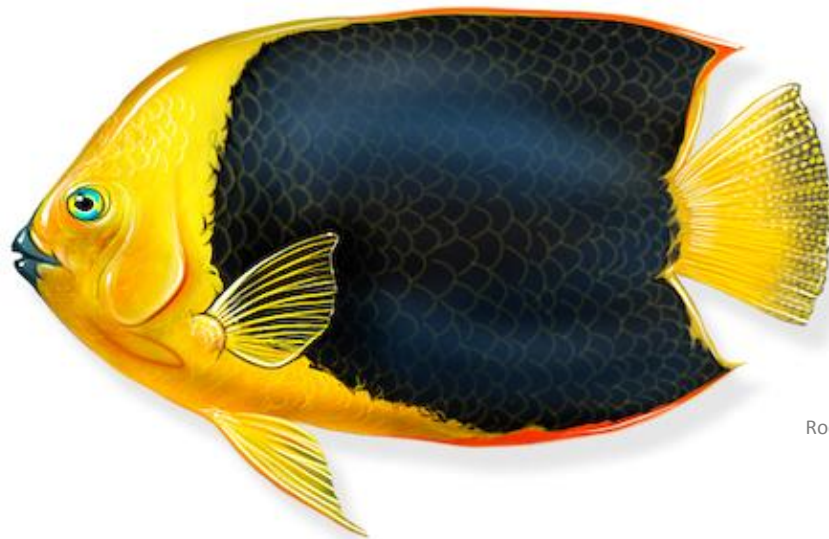
Rock Beauty

4. Don't waste my time

Much of our web use is motivated by the desire to save time. As a result, web users tend to act like sharks. They have to keep moving or they'll die.

Spotted Drum

## 5. Users still cling to their back buttons

There's not much of a penalty for guessing wrong. Unlike firefighting, the penalty for guessing wrong on a website is just a click or two of the back button. The back button is the most-used feature of web browsers.
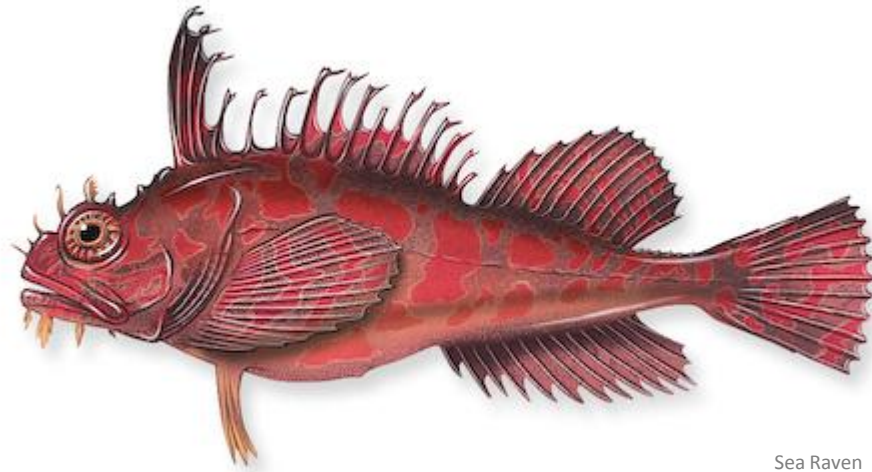
Sea Raven

6. We're creatures of habit

If we find something that works, we stick to it. Once we find something that works — no matter how badly — we tend not to look for a better way. We'll use a better way if we stumble across one, but we seldom look for one.
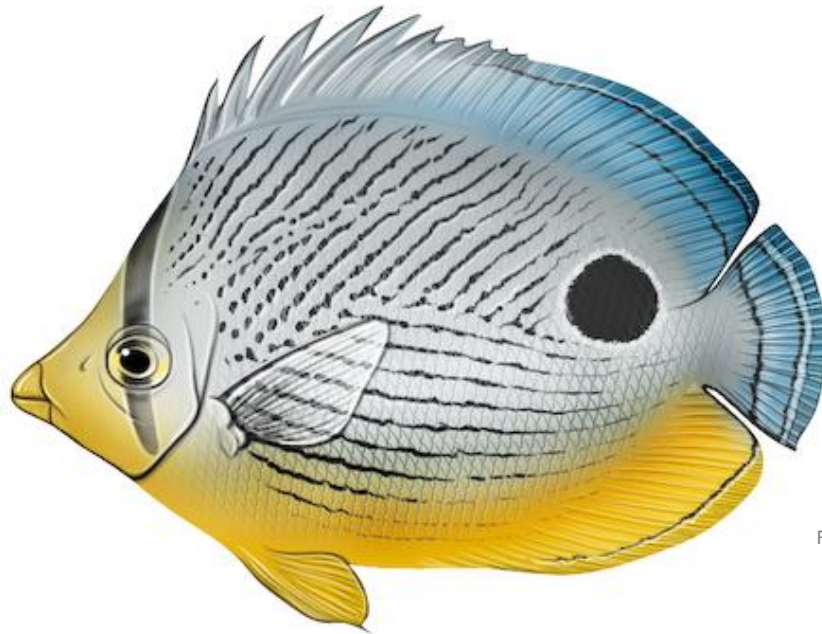
Foureye Butterflyfish

7. No Time for Small Talk

Happy talk is like small talk – content free, basically just a way to be sociable. But most Web users don't have time for small talk; they want to get right to the beef. You can – and should – eliminate as much happy talk as possible.

Boxfish

8. Don't lose search

Some people (search-dominant users), will almost always look for a search box as they enter a site. These may be the same people who look for the nearest clerk as soon as they enter a store.
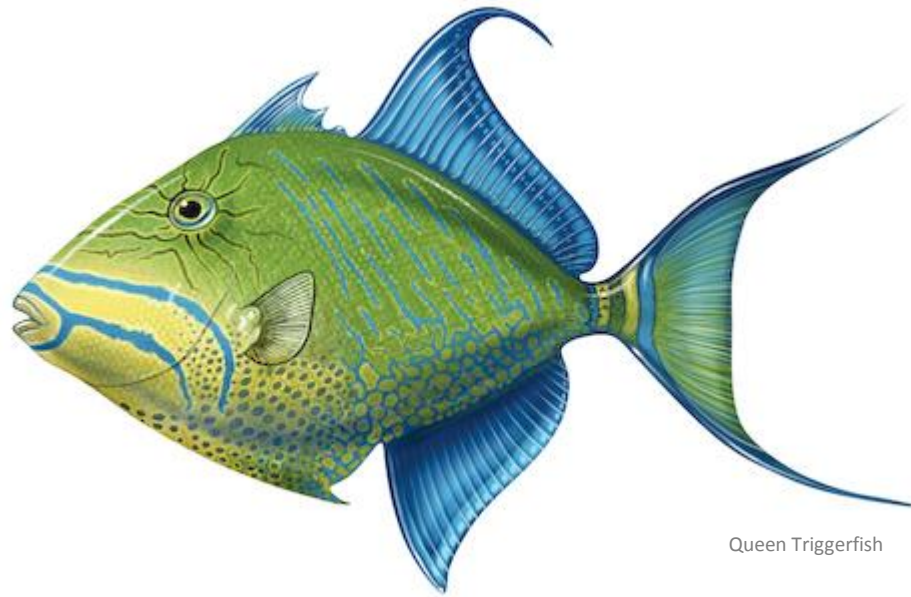
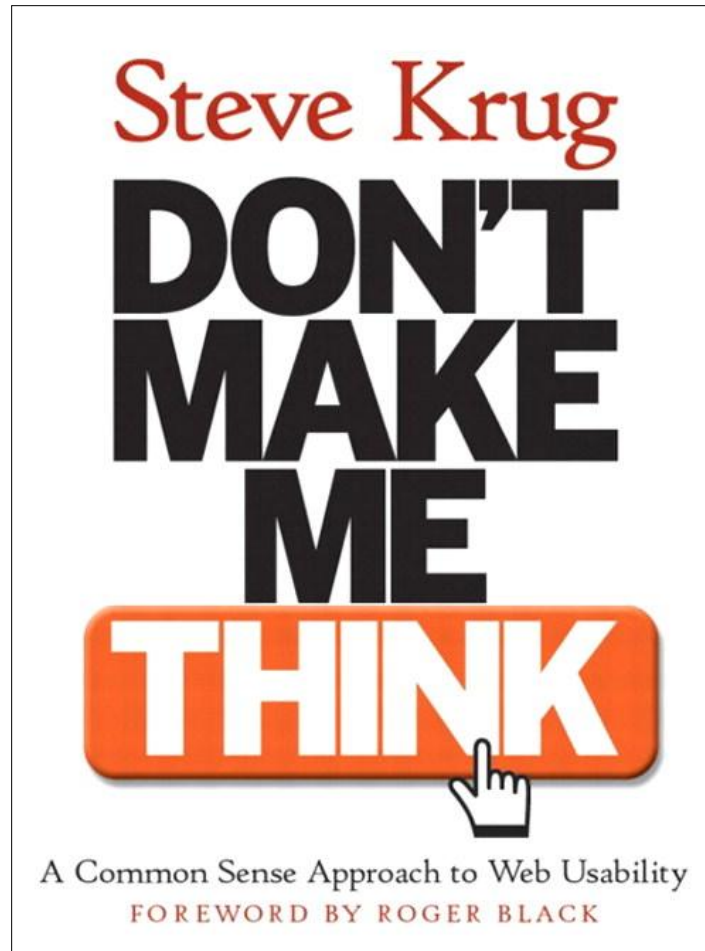Queen Triggerfish

9. We form mental site-maps

When we return to something on a Web site, instead of replying on a physical sense of where it is, we have to remember where it is in the conceptual hierarchy and retrace our steps.

Scrawled Filefish

10. Make it easy to go home

Having a home button in sight at all times offers reassurance that no matter how lost I may get, I can always start over, like pressing a Reset button or using a "Get out of Jail free" card.

The Book

Thanks to …