



## **LIFE HISTORY DATABASE**

### **Biological Characteristics of Nearshore Fishes of California**

Version 1.0  
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**Produced by  
California Department of Fish and Game  
Marine Region  
20 Lower Ragsdale Dr., Suite 100  
Monterey, California 93940**

### **Purpose & Overview**

One of the four core policies in achieving the goals of the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) is the principle of basing decisions on sound science and other useful information such as biology of fish, population status and trends, fishing effort, catch levels, and impacts of fishing (known as essential fisheries information or EFI).



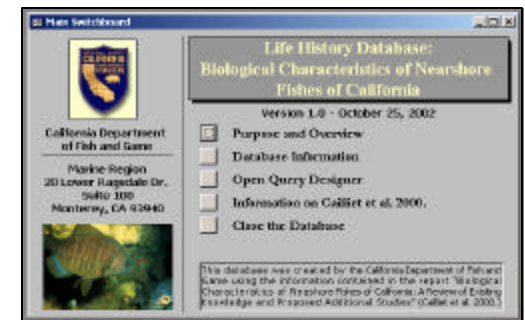
To this end, the California Department of Fish and Game created "The Life History Database: Biological Characteristics of Nearshore Fishes of California". The Life History Database was designed to facilitate easy access to life history information for nearshore fishes of California as part of an ongoing effort to gather EFI in order to enhance management techniques and improve management decisions.

The life history information contained in the database was imported from the report, "Biological Characteristics of Nearshore Fishes of California: A Review of Existing Knowledge and Proposed Additional Studies" (Cailliet et al. 2000).



### **Conversion**

The Life History Database was created by importing a large amount of data from a non-relational, Microsoft® Excel database (also known as a "flat" file) into a relational, query-able database using Microsoft® Access. The original Microsoft® Excel flat file contained 32 separate worksheets within a single Microsoft® Excel Workbook. Each worksheet contained 86 separate fields (sometimes 87) of information arranged in columns and organized by subject. The referenced citation for each piece of information was listed beneath each column and linked to the information using a number. The database contains over 1200 cited references with each reference being cited one or more times.



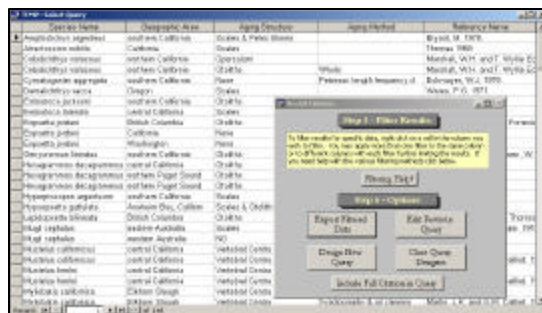
This information was converted into a Microsoft® Access 2002 database with 131 tables and 16,985 unique records all related to one another by species. In addition, the database was designed to allow those without any Microsoft® Access experience to easily maneuver through the process of creating and running queries, filtering and sorting data, and exporting results to Microsoft® Excel for further analysis. All this is done through a user-friendly, front-end interface that seamlessly accesses the database's complexity without the need for any knowledge of database design.

## Query Interface

The Life History Information Query Designer is the user's main tool in the database. This form is simple to use and easy to understand. It leads the user through a series of 6 steps that create, execute, and export a query on any subject in the database.



Interactive “buttons” allow for quick navigation through the system as well as protecting the user from unintentionally deleting a previous query result.

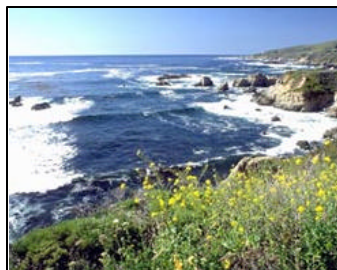


Simple filtering and sorting methods are described on the form and more advanced techniques are only a button click away.

## Benefits

### Management

Enhances the quality, availability, and consistency of life history information used in management decisions.

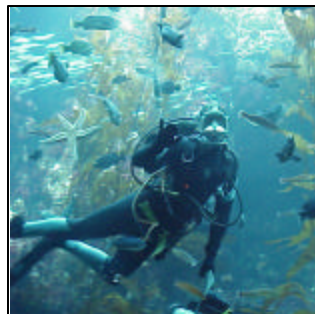


### Accessibility and Distribution of Data

Makes available extensive life history information of nearshore fishes of California to the public as well as government and academic institutions.

### Research

Improves researcher's and manager's understanding of which subjects and species are well-studied and which areas have a paucity of knowledge and require more research effort.



### Collaborations

Complements other nearshore research such as spatial and temporal distribution studies.

## Order a Copy

To obtain a copy of the “Life History Database: Biological Characteristics of Nearshore Fishes of California” on CD-ROM, please contact Deb Wilson-Vandenberg or Joshua Curtis at the Department of Fish and Game's Marine Region and include your name and title, your organization, your mailing address, and phone number.



### Contact Information

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**California Department of Fish and Game**  
“Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870”

