

## 2. SPORT FISHING CATCHES

Although this bulletin is concerned primarily with commercial catches it should not be inferred that market and cannery landings account for the entire volume of the fish caught along the California coast—far from it. Sport fishermen in ever increasing numbers are turning to ocean fishing and their catches of some species now actually exceed commercial catches.

During the last twenty years a considerable sport fishing industry has sprung up on our coast, particularly in southern California. There are now several hundred boats, the only or principal occupation of which is to take out fishing parties. As the growth of this fishery was observed, it became apparent to the California Division of Fish and Game that no study of fish catches could be complete without including a measure of the catches made by the anglers. It was obvious that commercial catch records dealt with only a portion of the fish taken and that sportsmen's catches, composed of the same species, played an important part in the general picture of fish abundance and utilization. Consequently, preliminary work on obtaining party boat catch records was started in 1932, and on the passage of necessary legislation a full-fledged program was inaugurated in 1936. Under the terms of the law enacted by the 1935 Legislature, all boats carrying fishermen for hire must keep daily records of their operations. As at least 80 per cent of the fish caught by sportsmen is taken on these boats, their records give an excellent idea of the magnitude of ocean sport fishing as well as providing a sound basis for formulating management policies.

A brief summary of the catches made from the various kinds of passenger fishing boats and barges that operate in ocean waters is presented in the accompanying table. It must be remembered that the figures do not include the catches of anglers fishing from the shore, piers or private boats.—*Richard S. Croker.*

**TABLE 1**  
**Ocean Catches of Sportfishing Boats Operating in California\*—Pounds of Fish Reported**

Species	1936	1937	1938
Barracuda .....	2,399,177	2,991,501	1,636,074
Yellowtail .....	1,231,795	821,699	646,905
Rock Bass and Kelp Bass .....	705,114	470,518	901,488
Pacific Mackerel .....	480,384	565,437	543,621
Rockfish .....	309,467	410,168	427,662
California Halibut .....	322,277	254,249	207,452
White Sea-bass .....	132,550	117,767	163,131
Tuna, Yellowfin .....	345,994	25,545	15,096
Tuna, Bonito .....	97,610	192,771	58,776
Tuna, Bluefin .....	49,773	65,695	226,161
All others .....	290,886	488,175	537,982
Totals .....	6,365,027	6,403,525	5,364,348

\* Includes catches made by California boats fishing in Mexican waters.

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