

FISHING REPORT

Reporting Period: February 24, 2023 to March 25

Note: Missing dates normally mean that the wind contributed to boats not going out to fish.

I have a NEW email, if you can send me any fishing news or pictures: lyncurt0@gmail.com

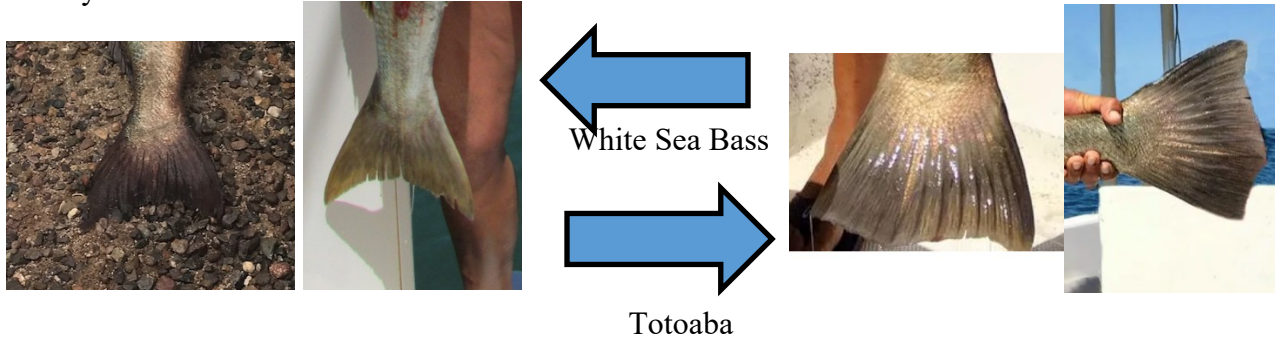
- 2/24/2023** NIGHTWINGS fished a number of drifts at Colorado Risco with jigs and bait and caught Goldies, Salmon, a fat Rockie and one (!) Triggerfish. Water temperatures from 56 to 62 degrees between there and Dead Man, where very little was caught, but many fish were showing on the sonar to 140 feet.
- 2/25/2023** SAND DOLLAR, HILL BILLY YACHT and CAP'N JACK all made the run to San Pedro Matir and enjoyed calm seas all day, but the currents were strong for deep water fishing and no yellowtail sign was seen except for deep hanging fish marks. There was some bird activity note. Bottom fishing on the west side produced some really nice Goldies and a few Grouper, probably Baquetas and one Rosy Baquetas. Some Goldies were also caught deep off the southwest corner but no Grouper. CAP'N JACK also got Goldies, a Grouper and one Sheephead (First reported this year). Hill Billy Yacht reported that Rafa Jr hooked and released a 10-12 shark of unknown species. I guess they needed a "Bigger boat".
- 2/27/2023** CAP'N JACK fished south of Turner in moderate currents for three Rosy Baquetas and Goldies.
- 3/04/2023** CAP'N JACK and SEA DANCER both reported bottom fish and some grouper.
- 3/05/2023** NIGHTWINGS had a slow morning at Colorado Risco so moved to drift over the south reef at Turner for bottom fish on jigs with bait and finally. Landed a nice Yellowtail using a jig near the bottom (first of the year). However further jigging produced no more Yellowtail. HILL BILLY YACHT went to Northwest San Esteban trolling for Yellowtail, but only caught bottom fish, and MAYFLOWER and DOS PRIMOS fished deep water south of Turner for Goldies and Grouper.
- 3/07/2023** OVERCAST fished in 200 feet for Goldies south of Turner but did see a couple of whales.
- 3/14/2023** KNIGHTSFISHER tried trolling around Turner and Dead Man for Yellowtail but only caught bottom fish. After a slight change in location and depth, they caught nicer Goldies, salmon, a Baqueta, Threadfin Bass and a 42 pound Pinto Bass (no joke?). EL SUENO tried trolling for Yellowtail, saw some marks on the sonar, but no biters. They did catch some bottom fish but the swell was pretty bad. CAMINO DEL MAR had a similar experience. SAND DOLLAR. Fished deep water southwest of Turner for a nice catch of Goldies, Grouper and Pargo.
- 3/15/2023** SAND DOLLAR went to Willard for lots of nice Goldies but still no reports of Yellowtail trolling. Maybe the change of moon phase will spur "The Bite" later this month or early in May.
- 3/18/2023** ESCAPE fished deep at the "Cross Roads area for a 25 pound Rosy Baqueta, nice eating size.
- 3/20/2023** GATOR BAIT went out to an unknown location, for a nice mess of Groupers.
It must have gotten windy down there since I received no more reports by today.

Finally, since the season is fast approaching, if not already here, here are some notes to help differentiate the prized **White Sea Bass from the endangered and protected Totoaba.**

Both are in the “Croaker” (Serranidae) family of fishes. This family includes all of the Corvina species and the Yellow Fin Croaker. The WSB is the largest member of the family on the Pacific West Coast of the USA and Baja California, weighing up to 90+ pounds. It has a **concave shape** on the margin of the tail (caudal) fin, while the Totoaba, which is only found in the Sea of Cortez has a more **convex shape** as shown below. Historically Totoaba can reach up to over 220 pounds. The WSB also has a ridge of scales along its belly (ventral) side that the Totoaba lacks.



Totoaba near 100 pounds are extremely rare these days and are in danger of extinction due to over-fishing and illegal netting for their valuable air bladders more than the excellent texture and flavor of their flesh. The drug cartels in Mexico have even gotten into the business of supporting the harvest for sale to Asia and there have been violent confrontations with them and fishermen as well as environmental watch groups. Their air bladders can be sold for up to \$10,000 USD in Asia. Penalties for being caught with this fish in Mexico include fines up to \$150,000 USD and imprisonment for up to 20 years. Needless to say, boats and all fishing gear is also forfeited. This species is not only near extinction, but the by-catch of the Vaquita has almost completely eliminated that species. This is the smallest of porpoise species and is found only in the northern end of the Sea of Cortez and the population is probably down below 100 now. Just worth thinking about that before keeping a Totoaba, or ordering it in a local restaurant. This may be legal if the fish comes from aquaculture, such as the fish farm north of Kino. I am not sure about the legality of this and it may be hearsay.



If interested in catching White Sea Bass, the best method seems to involve drifting over structure like the reef south of Turner or rock structure near flat bottom and using either live bait such as small Grunts or mackerel or heavy jigs. The best types of jigs are chrome Diamond or any other chrome jigs, Salas or Tady style jigs in sizes 6X Jr. to 7X or even P68 (larger size). The colors I have had best luck with include chrome, blue and white, “Angry Squid “ or “Mauve Squid”. Adding cut bait is not necessary but may help attract a bite. It is important to keep your jig near the bottom making moderate lifts up and then dropping back down. Gradually work up to about 15 feet off the bottom before dropping back down or reeling in for another drop or cast. Try to avoid snagging the bottom also. Be ready for a tough fight because WSBs can give a very strong first run and it is critical to turn their head up and get them off the bottom. After that first surge, take your time calmly and steadily reel them in without trying to “horse” them up because they do have tender mouths and pulling the hook is possible.

