



Catch the facts about what's being caught in WA



The 2013/14 WA Recreational Boat Fishing Survey

Almost 7,500 fishers took part in our second major boat fishing survey, the most comprehensive of its kind in Australia. The innovative format, using log books, boat ramp surveys and remote cameras, has been used to generate catch estimates covering the entire State.

Almost 7,500 boat fishers surveyed around WA

The results of this second survey in 2013/14 revealed that blue swimmer crab was the most popular species – as it was in the first survey

of this type in 2011/12 – with more than 900,000 caught. School whiting was the most popular finfish, with more than 350,000 caught.

Importantly, more than half the overall catch was released, showing that fishers are fishing responsibly by adhering to size and bag limits and embracing their role in helping to keep stocks sustainable.

Most boat fishing was done in the West Coast Bioregion (Augusta to Kalbarri), where

catches of the prized demersal suite of species – which includes the West Australian dhufish – were similar for both surveys (about 150 tonnes).

900,000 blue swimmer crabs caught in 12 months

If you bought a Recreational Fishing from Boat Licence – more than 140,000 are issued each year – you helped fund this project.

We will carry out a survey every two years to compare catches over time. Along with annual commercial catch data, the survey provides information to help us manage our aquatic resources and ensure recreational fishing in WA remains among the best in the world.

140,000 fishing from boat licences issued annually

The survey is vital in helping us understand recreational fishing patterns to ensure there will be 'fish for the future'.



About the survey

The survey included:

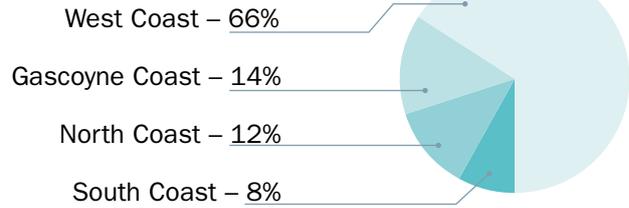
- A 12-month phone-diary survey providing catch and effort data recorded in fishers' log books.
- Surveys of fishers at boat ramps to collect data on sizes of key species.
- Video monitoring of boat launchings at key boat ramps.

Participants	
3,036	fishers kept log books and took part in the phone-diary survey
4,425	fishers were interviewed at boat ramps

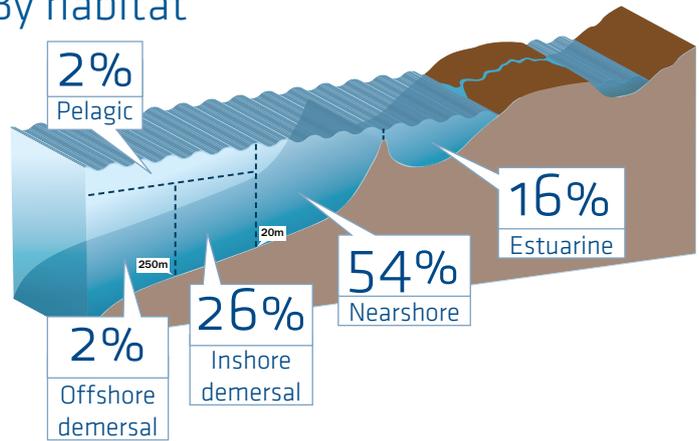
Key findings

Fishing effort

By bioregion



By habitat



What fishers kept and released

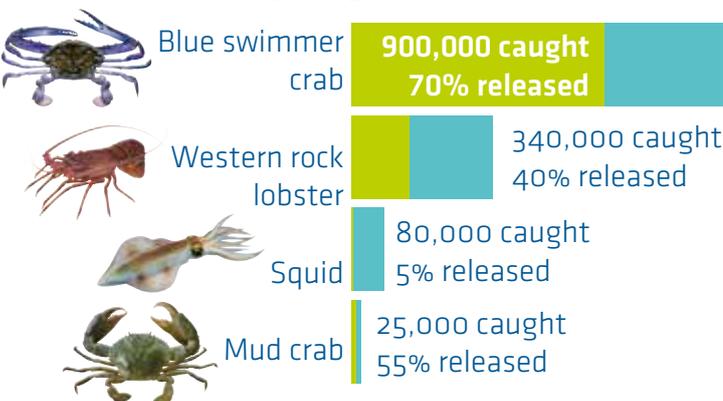
More than **3.4 million** finfish and invertebrates were caught from **230** different species/groups. More than half the overall catch (56% for finfish and 57% for invertebrates) was released for reasons including size and bag limits, catch and release fishing or personal preference. During the survey, almost 11,000 fish were measured at boat ramps.

Note: Separate data is gathered for charter fishing, which was not included in these survey results.

Invertebrates

About 40% of the recreational catch was invertebrates, including crustaceans (9 species) and molluscs (6 species).

The most commonly caught were:



Key:
■ – Released
■ – Kept

While the total Statewide recreational catch for blue swimmer crabs was similar in number for both surveys, the Statewide release rate grew to 68% in 2013/14, which represented almost a 20% increase.

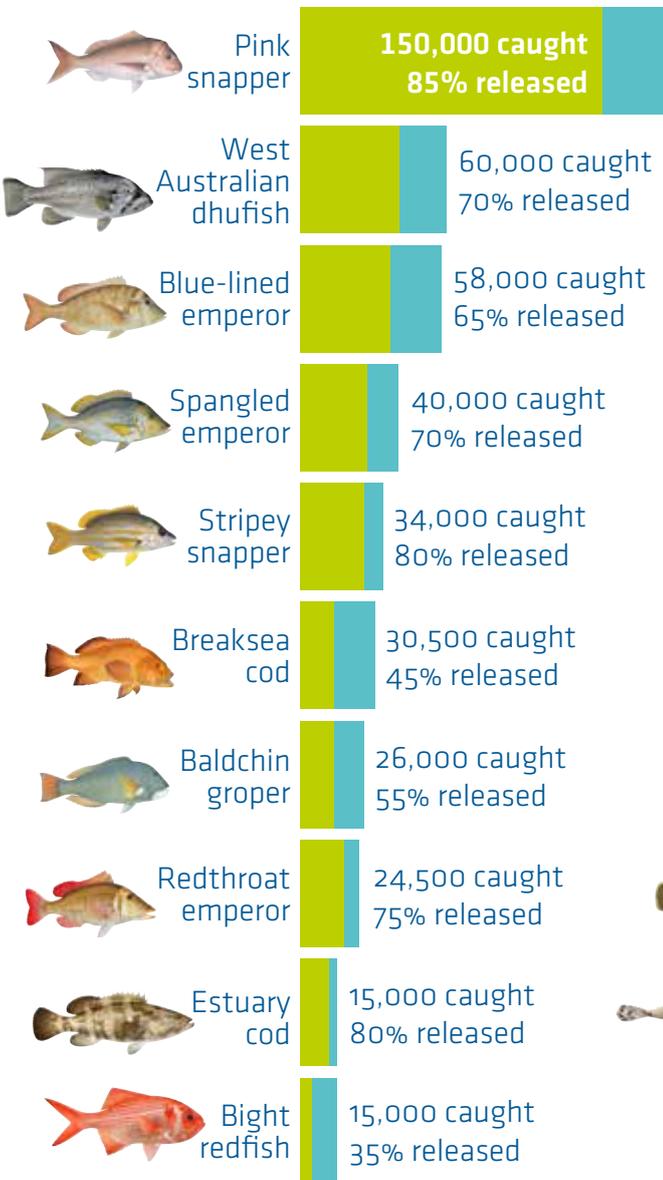
Environmental conditions have a significant impact on recruitment (addition of young crabs to the fishery), which affects the abundance of crabs in different areas.

Recreational fishing estimates for each key crab fishery will be used, with environmental data and other information, to ensure we continue to carefully manage each fishery.

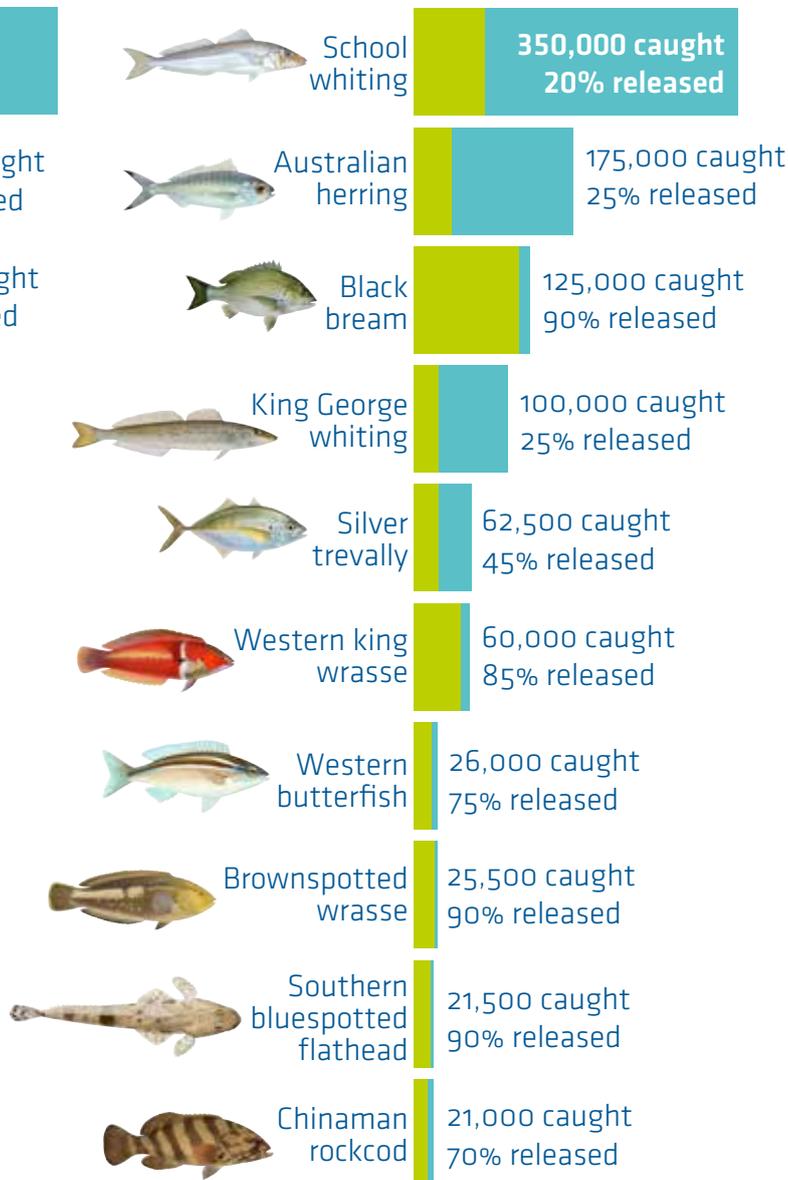
Finfish

About 60% of the recreational catch was finfish from nearly 200 scalefish species, and 15 shark and ray species.

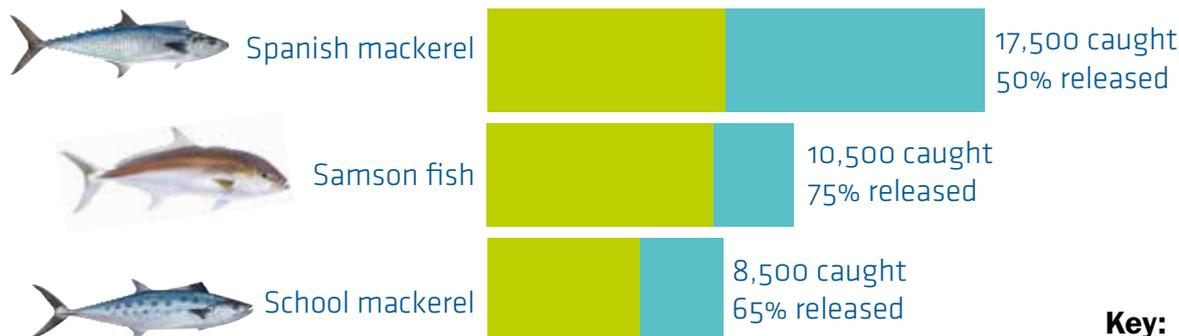
The most commonly caught inshore and offshore demersal (bottom-dwelling) finfish were:



The most commonly caught nearshore and estuarine finfish were:



The most commonly caught pelagic finfish were:



Key:

- – Released
- – Kept

Estimated demersal scalefish catch

The survey results allow us to estimate the weight (in tonnes) of the kept recreational catch for most demersal species, a popular but vulnerable group.

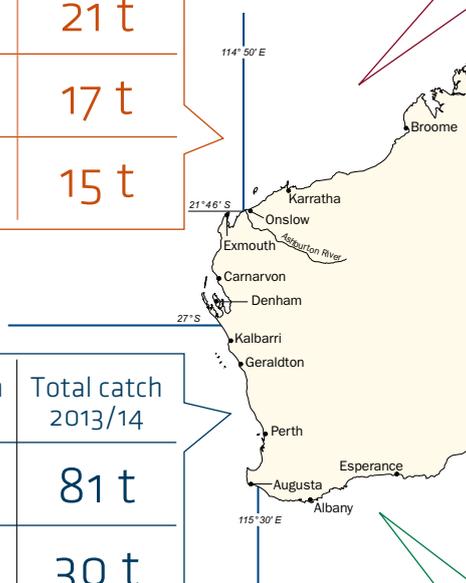
Estimated catch for top three demersal species in each bioregion:

Gascoyne Coast	Total catch 2011/12	Total catch 2013/14
Pink snapper	27 t	21 t
Spangled emperor	35 t	17 t
Goldband snapper	10 t	15 t

North Coast	Total catch 2011/12	Total catch 2013/14
Grass emperor	16 t	12 t
Barcheek coral trout	11 t	8 t
Red emperor	10 t	7 t

West Coast	Total catch 2011/12	Total catch 2013/14
West Australian dhufish	74 t	81 t
Pink snapper	33 t	30 t
Baldchin groper	29 t	20 t

South Coast	Total catch 2011/12	Total catch 2013/14
Bight redfish	12 t	10 t
Blue morwong	12 t	8 t
Pink snapper	9 t	5 t



We will continue to monitor catches of these species to gain information over time about the sustainability of the stocks and to help us make future management decisions.

Where to from here?

We will keep working with our research partners at Recfishwest and Edith Cowan University to improve our understanding of the recreational fishing catch across WA.

The third recreational boat fishing survey has begun and information from fishers will be collected until August 2016, this time including information on shore-based fishing.

A full version of the report is available at www.fish.wa.gov.au

Further information:

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