**Rockfish are an incredibly diverse and important group of marine fish in our Pacific waters. A number of species are in low abundance in both Puget Sound and the Washington coast. To aid their recovery, fisheries in these areas have ended or been restricted. Read on to learn how you can help conserve Washington’s rockfish.**

See the WDFW web page for more information: [https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/bottomfish/rockfish/mortality.html](https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/bottomfish/rockfish/mortality.html)

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**IDENTIFY AND REPORT**

**CANARY**
- 3 orange stripes across head.
- Lateral line in clear gray zone & orange mottling.

**YELLOWEYE**
- Brilliant yellow eye & raspy ridges above eye.
- Fins usually have black edges.

**BOCACCIO**
- Lower jaw greatly projecting & elongated body.

**VERMILION**
- Reddish & mottled with gray.

**Rockfish can be challenging to identify.** Anglers are encouraged to learn key features and use picture references to aid identification.

**Accurately identify and report all caught & released rockfish.** Data from recreational anglers are critical to scientific evaluations that determine population health. Report all rockfish caught and released to WDFW port samplers.

**Support rockfish conservation.** Be an informed angler; support the continued survival of rockfish by knowing how to properly identify, report, and, if necessary, release these species.

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**SEND THAT FISH DOWN**

As fish are brought to the surface, gases in the swim bladder expand causing the stomach and eyes to bulge. This is known as **barotrauma.**

Sending fish with barotrauma to their caught depth recompresses them, improving their ability to stay down.

There are several devices that you can use:

**DEPTH PRESSURE RELEASE**
- These devices grasp the fish on the jaw and release automatically once your desired depth is reached.

**INVERTED HOOK**
- An inverted barbless hook is inserted in the lower lip. Once back to depth, release the fish with a sharp jerk on the line.

**BOTTOM CONTACT RELEASE**
- A weight secures the grip as the fish descends. Once the weight contacts the sea floor, it releases the fish.

**DO NOT VENT**
- Puncturing the fish’s swim bladder or bulging organs is not recommended as it can cause serious injury or introduce infection.

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**tips**

- **Protect sensitive species by avoiding them:** if you are fishing in an area where you are catching fish you can’t keep, it’s best to move to another location.

- **Get the rockfish down quickly:** have your descending device ready to use. Fish returned to depth within 2 minutes have a much better chance of survival.

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**Avoid rough handling**
- avoid dropping fish; touch fish as little as possible.
  - Use a wet towel or wet your hands to avoid removing the protective slime coat.

**Return fish back to the depth of capture or at least 60 feet.**

**Use the descending device that works for you**
- consider the fishing location, depth, and type of boat you have.