

After hatching, sockeye spend a year or two in a lake before going to sea. When caught on their return from the ocean they weigh about six pounds each. This is a summer fishery, usually from mid-June to September. The bulk of the catch is taken by gillnet and the remainder by purse-seine; as sockeye feed on small crustaceans, they are not attracted by the lures of the troll fishery. Landings are smaller than the catch of chums or pinks but more valuable because, with its firm texture and attractive colour, canned sockeye commands the highest consumer price.

Pink salmon mature and return after only two years at sea. The fish average four to five pounds. Both pinks and chums are widely distributed up and down the coast but pinks appear in a more concentrated run. Chums return after four years at sea when they average about ten pounds in weight. They usually appear in two rather scattered runs, one in early summer and one in the autumn, and contribute somewhat more than pinks to the total volume of the salmon catch. Coho hatch in small streams and are vulnerable to summer water levels. At sea they grow rapidly to weights between five and ten pounds and return to spawn after three years. They are taken by net or troll for canning or for the fresh market, depending on current demand. Mature spring salmon usually run between ten and twenty-five pounds in weight. Since they feed on small fish, they can, like coho, be taken by lure but about one-third of the catch is secured with gillnets, notably at the mouth of the Fraser. They are usually caught in their third or fourth year and are favoured on the fresh fish market.

About three-quarters of the annual salmon catch is canned and most of the remainder goes to the fresh market. Vancouver and Prince Rupert are the major processing centres.

The main stocks of herring move inshore in the autumn and winter, spawn in the spring and then return to summer feeding grounds offshore. Only small stocks remain on the fishing grounds throughout the year. Consequently, the bulk of the catch is taken from October to March. As the total known supply of this species in British Columbia is being exploited, catches are limited to local quotas by area. Fishing is by purse-seine and the catch is converted into oil and meal, mainly at Steveston, Vancouver or Prince Rupert. The 1960 herring catch was less than half that of the previous year—186,600,000 lb. compared with 443,000,000 lb. in 1959. Fishing operations ceased for several months during the year because of a depressed market for products of this phase of the industry.

While salmon and herring live at mid-water depths, halibut feed on the bottom and are usually caught beyond the three-mile limit. Canadian and American longliners share in this fishery off the coasts of both Alaska and British Columbia and, by joint agreement, the catch is controlled by a system of quotas and fishing seasons in various areas. The most productive halibut grounds on the Continent are those adjacent to British Columbia, and American as well as Canadian vessels, even when fishing off Alaska, usually land at Prince Rupert or Vancouver. The catch amounted to 33,500,000 lb. in 1960, an increase of 3,600,000 lb. over the previous year; however, the landed value at \$5,433,000 was lower by \$178,000 than the 1959 value. Much of the halibut caught is frozen for the fresh market in the United States.

Two other species of bottom-feeding fish—soles and grey cod—are taken by the trawler fleet, usually beyond the three-mile limit either in Hecate Strait or off Vancouver Island. These vessels drag a large-mouthed, tapering net across the ocean floor and scoop up the fish feeding there. They operate mainly in the spring and summer and on smooth bottom in depths between twenty and seventy fathoms. During the winter they pursue a limited fishery in the relatively protected waters of the Strait of Georgia. Ling cod and black cod also feed on the bottom. Small boats rigged with one or two lines and a few hooks take most of the ling cod catch in the Strait of Georgia but further supplies are captured together with other groundfish in course of the trawler fishery. The bulk of the black cod is taken off Alaska by the large longliners that also fish for halibut. These vessels lay their long lines on the ocean floor with hundreds of baited hooks attached to them.