

# Forage Fish in Nearshore Waters of Prince William Sound, Alaska

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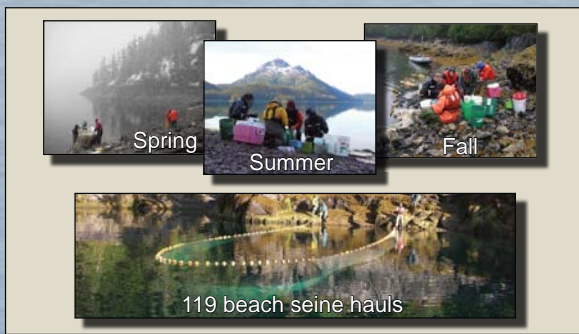
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**Forage fish are an important prey resource for marine mammals, seabirds, and other fish**  
**Problem:** Limited information on forage fish species in shallow, nearshore habitats of Prince William Sound  
**Objective:** Identify seasonal distribution, habitat use, and relative abundance of forage fish in nearshore waters

## What we did

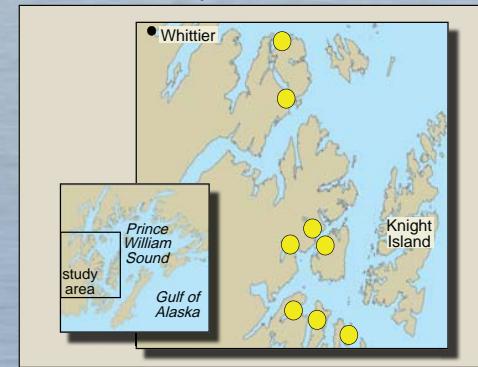
- Sampled in 2006 (spring, summer, fall) and 2007 (mid & late summer)



- Sampled 3 habitat types



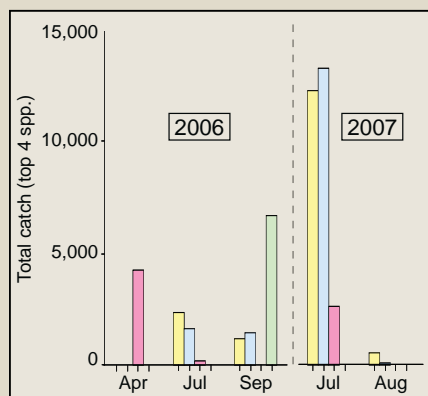
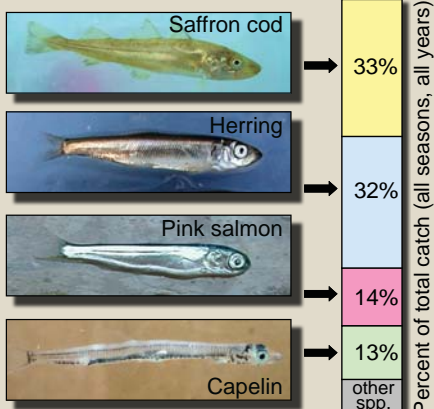
- Sampled 8 locations



## Species

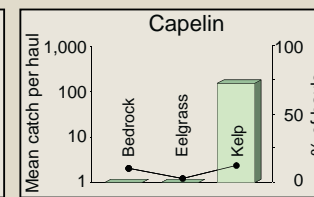
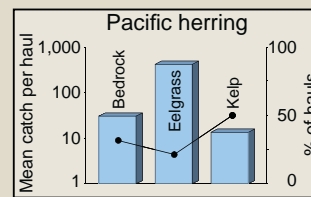
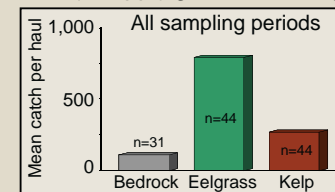
## What we found

- Juveniles and larvae dominated catch
- 4 species accounted for 92% of catch
- Dominant species changed seasonally



## Habitat

- Catch (all spp.) greatest in eelgrass



- Herring captured frequently and in all habitats
- Capelin captured infrequently and mostly in kelp

## What we learned

- Catch and composition changed seasonally
- Saffron cod dominate nearshore fish community
- Vegetated habitats used by herring and capelin
- Nearshore habitats used at least 6 months a year

## Future plans

- Develop fish habitat model to predict quantity and quality of forage fish habitat in PWS
- Field verify the predictability and accuracy of the model