

Whales

from 1B

which means as they feed for crustaceans along the ocean floor, they roll onto their sides to scoop up water and sediments that are forced through fringed baleen plates that hang from each side of their upper jaws.

They have no teeth, so this filtration process is like panning for gold, except in this case the “gold” is the nutrients they feed on.

When looking for whales, the first thing visitors often spot is the telltale “blow” of water from one of the whales’ two spouts. These blows are not fountains of water, but are a geyser of mist that condenses as warm, moist air exhaled under high pressure from the whales’ lungs.

During the long 12,000-mile migration, the whales’ breathing pattern incor-

porates a rhythmic series of three to five short, shallow dives of 15 to 30 seconds. This is then followed by a long, deep dive of up to six minutes.

While watching for whales, keep this pattern in mind in order to increase chances of spotting a pod.

From time to time, whales exhibit a behavior known as “spy hopping,” when whales stick their heads straight up out of the water to take a look around.

The most exciting behavior, of course, is when whales breach, sending half to 3/4 of their bodies out of the water before creating a massive “splashdown” as they re-enter the water.

Beginning March 24, WWSH volunteers will be at locations marked with “Whale Watching Spoken Here” signs from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day through March 31.

For more information, visit www.whalespoken.org.



COURTESY PHOTO

Approximately 160 gray whales will pass along the Oregon coast each day between March 24 and 31.

Fishing

from 1B

Reedsport and Coos Bay, the combined lakes offer nearly 2,000 acres of water and miles of shoreline to fish for large-mouth bass, bluegill, crappie and brown bullhead catfish. Much of the property around Tenmile is privately-owned and the lakes are best fished by boat, but a fishing dock at Tenmile Lake County Park in the small community of Lakeside is wheelchair accessible and a great spot for kids. There also is a campground and boat launch at the County Park. Spinreel Campground (US Forest Service) on the west side of Hwy 101 offers camping for those wanting an extended stay. Several area resorts and marinas also provide camping spaces, lodging and boat rentals.

The shoreline of North and South Tenmile is varied as a number of streams flow from the coastal foothills and into the

lakes creating several large arms and many smaller bays and inlets dotted with pilings, docks and boat houses. Both lakes are shallow with an average depth of about 15 feet and abundant aquatic weeds, willows, and bank vegetation that provide excellent cover and productive habitat for warmwater fish.

Tenmile’s reputation for largemouth bass makes it the site of many bass tournaments. Fish generally range from 1 to 4-pounds, but a 6-pound bass is not uncommon. Bass fishing is best during periods of warmer water from spring through early fall. When spring water temperatures reach about 60 degrees F, the bass move into shallower water to spawn. During the spawn, lures and jigs that imitate prey such as small fish and crayfish, and soft plastic worms work well.

Spinnerbaits, buzzbaits and other surface lures are also effective. Anglers should target areas around willows, docks,

logs or vegetation that provide a combination of cover and patches of open water. Good locations include the Black’s Creek arm and railroad trestle crossing on North Lake, and the Coleman and Templeton arms of South Lake.

CRAPPIE:

Anglers catch crappie in both lakes with good fishing in the spring and throughout the summer. Best fishing is in the calm water along the shoreline, in the many small coves and inlets. Crappie anglers should target shaded areas with wood structure including submerged brush and trees, downed logs and docks. The fish are often found in schools at depths of 10-15 feet.

A good set-up is light spinning tackle with 4-pound test line and a light-colored 1/32-ounce jig. Have an assortment of garland-style and curly tail jigs in a variety of bright, neutral, and dark colors and sizes.

Use a tapered panfish bobber and change the depth of the jig until you find fish. Allow the jig to sink then retrieve slowly. Fishing is best early and late in the day, but a mid-day breeze can also trigger a bite. Crappie abundance can go through

cycles every few years so check with ODFW for the latest information.

YELLOW PERCH:

For yellow perch, you can fish the same areas of the lakes and use a similar set-up as for crappie, but try baiting the jig with a piece of worm. A size-8 hook baited with worm and rigged 1-2 feet above a sinker fished on the bottom will also work. Perch will most often be found in deeper water than crappie. Like crappie, perch fishing is best from spring through fall, but they can be caught year-round, even during winter.

BLUEGILL:

Bluegill fishing is best as the water warms during the summer. Bluegill will be found in shallow areas with less woody structure, but more vegetation. During the late summer and early fall they can be caught in the canal between North and South Tenmile.

As with crappie, light spinning gear works well, but smaller jigs and hooks are needed. A small hook baited with a piece of worm or other panfish bait and suspended 10-18 inches below a bobber can be deadly.

Bluegill are aggressive biters, but if you give them too much time they will steal the bait off your hook — pay close attention to your bobber. They will feed throughout the day and are a great target for young and beginning anglers.

BROWN BULLHEAD:

Spinning tackle also works well for the brown bullhead catfish, which are abundant and can reach up to 13-inches long.

Worms or baits with a strong odor are effective, particularly when fished near the shore in the evening or at night. Use 6-8 pound test line and a sliding egg sinker placed above a barrel swivel.

Below the swivel, tie your hook to the end of an 18-inch leader. The sliding sinker allows the fish to take the bait without feeling the weight of the sinker.

If you’re fishing in an area with weeds, a float can be used instead of a sinker to suspend the bait above the weeds.

MARINE ZONE

PACIFIC HALIBUT:

Halibut can get big — upwards of 100 pounds and almost 70-inches long — making them one of the most popular marine fish. Hauling in these sometimes huge, very flat fish can be back breaking work, but the reward is a delicious fish large enough to feed more

than a few family members and friends.

Halibut seasons are announced in May and fishing generally occurs in June and again in August. These are quota fisheries that can close early, so it’s important to double-check the open dates before fishing. If you’re up for a halibut fishing adventure, but you don’t have a boat or halibut gear, there are charter boats in most Oregon ports that can take you out for a day of fishing.

OCEAN SALMON:

Before they enter fresh water to spawn, ocean coho and Chinook stage in coastal waters near the mouths of bays and rivers. Ocean salmon seasons are announced in May, and fishing is usually best in July and August as migrating coho and feeder Chinook salmon are readily available.

Many of the ocean salmon seasons are based on quotas and may close early, so it’s important to double-check the status of the fishery before fishing.

Charter fleets in several Oregon ports offer salmon fishing trips.

SURF PERCH:

Surf perch are the perfect ocean fish for anglers who like to keep their feet firmly on the ground. These disc-shaped fish can reach up to 15-inches and come in a variety of colors.

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