

Whales from 1B

its annual Whale Watching Spoken Here program. The program places trained volunteers at 24 whale-watching sites along the coast during "watch" weeks. Volunteers who complete the one-day training can select a whale-watching site, where they will be stationed to assist visitors in spotting gray whales and maintain a count of whales spotted.

In addition to the winter whale migration in December, gray whales will make a return trip in the spring, March 24 through 31, 2019. Volunteers can register for the training online at www.whalespoken.wordpress.com, as well as select a watch site. The training is required for new volunteers, and returning volunteers are encouraged to repeat the course every few years to learn the latest gray whale research results. The first of three training

sessions is set for Saturday, Dec. 1, in Newport, at the Hatfield Marine Science Center. Training will be delivered by Dr. Bruce Mate, an expert on whales and director of the Oregon State University Marine Mammal Institute. Additional volunteer training is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019, in Charleston at the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, and also Saturday, March 2, 2019, at the Clatsop Community College in

Astoria. For whale seekers simply wanting an up-close and personal view, Dockside Charters in Depoe Bay will offer daily whale watching excursions starting in mid-December. Just south of Lincoln City, Depoe Bay is considered the "Whale Watching Capital of the Oregon Coast" and is also home to the Oregon State Parks Whale Watching Center. "We offer 90-minute whale watching excursions for the winter," says Loren Goddard,

one of the owners of Dockside Charters. "Typically our excursions are an hour long, but because the whales are moving fast to Mexico, we have to accommodate for that. We recommend that visitors make reservations early because the winter excursions are very popular." Goddard says what makes the trips so popular is that "Visitors are curious about whales on the coast. And the whales are just as curious about us as we are of them,"

Goddard explains. "The best part is when they come right up to the boat. Seeing these mammals up-close is a very special experience." Gray whales can grow up to 45 feet in length (13.7 meters) — longer than a city bus — and weigh more than 45 tons (41,000 kg). To learn more about the winter and spring whale-watching seasons, contact the Depoe Bay Whale Watching Center at 800-551-6949.

Fishing from 1B

Fall Chinook fishing on the Siuslaw river/bay has been slow. Warm and dry weather this week will continue to stack fish in the estuary waiting for the next big rain event.. Best techniques include trolling herring/spinners and bobber fishing with bait. All wild coho must be released for the 2018 fall salmon season.

Lake Creek, a tributary of the Siuslaw River, is closed for the 2018 fall salmon season. Sea-run cutthroat will begin entering the lower river later this month and into the fall. These fish are very aggressive, respond well to flies and lures, and can be up to 20-inches long. Trout fishing is open in streams and rivers. ALSEA RIVER: *Cutthroat trout, fall Chinook*

A few fall Chinook are being caught everyday but overall the fishing has been slow. Warm and dry weather this week is holding fish in the estuary waiting for a significant rise in the river levels. Fresh fish will continue to enter the estuary on each tide and "stage" throughout the estuary waiting for a bigger rain event. Best techniques include trolling herring/spinners and bobber fishing with bait. All wild coho must be released during the 2018 fall salmon season.

Sea-run cutthroat are also available in the Salmon River. Although not as popular as the larger rivers in the area, the Salmon River still provides opportunity to catch these scrappy trout up to 20-inches in length. Trout fishing is open in streams and rivers. SILETZ RIVER: *Steelhead, cutthroat trout, fall Chinook* Fall Chinook fishing on the Siletz river/bay has been slow but anglers are catching a few fish every day. Fish are now scattered throughout the entire estuary and will continue to stage waiting for the next big rain event. Best techniques include trolling herring/spinners lower in the estuary, while bobber fishing with bait and casting spinners from the bank generally works better higher in the estuary. All wild coho must be released during the 2018 fall salmon season.

as water temperatures drop with the cooler nights and occasional rain freshens the river. Concentrate on deep pools and riffles with some chop and cover to them. Drift fishing small presentations, spinners, and flies are good choices to target these fish. Sea-run cutthroat are present in good numbers on the North Coast this year, and anglers will find them throughout the basin. YAQUINA RIVER: *Cutthroat trout, fall Chinook* Fall Chinook fishing on the Yaquina river/bay has been slow but anglers are catching a few each day. Fishing will continue to improve as more fish continue to move into the estuary waiting for the fall rains. Best techniques include trolling herring/spinners and bobber fishing with bait. All wild coho must be released during the 2018 fall salmon season.

Fishing in the Triangle and South jetty has been successful. Chinook and coho are being caught from the shore at Half Moon Bay and Osprey Point. COOS RIVER BASIN: *Rockfish, trout, salmon* Streams and rivers are open to trout fishing through Oct. 31. Trout fishing in streams and rivers is slow to due to low water conditions. Trout anglers can now use bait in all streams that are open to trout fishing. The daily limit for trout in streams is 2 fish per day and they must be 8-inches or longer. Salmon fishing continues to be slow and most anglers stopped salmon fishing for the year in Coos Bay. There is no retention of wild coho in Coos Bay this season. Recreational fishing for bottomfish is open in the ocean along with bays and estuaries. The daily bag limit for marine fish is back to 5 plus 2 lingcod. The retention of cabezon is no longer allowed for the rest of the year. Fishing for rockfish and greenling continue to be good inside Coos Bay near the north jetty and other submerged rock structures. PACIFIC OCEAN and BEACHES: *Bottomfish, salmon, halibut, surfperch* Bottomfish anglers may now fish at all depths for the remainder of the year. The daily bag limit for marine fish is 5 plus 2 lingcod. The retention of cabezon is now closed for the remainder of the year. Bottomfish anglers have returned to port with near-limits of rockfish when wind and waves have allowed boats to get out. Lingcod fishing has been scratchy out of most ports but usually improves during the fall and winter. The bottomfish fishery is open at all depths with a general marine fish bag limit of 5 fish. The longleader gear fishery outside of the 40-fathom regulatory line is open all year. Catches often consist of a nice grade of yellowtail, widow and canary rockfishes. The Stonewall Bank Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (approximately 15 miles west of Newport) is closed to all bottomfish (groundfish) fishing, including longleader gear trips. Anglers may also choose to fish the offshore longleader fishery outside of the 40-fathom regulatory line which is open year-round. The longleader fishery has a daily bag limit of 10 fish made of yellowtail, widow, canary, red-stripe, greenstripe, silvergray, and bocaccio rockfish. No other groundfish are allowed and offshore longleader fishing trips cannot be combined with traditional bottomfish, flatfish or halibut trips. The Elk River Fall Chinook State Waters Terminal Season is Nov. 1-30. From Humbug Mountain to the OR/CA border, salmon fishing is closed for the season. SHORE and ESTUARY FISHING: Public piers provide opportunities to catch surfperch and baitfish and to drop crab pots (but check first for crab health safety closures). Surfperch are available year-round, with the best fishing occurring when swells are small.

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WILSON RIVER: *Steelhead, trout, fall Chinook* Very few Chinook have moved up into the Wilson River as of yet, and with the current low flows it will take a significant rain event to move fish into the river in any real numbers. Bobber fishing bait, back bouncing, back-trolling divers and bait, and large plugs are all good river techniques for fall Chinook. Hatchery summer steelhead are available throughout the system and there are some fish getting caught. Fall can actually be a great time to target summer steelhead, because these fish will get more active

Steelhead fishing is open in the gorge area year round but salmon fishing/retention is closed upstream of the Illahee boat ramp located in the town of Siletz during the fall salmon seasons. The 3.5-mile bridge (aka Steel Bridge) in the Siletz gorge is open to motorized vehicles, but is only open to public vehicles on the weekend. Anglers can walk/bike in the road during the weekdays. If anglers do walk in they can park at the one-mile gate and start from there.

Summer steelhead are in the river. Fishing has picked up as water temperatures have started to cool down and we've had a few small rains. Most of the fish are located in the upper river especially in the gorge area. Early mornings or late evenings are not as critical with the cooler temperatures and overcast weather so fishing can be good throughout the day. Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

Trout fishing on Tenmile Lakes has slowed down with the best fishing is in the early mornings. Anglers should focus on fishing in deeper water. The wild coho fishery in Tenmile Lakes is open through Dec. 31. Salmon anglers may harvest 1 wild coho per day with up to 5 wild coho for the year in aggregate with **Siltcoos** and **Tahkenitch** lakes. The water level in Tenmile Lakes is very low so it will take a few good rains to bring the coho into the lake. Fishing for largemouth bass has been good. Bass are hitting plastics and jigs fished in deeper water. Yellow perch fishing is very good this fall with lots of fish in the 9- to 12-inch range. Yellow perch have transitioned away from the weedlines into the deeper mudflats in the lake. Anglers are using small jigs or a worm on a hook fished near the bottom. UMPQUA RIVER, SOUTH: **CLOSED** The annual closure of the South Umpqua and Cow Creek began Sept. 16 and continues through Nov. 30. Tributaries to the South and Cow Creek also closed Sept. 15 until the opener in May. WINCHESTER BAY: *Bottomfish, perch*

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