

OVGARD

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I'd put him on some small cabezon the night before in the sea lettuce beds of my favorite intertidal zone, but the appeal of the world's largest sculpin is lost with hand-sized fish, and we both knew that.

Due to a lack of traditional boat ramp or harbor, relative isolation, small population size, marine protected areas to the north and south and distance from Highway 101, the Pacific City fishery is one of the healthiest bottom fisheries not only in Oregon but in the world.

As a result, you can fish shallower than you would anywhere else from Astoria to Brookings and still catch fish, but if you fish deeper, each angler will catch a party boat's worth of large fish. Another advantage of the deeper, colder water is a reduced parasite load and firmer meat in the fish you'll catch, so they taste better, too.

I quickly traded my medium spinning-jigging setup for the even lighter rods on the boat, and it paid dividends.

We plowed through large black, blue, canary, copper, deacon, quillback and yellowtail rockfish fishing three- to five-inch swimbait on remarkably light half- and one-ounce jigheads. It felt like cheating, fishing with such light gear, but you could feel every take, the fight was superior.

I managed my largest-ever yellowtail and copper rockfish — both topping five pounds. Dom caught some huge black rockfish. We added a few lingcod, Dom got his larger cabezon, and I even caught a new species when we drifted over a deeper reef: a yelloweye rockfish.

Like many deepwater fish, rockfish have what is called a swim bladder. The



Luke Ovgard/Contributed Photo

Dom Porcelli with a cabezon.

large fleshy sac inflates or deflates accordingly to help a fish's body deal with varying pressures at depth. When a fish is brought up rapidly, the sac inflates and prevents the fish from swimming down.

Oregon angling regulations require the use of a descending device for fish with barotrauma, which the protected yelloweye had. While Captain Josh dug his out and prepared it, Dom snapped a few quick pictures of me and the vibrant orange fish with those striking namesake yellow eyes.

When we called it a day, we surfed the waves in. Captain Josh planted us squarely on top of a big wave, killed and raised his outboards in a fluid motion, and let the momentum of the surf plant us on the beach. Though I had

nothing to do with it, I felt proud by association.

We unloaded our gear and chased other quarry while the captain cleaned our catch. Dom was living in a motel and planned to return to Florida in two days' time, so he graciously added his catch to my own, giving me a solid portion of clean white fillets to take home.

Dom finished his trip to Oregon with more than 15 new species, including those he found on the dory.

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Tom Claycomb/Contributed Photo

Prepping the poppers. Cut a strip of bacon in half. Lay on a slice of marinated dove breast, slice of jalapeno and onion and roll it up and pin together with toothpicks.

CLAYCOMB

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So, if you have a pile of doves in the freezer tell your wife that you've

got dinner tonight. Whip out these bad boys and she'll likely beat you with a stick to go out and get her some more. And that's a good problem to have. A wife who wants you to go hunting. Gee, I ought

to go into marriage counseling! (If you don't have any doves, don't panic. I made these poppers out of Eurasian doves and pigeons which I'd just shot with my Umarex .25-caliber Gauntlet airgun.)



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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2021

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- 1 Metal in bronze
- 4 Franklin's flier
- 8 Thick slice
- 12 Playful bark
- 13 Kind of gin
- 14 Jot
- 15 Island near Java
- 17 Peeve
- 18 Very funny person
- 19 Groovy
- 21 Thin clouds
- 22 Chewed the scenery
- 25 Debtor's letters
- 26 Note
- 27 City in Poland
- 30 Coffee server
- 31 Fragile layer
- 33 Last mo.
- 35 Orchestra member
- 37 "Hooray for me!" (hyph.)
- 38 Head warmer
- 39 All thumbs

DOWN

- 1 Waiter's check
- 2 Levin or Gershwin
- 3 QB's org.
- 4 Midwest st.
- 5 Work by Homer
- 6 Legal wrong
- 7 Response to a rodent
- 8 It follows Orion
- 9 Superman's girlfriend
- 10 Surmounting

Answer to Previous Puzzle

W	H	Y	T	A	N	G	A	C	D	C
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