

Fishing Journal

Information For The Serious Angler

by John Martinis

May 2014

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2014 Recreational Sport Fishing

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Jennings Park Kids Fishing Derby

Saturday May 3rd - 8-11AM

Free-Ages 2-12

Tackle and Bait Provided

The Marysville Kiwanis Club, Everett Steelhead and Salmon Club, John's Sporting Goods and Marysville Parks and Recreation is sponsoring our 20th Annual free Fishing Derby. Children may bring their own equipment or use the equipment that is provided. A limit of one fish per entrant will be enforced. Door prizes and grand prizes are determined by a random drawing of all participants. The Kiwanis Club will also be sponsoring a Pancake Breakfast from 8:00 am to 11:00 am in the pavilion. The cost for the breakfast is \$3 a plate for kids and \$5 for adults. All participants are asked to bring a canned food item to be donated to the Marysville Community Food Bank. Please leave pets at home.

2014 Lake Stevens

Kokanee Derby

Saturday

May 17th 2014

Largest Kokanee 1st Place - \$1,000.00 Sponsored by Dick Nite Spoons. 2nd Place - \$ 500.00 Sponsored by Ted's Sports Center. 3rd Place - \$ 250.00 Sponsored by John's Sporting Goods. Ticket locations: Greg's Custom Fishing Rods, 3 Rivers Marine, John's Sporting Goods, Ted's Sports Center, Holiday Sports, and Triangle Bait & Tackle

Halibut Fishing 2014

There are three very effective methods for catching these big flatties. I will address drifting for Halibut, trolling for Halibut and anchoring for Halibut.

If you think that you need to go to Alaska to catch a huge Halibut, think twice. My friend Woody Woods caught a 225 pound Halibut in the Straits of Juan de Fuca during the 2013 Halibut season. Though, unusual to catch a Halibut that size, it is not unusual to catch Halibut 50-100 pounds in Puget Sound and in the Straits Juan de Fuca. Halibut that are 25 to 50 pounds are caught with great regularity at places such as: Mutiny Bay, Admiralty Bay, Partridge Bank, Eastern Bank, Hein Bank and MacArthur Bank.

Another friend of mine, Peter Hatch, caught five Halibut in six trips to Mutiny Bay last year. There is some good local Halibut fishing available to all of us!

Before I address the three methods for catching Halibut, I want to talk about the fishing tackle you need to rig for catching Halibut. I like to keep the tackle fairly simple because you can fish for Halibut almost any way you wish as long as you have a good quality bait on the rig that you are using.

The Tackle/Rig

When I fish for Halibut, I use the same rig everywhere I go. The rig looks like this: an 18" spreader bar, white Pline 7" squid, 80lb leader, two 10/0 Gamakatsu Octopus hooks and a 7 to 8 inch herring tied onto the hooks with Miracle Thread.



Tie the hooks so that when the first hook goes through the head of the herring, the trailing hook is near the tail of the herring. The finished leader needs to be 18 to 24 inches long. Take a look at this video I made on assembling this Halibut rig: [How to Rig for Halibut](#). This is a fairly straightforward rig that is very effective for Halibut fishing. [Diagram for Halibut Rig](#).

There are two schools of thought for picking out a Halibut rod and reel. For Puget Sound Halibut fishing, the fishing rod only needs to be a medium action or medium heavy action 5 1/2-7 foot Halibut rod. For ocean Halibut fishing, where you are fishing 300-500 feet deep, the fishing rod needs to be heavy action or extra heavy action. Here is the reason for the difference: in Puget Sound and the Straits of Juan de Fuca you will only be using 16-24 ounces of lead on most days and you will only be fishing in 60-180 feet of water. In the Pacific Ocean you need at least 32 ounces of lead to get to the bottom in 300-500 feet of water. A medium or medium heavy action halibut rod does not handle two pounds of lead very comfortably. An 5 1/2-6 1/2 foot heavy or x-heavy rod will do the job quite well for deep water Halibut fishing.

There are three Halibut rods that I highly recommend: Shakespeare Ugly Stik Tiger [BWCA/O 2201 7'-0" 20-50lb Medium](#) and [BWCA/O 2202 7'-0" 30-60lb Medium Heavy](#), these are great Puget Sound Halibut rods. An Ocean Halibut fishing rod that will haul any Halibut in from 500 feet: Shimano [Talavera Rod Tec-60H](#).

You can use the same fishing reel for Puget Sound Halibut fishing as well as Pacific Ocean Halibut fishing. There are three fishing reels that will meet the needs of deep-water fishing as well as fishing in 60-180 of water. These

fishing reels include: [Shimano Tekota 700](#), [Penn 113H](#) and the new [Penn Squall 50](#).

If you are fishing Puget Sound or fishing the Pacific Ocean for Halibut, I would recommend using 65lb braided spectra line. The three reels that I mentioned have the capacity for more braided line and what is necessary. To compensate for that, I fill the reels 2/3 of the way full with 80lb braided Dacron and then I tie the Dacron to the 65lb braided spectra line with a Uni to Uni knot. If you want this knot to have more strength than either line, superglue the knot. The end result should be that the reel is loaded with 300 yards of 65 pound braided spectra line. 900 feet of line is more than adequate for Halibut fishing.

Quite often I get asked if 65 pound test spectra line will bring an 100 pound halibut to the surface. 65 pound test spectra line will bring any fish that lives in the Pacific Northwest to the surface quite easily!

Drifting for Halibut

Drifting for Halibut is the most common fishing method and the easiest method to fish for Halibut. Set up your draft so that you can maximize the amount of time that you spend in 60 to 180 feet of water. To do this you must look at a chart or your GPS and figure out the direction of the water/drift and the layout of the bottom. The ideal way to do this is to start in shallow water and drift in the direction in which the depth is getting deeper. If you are not catching Halibut, do not make the classic mistake of repeating the same drift repeatedly. Take a different slice out of the area you are fishing with each drift. If you hook a halibut mark the spot with your GPS immediately because most likely you can go back to

that spot and hook another Halibut.

Trolling for Halibut

Trolling for Halibut is not a whole lot different than trolling for salmon except that you will be trolling much slower. A common rig for trolling for Halibut is cut plugging a herring or trolling a herring behind a dodger or flasher. If you are trolling for Halibut I would recommend picking a particular depth and trolling at that depth for an extended period of time. This makes the job much easier because you will not be lowering and raising your downrigger nonstop. It is quite common to hear of salmon anglers catching Halibut while trolling for Chinook in 90-120 feet of water. In fact, my good friend Peter Hatch caught and released a 25lb Halibut at Mid Channel Bank a couple of weeks ago while trolling for Chinook. Salmon anglers regularly hook Halibut at Hein Bank during the winter Chinook fishing season. This tells me, "This is a pretty good way to hook Halibut without going through a lot of effort."

Anchoring for Halibut

Anchoring for Halibut's has gotten to be immensely popular these last couple of years. Not only is this relatively easy. It is also extremely effective! The last two Halibut trips that I have made in which I was anchored, I caught a Halibut each time. See my video ["Anchoring for Halibut"](#)

Use the same Halibut rig with a spreader bar and white squid and herring that you would use as if you were drifting for halibut.

Set your anchor in 100-120 feet of water. The Coast Guard recommends three times as much anchor line as it is to the bottom.

Just Fishing



Most Halibut anglers use a chum bag filled with any fish parts they have in their freezer. Any crab bait that you have saved is good for your Halibut chum bag. The chum bag is attached to a downrigger ball and lowered to the bottom. Set the chum bag off the bottom one foot. Other good items to put in the chum bag include: any baits that you use to catch shrimp. Include Mackerel, Shrimp Pellets and Cat food in the chum bag.

After the anchor is set, then comes the easy part. Put your gear to the bottom and reel back one foot. Put the rod in the rod holder and wait for a bite. Do not be tempted to grab the rod the moment you see a Halibut consuming your bait. Wait until the fish is flexing your rod. Take the rod out of the rod holder, dip the rod tip to the water and wait for the fish to be thumping on the rod. Now, it is the time to set the hook.

Some anglers have not used a chum bag because they are not sure if it is legal to do so. I am not telling you that it is, but here is my interpretation of the rules: Page 10 of the regulation pamphlet, "Food Fish Includes forage fish, Halibut, bottomfish, common carp, shad, tuna, mackerel, salmon, and sturgeon."

Page 10 of the regulation pamphlet, "Game Fish Includes bass, burbot (freshwaterling), catfish, crappie, grayling, northern pikeminnow, peamouth chub, yellow perch, tiger muskie, sucker, sunfish, grass carp, trout (including steelhead, kokanee, and Dolly Varden/bull trout), landlocked salmon (Chinook, coho or Atlantic), walleye, and whitefish."

Page 12 of the regulation pamphlet, "Chum (broadcast feed) to attract Game Fish, unless authorized by Special Rules."

The regulation pamphlet clearly restricts chum to attract Game Fish. However, on page 10, the regulation pamphlet clearly classifies Halibut as a Food Fish.

I cannot find any restriction in the rule pamphlet that restricts chumming for Food Fish.

Please do not call me with the idea of arguing the chum rule for Halibut because I do not debate the complicated Washington State fishing rules over the telephone. If you wish to debate the rules here is a number that you can call at the WDFW 360-902-2936.

Halibut Gear List

18" Spreader Bar
60-80lb Leader
10/0 Gamakatsu Hooks
Pline 7" White Squid
7-8 inch Herring
Miracle Thread
16 ounce Lead
#6 Corkies

I have bags of Halibut tackle made up with two of everything that you need on the Halibut Tackle list

Top five Halibut fishing area Maps

[Mutiny Bay](#)
[Admiralty Bay](#)
[Partridge Bank](#)
[Eastern Bank](#)
[Hein Bank](#)
[More Maps](#)

Puget Sound/Straits Halibut Fishing Dates

Marine Areas 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10: The fishery will be open May 9 and 10 and May 17. The fishery will be open Thursday through Sunday, May 22-25, for Memorial Day weekend. The fishery will open again May 29-31 and will be open one final day on Saturday, June 7.

Puget Sound Ling Cod

LINGCOD May 1-June 15, Hook and line season. Min. size 26". Max. size 36". Daily limit 1. Includes: Marine Areas 7, 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, and 11.

Every May 1, I look forward to going Lingcod fishing with Charter Captain Gary Krein. Not only are Gary and I good friends, this day gives us a chance to fish together and share Lingcod fishing techniques with each other. May 1, always takes us to Possession Bar where we routinely catch our limit of Lingcod in 2-3 hours of fishing. However, there is some prep involved before we catch our Lingcod.

The prep involves catching "dabs". Dabs slang term for Sand Sole. Sand Sole can be caught throughout Puget Sound on any sandy flat in 60-100 feet of water.

Here's the deal: you need to have Lingcod gear and gear for catching dabs. First I will address gear for dabs. Gear for dabs includes a small double hook Crappie rig with a size 6 or size 8 hook. On the bottom of this rig you need to snap a 4 ounce or 6 ounce cannon ball sinker. The size of the cannon ball sinker will be determined by the wind and the tide. Almost any

Just Fishing



bait will work for catching Sand Sole. I use squid just because it is a tough rubbery bait that will stay on the hook. Cut squid into small pieces and thread one single piece on to the hook. Don't worry about covering the hook with the bait.

I have these Crappie rigs for catching Sand Sole at the store. They come rigged with size 6 or size 8 hooks. Either one will work. These rigs are made by Mason Tackle.

Here's the trick for catching these little critters: Let your line to the bottom and reel back approximately 6 inches of line. When you get a bite from a Sand Sole do not jerk are set the hook. Let the fish eat the bait until it hooks itself. If you're patient, you will catch two Sand Sole at a time. The Sand Sole need to be kept alive. To do so, they need to be kept in a live well or a bucket with an aerator. Don't expect the bait to stay alive much more than 2 to 3 hours unless you have a very elaborate live well. Dead Sand Sole will work for Ling Cod, they just aren't as effective as when they are alive.

Places to Catch Sand Sole: the bar on the East side of Hat Island (Gedney Island). Another spot is ½ mile north of Possession Point. You can catch Sand Sole in either one of these two places in 60-100 feet of water. Drift around until you locate patches of Sole, when you get into them, mark the spot with your GPS and stay on top of the fish. Try to catch six baits per person fishing. If you happen to catch Sculpin while you are fishing dabs, keep the Sculpin because they are nuclear bait for Ling Cod.

The rig for live bait fishing for Ling Cod is quite simple. [Live Bait Ling Cod Rig Diagram](#). If you choose to tie your own live bait rig, use 5/0 or 6/0

Gamakatsu circle hooks. If you choose to purchase hooks that are tied: choose Gamakatsu 4/0-5/0 solid tied mooching hooks with an 25-40lb leader.

The best way to hook the Sand Sole: run the upper hook through the roof of his mouth and have the hook come out between his eyes. Let the other hook dangle. A really nifty trick: put a Buzz Bomb bumper on the upper hook so that the hook will not slip off of the Sand Sole. Do this by slipping the Buzz Bomb bumper over the tip of the hook and onto the shank of the hook.

Position yourself in 35-90 feet of water. Now let the Sand Sole to the bottom and crank back 6 inches of line. At this point you are just as well off putting the rod in a rod holder. I have found that the less that you do while the Lingcod is consuming the Sand Sole the better chance you have of catching the fish. Wait until the Lingcod is taking line off of the reel. At this point, start reeling slowly and let the hooks set into the fish by themselves. If you jerk, you will lose the Lingcod 50% of the time.

If you don't want to mess around with live bait a very good alternative is using twin tail scampi's. I like the four-inch scampi tails with 2-3 ounce lead heads and the 6 inch scampi tails with 4-6 ounce lead heads. In either case I always use a full fillet of salted herring on the hook. Colors of scampi tails that I recommend are: Motor Oil Red Flake and Black/Smoke Silver Flake.

There is an art to using scampi tails. Let the scampi tail to the bottom and gently swim the scampi tail without moving the rod tip more than 6 inches. When a Ling Cod picks up the jig, jerk hard and real fast until you have a deep bend in the rod.

Herring rigged exactly how you would rig it for salmon fishing, is another very effective method for catching Lingcod. Cut plug the herring so that it has a good spin. The only modification I would make to this rig is to shorten the leader to 36 inches.

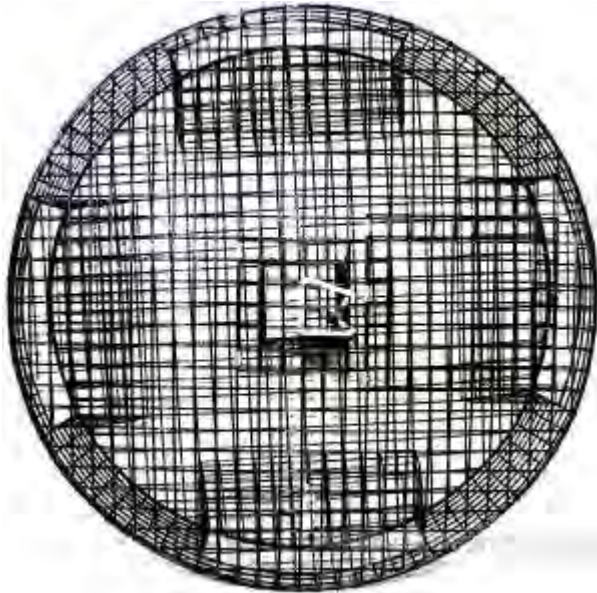
The two most productive fishing areas for Ling Cod in Puget Sound: Possession Bar and Double Bluff

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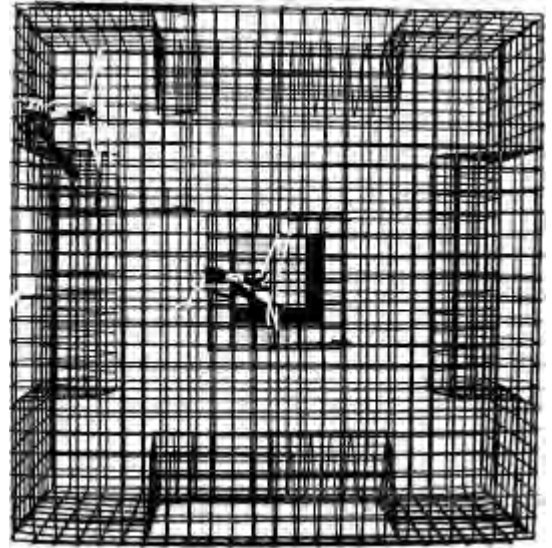
Tackle For The Serious Angler

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Shrimp Pot Rigging Video: [Click Here](#)



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