

Fishing Journal

Information For The Serious Angler

by John Martinis

April 2017

Fishing Dates

These Seasons are based on quotas and they May Change

Area 6

Dec 1-April 15

Daily limit one

Chinook, hatchery only

Area 7

Opened March 25 for

Chinook, limit one

Chinook

Area 8-1

Nov 1-April 30

Daily limit one

Chinook, hatchery only

Area 8-2

Nov 1-April 30

Daily limit one

Chinook, hatchery only

Area 9

Open until April 15

Chinook, daily limit one, hatchery only

Area 10

Closed for Chinook

until further notice

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John's Sporting Goods

Halibut Seminar

by John Martinis

I will be giving a talk on Halibut fishing at the Everett Steelhead and Salmon Club April 20th @7PM. You are invited to the talk that I am giving and the seminar is free to the public. I will see you there!

Location: 2411 Hewitt Ave, Everett 98201. [Map](#)

Area 7 Chinook

Opened March 25th

That's correct, Marine Area 7 opened earlier than all of us anticipated on March 25. Early reports suggest that the Chinook fishing is quite good in all the usual places

"The 2017 Halibut, Spot Shrimp and Lingcod Seasons"

Opening Soon at an Area Near You

Puget Sound Halibut Dates

May 4, 6, and 11 and hopefully some other dates if the quota is not met during the three days of recreational fishing. Halibut fishing, in most areas of Washington State, will open on the same three days. There are no size restrictions and the limit is one Halibut.

Puget Sound Spot Shrimp

There are no size restrictions and the limit is 80 Spot Shrimp

Marine Area 6: Open May 6 and is open every day until the quota is achieved

Marine Area 7 South: Open May 6 through May 21

Marine Area 7 West: Open May 6 and is open every day until the quota is achieved

Marine Area 8-1: Open May 6 and 17

Marine Area 8-2: Open May 6 and 17

Marine Area 9: Open May 6 and 17

Marine Area 10: Open May 6 and another day to be considered later

Marine Area 12: Open May 6, 10, 17 and 20

Puget Sound Lingcod

May 1 through June 15

Size limit 26 inches to 36 inches

Halibut Fishing

Marine Areas 6, 7 and 9

Halibut fishing in Marine Areas 6, 7, and 9 is not for anglers wanting immediate gratification. Halibut fishing can be and most often is more of a marathon run. To be successful at this sport in the Puget Sound Area you must be prepared to put in a lot of hours on the water. The attraction of Halibut fishing

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is that the fish can be 25 to 100 pounds. Even a 25-pound Halibut produces a heck of a lot of fillets. My best advice to all new Halibut anglers is to be persistent and keep at it each day of the open season.

Places to fish for Halibut are like salmon fishing areas. There are some relatively close fishing areas and then there some areas way out in the Straits of Juan de Fuca nowhere close to land. So, choose the area that best fits your boat size.

The best area in Area 9 to fish (if you don't have a large enough boat or the experience of going out into the Straits) is Admiralty Bay. There is a boat launch at Fort Casey near the ferry terminal at the edge of Admiralty Bay. From this boat launch you can be Halibut fishing in five minutes.

From the Everett/Edmonds area, Mutiny Bay is probably a twenty-five-minute run from either boat launch. Mutiny Bay is the closest place from either boat launch for a realistic chance for catching Halibut. Because of Mutiny Bay's proximity to the Seattle/Everett metropolitan area, it is also going to be the most crowded area to fish in Puget Sound. Don't let the crowds deter you because every year there are some nice Halibut caught out of Mutiny Bay.

If your boat has a greater range and you have a sense of adventure, think about Halibut fishing at: Partridge Bank, Eastern Bank, Hein Bank, McArthur Bank, Middle Bank and Coyote Bank.

While salmon fishing in March I hooked and released a 40 pound Halibut on the Southwest corner of Partridge Bank and also caught and released a 25 pound Halibut on the Southeast corner of Coyote Bank. The Halibut I caught at Partridge was in 100 feet of water and the one I caught at Coyote was in 150 feet. The Partridge Halibut was caught on a Coho killer and the Coyote Halibut was caught on a 5-inch herring. Wow.... sort of blows the theory about using large horse herring for catching Halibut???

The two most widely used methods for catching Halibut are: First - Drifting and pounding the bottom with spreader bars. Second - Anchoring and fishing close to the bottom with a spreader bar and bait or using a downrigger.

Some Halibut anglers like to troll for Halibut with a 7 to 8-inch Herring placed off a downrigger. When I started fishing for Halibut many years ago, I trolled for Halibut on Eastern Bank. I used a dodger and a 7-inch herring and trolled slowly close to the bottom. I caught as many Halibut then as I do now anchored to the bottom and waiting for a Halibut to ambush my Halibut rig.

Let's explore these two methods. If you are uncomfortable with anchoring your boat in 100 to 150 feet of water, the drifting method works just fine. The largest Halibut I caught in the Straits was drifting on top of Partridge Bank in 60 feet of water. On that day, I hooked a 100-pound Halibut and my brother-in-law Ernie got a Halibut that was around 50

pounds.

The Rig for Drifting for Halibut: I prefer to use an 18-inch spreader bar, a 7-inch white Pline squid with two 10/0 Gamakatsu octopus' hooks. On the 10/0 hooks, I tie a 7-inch herring on to the hooks with clear Miracle Thread.

There are numerous ways to Halibut fish while on anchor. Let's look at a couple of ways to get correctly set-up: The spreader bar rig, as I described above, works quite well while on anchor. An easier and likewise effective way to fish for Halibut while on anchor is to use a whole herring off a downrigger. Rig the herring up just as you would for salmon fishing and drop it to within a few feet of the bottom. When the tide/current slows down, you need to go back to the spreader bar method for about one hour while the current changes direction. If you do not heed my caution, you will experience one bad tangle-up that you could ever imagine. While on anchor I would advise using a chum bag using either salmon parts or shrimp bait. The bag can be zip-tied to the downrigger ball. Don't make the chum bag too heavy since the weight could break the downrigger spool. Five pounds of chum is more than enough to get the job done.

Depths for Effective Halibut Fishing: Halibut can be caught at a depth from 60 to 300 feet of water. Remember, the greater the depth, the harder it is to keep bottom contact with the Halibut rig. Here in the Puget Sound and the Straits of Juan de Fuca the sweet spot for Halibut fishing is about 90 to 150 feet.



If you do not want to tie your own Halibut rigs, I have the Pline 7-inch squid tied with 10/0 Gamakatsu hooks in the store. I also package most of the items mentioned on the list below with two of everything in a large zip lock bag.

Halibut Gear

18-inch Spreader Bar
Pline 7-inch white squid
Gamakatsu 10/0 Hooks
60 to 80-pound leader material
7 to 8-inch Herring
Miracle Thread

Rod-Reel-Line

Shakespeare Ugly Stik Tiger Rod MH
Shimano Trevala Rod TVC 66H
Penn 113H Reel
Penn Squall 30 Reel
65-pound braided line

Halibut Maps

Mutiny Bay
Admiralty Bay
Partridge Bank
Eastern Bank
Hein Bank

Halibut Videos by John Martinis

Rigging Halibut Gear
Halibut Fishing Video

Halibut Rigs Diagram

Halibut Seasons WDFW

Recreational Spot Shrimp

Harvesting Spot Shrimp is a ritual that a lot of shrimp fanatics participate in every year. Yes, the Puget Sound shrimp season can be short if you are unwilling to look elsewhere after the two-day Puget Sound season has passed. I will make sure that you get complete information on ways to expand your Spot Shrimp season.

This is what your Spot Shrimp season could look like: Harvest Spot Shrimp on Puget Sound May 6. Then move to the San Juan's for Spot Shrimp off Iceberg Point May 6 through 15. On May 17 harvest Spot Shrimp in Puget Sound. An alternative would be to go to Hood Canal on May 10 and harvest Spot Shrimp on that one day in Dabob Bay. After May 17 Areas 6 and 7 West are wide open. Shrimping is open every day in these two Areas. Hood Canal will open one more time on May 20. The beauty of Hood Canal is that you never need to worry about the current taking your gear away. Areas 7 South, 7 West and Area 6 are all tide dependent. If there is more than six feet of exchange between any high or low tide, there is a possibility of losing your gear. At \$250 to \$300 for a fully rigged shrimp pot, losing a shrimp pot gets your attention!

A Fully Rigged Spot Shrimp Pot: This should weigh at least 30 pounds. Most wire style shrimp pots only weigh 10 to 14 pounds. Additional weights need to be added to the wire style pots. The best placement of the weights is under the tunnels. You can

make or purchase a harness for the pot. SMI makes a very sturdy four arm harness with an extra-large snap that will connect to any shrimp pot. I like to attach the harness to the line with a stainless-steel oval. Do not use a spring-loaded snap at this connection because the snap can easily come loose from the rope. Sounds impossible but it happens. From the oval attach, have at least 400 feet of rope. The 400-foot chunk of rope should have a loop on each end. The loops can be formed and clamped with hog rings and then wrapped with electrical tape. This makes for a very secure fitting. At the surface end of the rope attach an oval that can then be attached to the yellow buoys.

There are two ideas when it comes to the correct amount of floatation. Remember, the buoys are the only life line to your \$250 pot. Believe it or not, the buoys are where people like to cut costs - the very thing that protects your investment! The correct amount of floatation for Marine Areas 8-1, 8-2, 9 and 12: Are two magnum solid foam yellow buoys. The correct amount of floatation for Marine Areas 6 and 7: One Polyform inflatable buoy, either LD2 or A2 and two small solid foam yellow buoys. Spend a day at John's Sporting Goods and hear the horror stories of people losing four fully rigged Spot Shrimp pots. Goodbye to \$1000 plus (which, by the way, is not tax deductible). It often happens, especially off Iceberg Point on the south end of Lopez Island. This is the "Bermuda Triangle" graveyard for lost shrimp pots.

If you make your buoys and line

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detachable with stainless steel ovals, you can adjust the buoys to the needs of where you are going shrimping.

5/16-inch leaded rope or ¼ inch leaded rope?

I prefer ¼ inch leaded rope for several reasons: ¼ inch rope coils much easier than 5/16-inch rope. ¼ inch rope costs significantly less than 5/16-inch rope. Four 400 foot shots of ¼ inch rope will fit into one large 18-gallon bucket. The only drawback to ¼ inch rope is that you have to hold on to the rope tighter while the shrimp pot puller is pulling the line in. No big deal because only one rope/pot can be retrieved at a time. The major reason for using ¼ inch rope is because it has less drag in the water. This is a big deal when shrimping in Areas 6 and 7.

Mixing Spot Shrimp Bait

If you look at newsletters I have written in the past, you notice I recommended keeping the components of the shrimp bait separate. Yes, it continues to work quite well. However, in the past several years, I began mixing my bait in five-gallon buckets using a five-gallon paint mixer attached to a drill. The basic shrimp bait ingredients are:

Canned Mackerel
Shrimp Bait Pellets
Friskies Ocean whitefish
Tuna Pate cat food
Pro Cure Crab and shrimp attractant

Unfortunately, Ace of Baits shrimp oil is no longer made.

Pour 5 pounds of Pellets in a five-gallon bucket

Add 2 to 4 cans of Mackerel including the juice

Add 4 cans of cat food

Add two cups of bait oil

Keep some oatmeal handy in case the mixture becomes too liquid. Adding a cup or two of oatmeal will thicken the shrimp bait. This mixing should be done the night prior to shrimping. This will give the pellets time to absorb all the liquids. Check the bait the next day and make certain it has the consistency of peanut butter. If the bait is the correct consistency, it should bleed out of the bait container at the rate of 50 % after a one hour pot soak.

I prefer using two of the 9 inch SMI bait tubes per pot. After a one hour pot soak I remove all the bait from the containers into an empty bucket and put fresh bait in the tubes. Then, I save the used bait for later in the day or for another day of shrimping. The used bait can be refreshed by adding more key ingredients that I previously mentioned. Last year when the Spot Shrimp limit was doubled in Area 6, I used the refreshed bait that I had used earlier in the day.

Shrimp Pots and Shrimp Gear

19027 SMI Octagon Shrimp Pot
19001 SMI Round Shrimp Pot
Magnum foam Yellow Buoys
Small 11-inch foam Yellow Buoys
Stainless Steel Ovals
Polyform A2 Yellow Buoy
Polyform LD2 Yellow Buoy
SMI Heavy Duty Harness
SMI 9-inch Bait Containers
¼ inch or 5/16-inch Leaded Rope

Spot Shrimp Bait

Shrimp Pellets
Canned Mackerel
Friskies Ocean Whitefish
and Tuna Cat food
Pro Cure Crab and Shrimp Attractant
Oatmeal

Shrimp Pot Diagram

Shrimp Pot Rigging Video

Shrimping Maps

Port Gardner Bay
Browns Bay/Edmonds
Elliot Bay Seattle
Iceberg Point
Hood Canal
Eastern Bank
Partridge Bank
Friday Harbor
Waldron Island
Spiden/Stuart Islands

Check Spot Shrimp Seasons WDFW
Web Site, [Click Here](#)

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SMI 19027 Sale Price \$89.50
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Reg. Price \$99.50



Daiwa Tanacom 750
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20% Discount
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Items that are excluded: Downriggers, Ace Line Hauler Products, Traxtech Products, Rods and Reels, Electronics, CTO3R Crab Pot, SMI Crab Pots & Shrimp Pots, Braided Line, items that are discounted, on sale, repairs, parts and closeout items. Cannot be used in combination with discounted gift certificates.

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Expires April 30, 2017

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300ft Cable
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Included in the price is new brake pads, your choice of 300' of 150lb. Cable or 300' 200lb. of braided spectra downrigger line, cleaning and lubricating the downrigger.

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Thursday: Big Fish Day

Friday: Deal of the Day

Scotty Downrigger Deal
Exclusive at
John's Sporting Goods

Scotty 1106
Guide Series

Installed with
300ft 200lb Braided Spectra
#1148 Ball hook
#371 Scotty Snubber
\$525

Standard Scotty 1106
\$473

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