



## Steep Creek Salmon Cam



### [Live Fish Cam](#)

(note: live video feed is only available for viewing between the months of July and November)

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The logo for Tongass National Forest features the word "TONGASS" in large, blue, 3D-style block letters. Below it, the words "NATIONAL FOREST" are written in smaller, blue, spaced-out block letters. The background of the logo is a light blue gradient with a faint image of a forest.

# TONGASS

NATIONAL FOREST

## Live Footage

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## Salmon Basics

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Pacific salmon are one of the most important links in ecosystems all along the North Pacific rim. There are five species of Pacific salmon in North America, and two species that can only be found in Asia. The main five species of Pacific salmon are chinook (king), coho (silver), chum (dog), sockeye (red), and pink (humpy). Those that can only be found in Asia are masu and amago. The pacific salmon lifecycle begins when the adult female salmon lays eggs in fresh water tributaries. The eggs hatch, and baby salmon emerge from the gravel. After the fish emerges from the gravel it is called an alevin. At this point, the salmon is still feeding on its egg yolk, and avoiding potential predators. Once the alevin uses up the egg yolk, it enters the "fry" stage. As a fry, salmon begin feeding on live prey, and begin making their way towards the ocean. As the salmon becomes a "smolt", it goes through a process of physiological change to prepare for life in salt water. This process is known as "smoltification". Entrance into open ocean signifies the salmon's "adult" stage. Adult ocean bound salmon feed on insects and fish for a number of years (time spent in the ocean varies from species to species, and fish to fish), then begin their journey back to the same fresh water tributary they originated from. Once moving up river, the adult salmon enters the "spawner" stage, where it will spend all of it's remaining energy migrating up river and spawning. Spawning salmon devote so much energy to spawning that they do not even feed during this stage. At this time the salmon changes to spawning colors, which makes them easy to identify. Pacific salmon spawn only once in their lifetime, then they die. This may seem like a dismal reality, but the thousands of salmon carcasses that blanket streambeds and forest floors during the spawning season are key to ecosystem survival. Salmon carcasses provide nutrients for the forest as their bodies decay and decompose into the soil. They Provide food for many different animals, and serve breeding insects. Salmon carcasses also deposit mass quantities of nutrients into rivers and streams, which flow into open ocean where it can serve sea-bearing invertebrates, fish, and mammals.

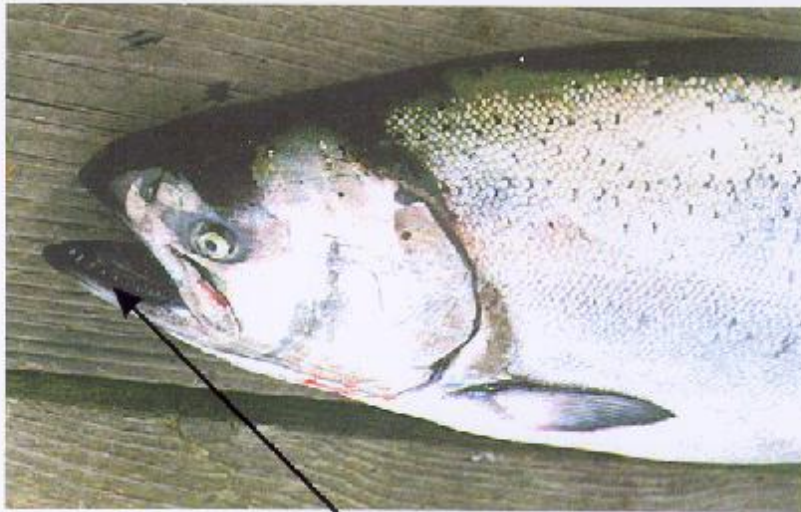
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## The Chinook Salmon

### CHINOOK (KING) SALMON

SIZE: 1 TO 80 POUNDS, UP TO 60 INCHES



TEETH EMERGE FROM BLACK GUM LINE ON LOWER JAW



TAIL CAN BE BRIGHT SILVER TO DARK WITH SPOTS ON BOTH LOBES



SPOTTING ON BACK



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# TONGASS

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## Sample Footatge

video 1

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## The Five Pacific Salmon

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### **Chinook (or King) Salmon** (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*):

The Chinook, or king salmon, is the largest in size of all the Pacific salmon species. The Chinook is also the least abundant of the five Pacific salmon, but it holds its value for sportfishermen throughout its entire native range. The average size and weight range for the Chinook salmon is 28 to 40 inches, or 10 to 25 pounds, but given the right circumstances and living conditions, they can reach nearly 100 pounds! The average life span of Chinook salmon is 3-6 years. Ocean run Chinook salmon are usually found in open ocean or intertidal areas.

### **Coho (or Silver) Salmon** (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*):

The coho, also known as the silver salmon, accounts for only about 10 percent of commercial salmon catch, but it is known as a favorite food fish, and is the most popular among sportfishermen. The coho salmon averages 24-28 inches in length, and 6-10 pounds. The coho salmon has a life span of roughly 2-4 years. Ocean run coho salmon generally stick to intertidal areas and inshore marine waters.

### **Sockeye (or Red) Salmon** (*Oncorhynchus nerka*):

Sockeye salmon, or "red" salmon, are prized by sportfishermen for the amazing and enduring fight they put up, and for their delicious red flesh. Sockeye salmon are also a huge part of the canning industry, and are sold all around the world. Generally sockeye salmon reach a length of 21-26 inches, usually weighing 4-7 pounds. Ocean run sockeye salmon are usually found in open ocean and intertidal areas.

### **Chum (or Dog) Salmon** (*Oncorhynchus keta*):

The chum salmon, commonly known as "dog" salmon, is an important salmon in the fish farming industry, as it does not depend as heavily on fresh water as the other salmon species. Chum salmon are also valued in the fish farming industry for their massive



weight increase from juvenile to adult. The chum salmon's spawning colors make it an interesting sight, and many sportfishermen prefer them for their tendency to fight hard. On average, chum salmon reach a length of 24-31 inches, and a weight of 6<sup>1/2</sup>-12<sup>1/2</sup> pounds. Ocean run chum salmon generally stay in open ocean and intertidal areas.

**Pink (or Humpy) Salmon** (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*):

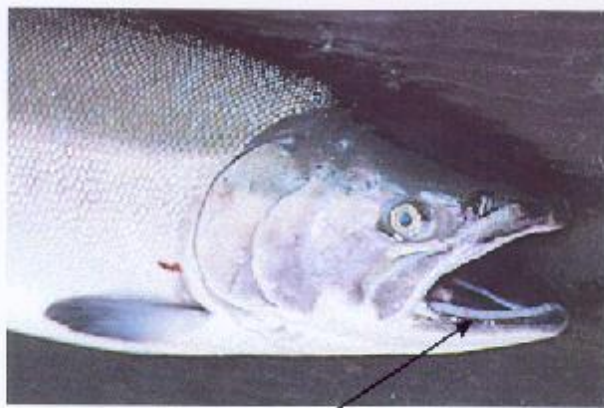
The male pink salmon, during spawning, boasts a distinctive hump on its back between the head and dorsal fin, hence the common name "humpy" or "humpback salmon". Pink salmon are the most abundant of all the Pacific salmon, but account for only a small percentage of commercial catch, due to their unfavorable meat and low fat content. Despite their minimal role in commercial fisheries, pink salmon are still commonly sought for by sportfishermen, and are valuable to canneries. Pink salmon average 18-24 inches in length, and 3-5<sup>1/2</sup> pounds. Pink salmon have the shortest life span of all the Pacific salmon, only 2-3 years. Ocean run pink salmon reside in open ocean, and intertidal areas.

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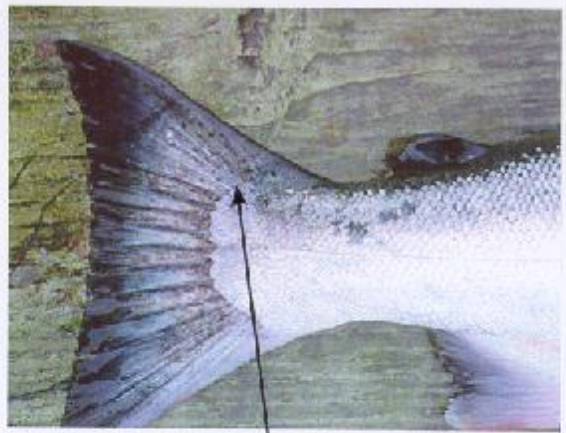
## The Coho Salmon

### COHO (SILVER) SALMON

SIZE: 1 TO 20 POUNDS, UP TO 34 INCHES



TEETH EMERGE FROM  
A WHITE GUM LINE ON  
LOWER JAW



TAIL HAS SPOTS ON  
UPPER LOBE ONLY

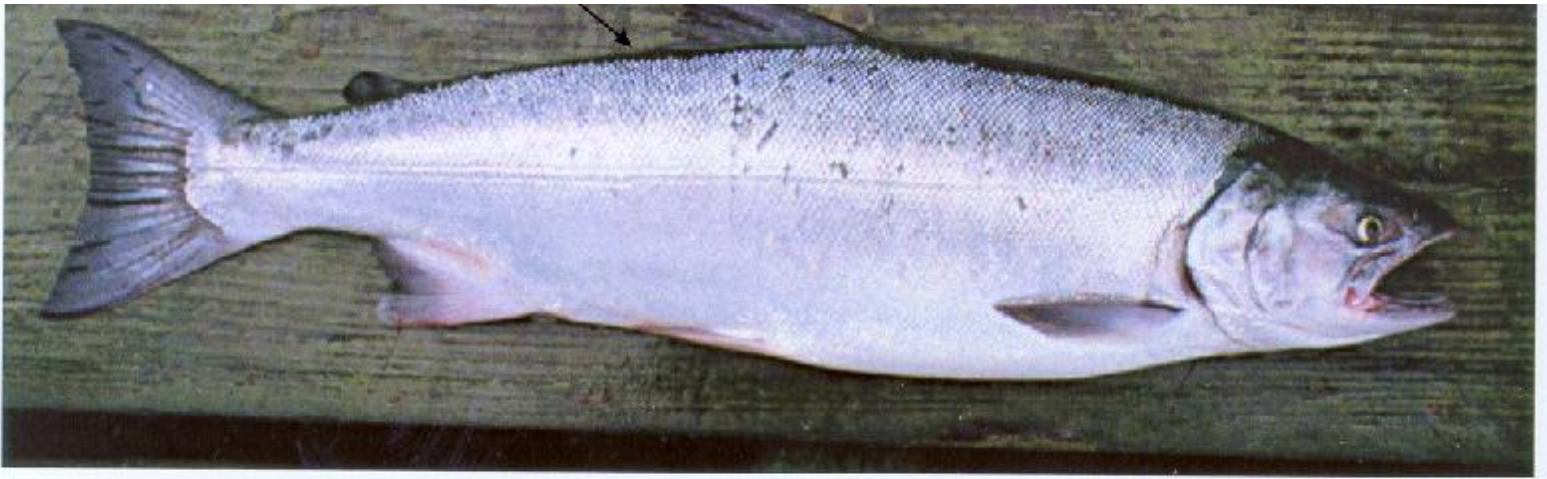


USUALLY HAS  
SPOTTING ON BACK

CAUDAL PEDUNCLE IS  
THICK FOR SIZE OF FISH







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## Sample Footage

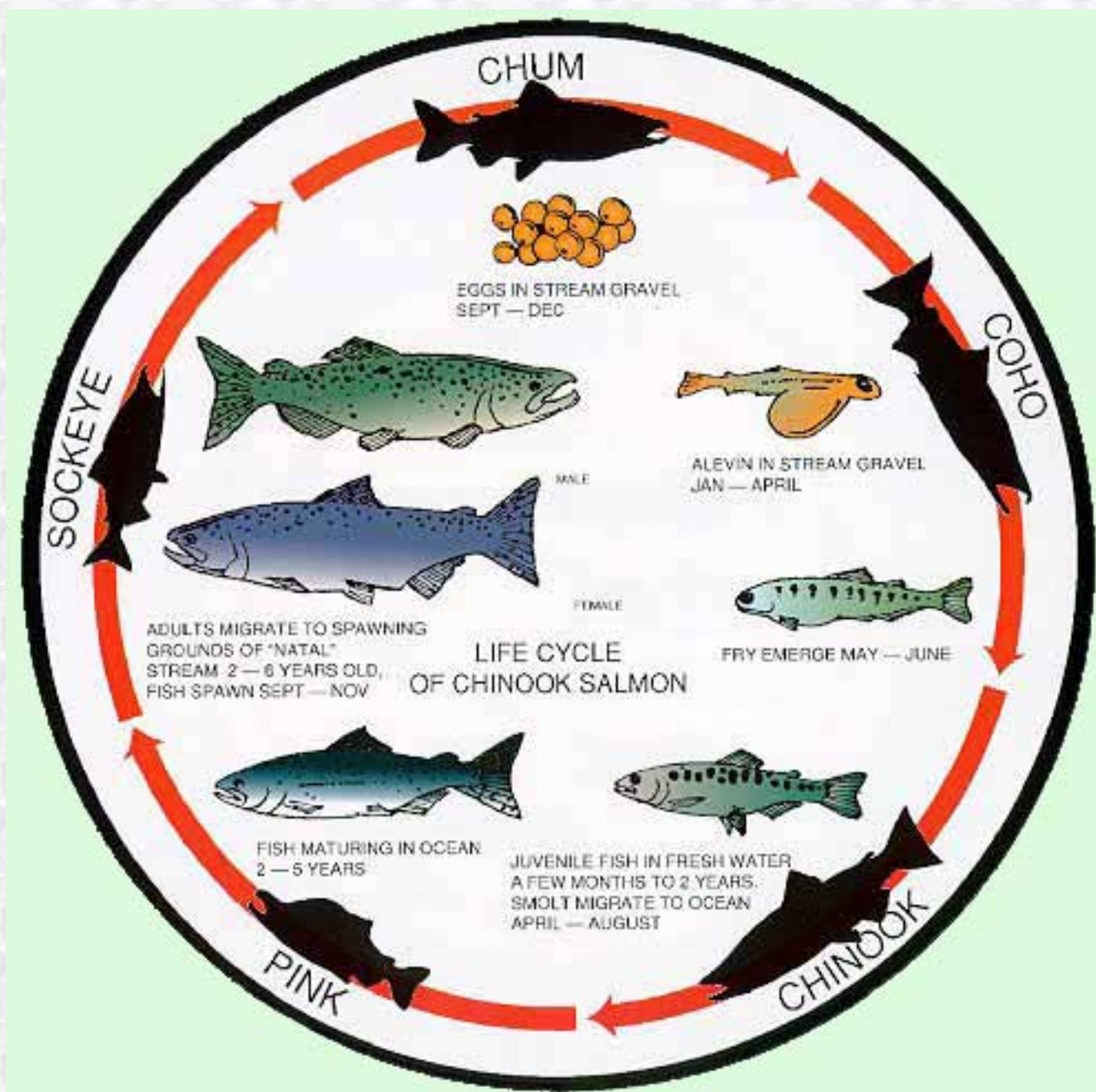
Video 2

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# TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

## The Salmon Life Cycle



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## The Sockeye Salmon

### SOCKEYE (RED) SALMON

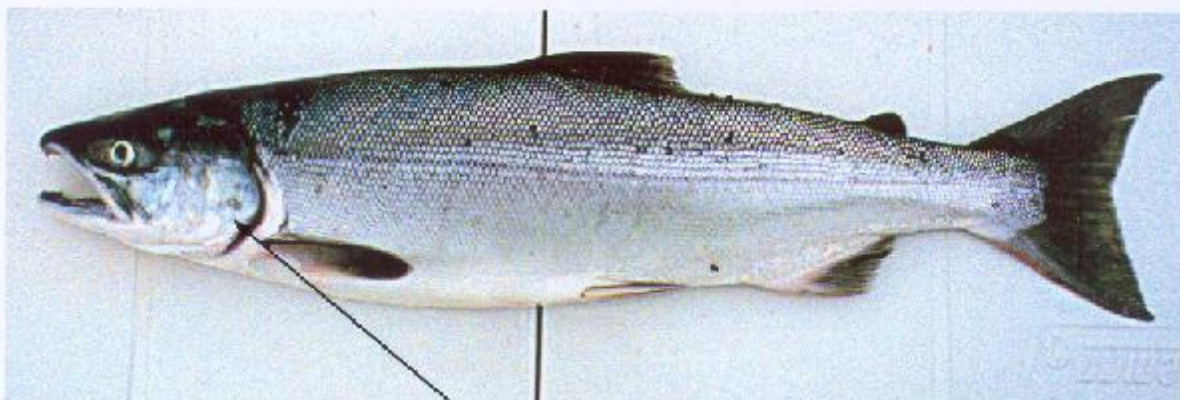
SIZE: 4 TO 8 POUNDS PLUS, UP TO 28 INCHES  
RARELY CAUGHT ON SPORT TROLL GEAR



TAIL HAS NO SILVER COLOR  
OR SPOTS; MAY HAVE FINE  
SPECKLING



TEETH ON BACK OF JAWS  
VERY FINE LIKE FINE SANDPAPER  
MAY HAVE "FANG-LIKE" TEETH  
AT TIPS OF JAWS



29 - 40  
LONG SLENDER  
GILL RAKERS



MOST FORWARD  
GILL ARCH

NO SPOTTING ON BODY



NO SPOTTING ON BODY



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## Sample Footage

Video 3

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## Alaska Salmon Facts

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### Did you know that:

- Alaska is one of the most important salmon producing areas world wide. It accounts for 35%-49% of total world salmon harvest per year.
- Pacific salmon are *anadromous*, which means they spend part of their lives in fresh water, and part of their lives in salt water.
- Salmon sometimes travel thousands of miles in open ocean before returning to spawn. Other times they travel only short distances and stay close to shore.
- Salmon are capable of vertical leaps of up to 10 feet.
- Out of the salmon that succesfully emerge from the gravel nest or "redd", only two percent live long enough to return and spawn.
- In some streams, salmon runs are so thick that you can't walk across without stepping on them.
- Pacific salmon are descended from rainbow trout.
- Salmon are among the most adaptable fish, provided their habitat remains healthy and undisturbed.

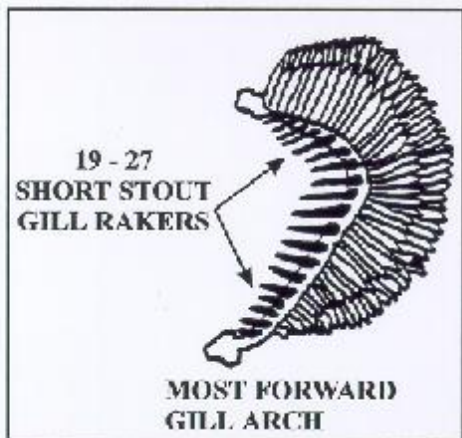
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## The Chum Salmon

### CHUM (DOG) SALMON

SIZE: 6 TO 18 POUNDS PLUS, UP TO 36 INCHES



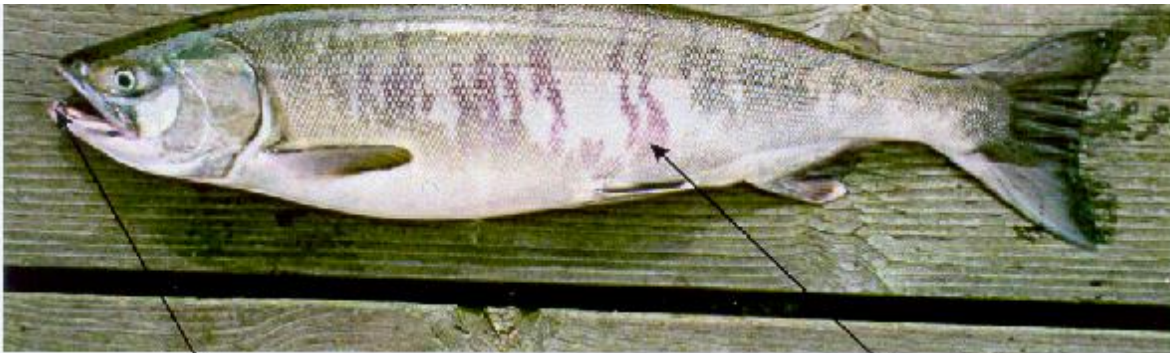
CAUDAL PEDUNCLE IS  
SMALL FOR SIZE OF FISH

TAIL MAY HAVE SILVER  
STREAKS AND IS SPOTLESS



PUPIL IS LARGE  
FOR SIZE OF EYE





**MAY HAVE "FANG-LIKE"  
TEETH AT TIPS OF JAWS**

**VERTICAL BARS (OR FAINT  
OUTLINES OF) ON SIDES**

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## Sample Footage

Video 4

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## Salmon Glossary

<b>Alevin</b>	Newly hatched salmon still feeding on its egg sac. Once the egg sac is completely consumed, the alevin "buttons up" and begins feeding in the river
<b>Anadromous</b>	A fish that spends part of its life in fresh water and another part of its life in salt water
<b>Anterior</b>	On a fish, the frontal area (head and gills)
<b>Caudal Fin</b>	The tail fin of a fish
<b>Chinook</b>	One of five species of Pacific salmon, also called "king" salmon
<b>Chum</b>	One of five species of Pacific salmon, also called "dog" salmon
<b>Coho</b>	One of five species of Pacific salmon, also called "silver" salmon
<b>Dorsal Fin</b>	The fin on the very top of a salmon's back
<b>Estuary</b>	An area where fresh river water flows into the ocean and mixes with salt water, This is an important spot for migrating smolt and fry to adjust to the salt water
<b>Fry</b>	The stage that a salmon learns to feed and swim on its own
<b>Fish Wheel</b>	A trap-like basket made to sit along the edge of a river, and as the current turns the baskets, they scoop up migrating salmon and dump them through a shoot into a basket
<b>Gill</b>	Thin membranes behind a fishes head that enables them to breathe in water, Oxygen passes through, and carbon dioxide passes out
<b>Gill Netting</b>	A special net used for both subsistence and commercial fishing, working by catching a salmon right behind the gill covers
<b>Hatchery</b>	A compound that incubates salmon eggs and raises salmon until they are big enough to be released into open ocean
<b>Imprinting</b>	The phenomena through which young salmon are able to "imprint" the location of their home stream into their memory, so that they can return to spawn there
<b>Milt</b>	A milky sperm that male salmon deposit onto the eggs to fertalize them
<b>Mooching</b>	A method of fishing for salmon
<b>Parr</b>	Baby salmon that still have vertical bars or "parr marks" running down their side to serve as camouflage
<b>Pink</b>	One of five species of Pacific salmon, also called "humpy" or "humpback" salmon

<b>Posterior</b>	On a fish, the back portion (caudal fin, anal fin, adipose fin)
<b>Redd</b>	A nest that female salmon dig into gravel river beds with their tail to lay eggs in
<b>Scales</b>	Tiny, over-lapping plates that protect a fish. They can be used to determine a fishes age, and in some cases, their origin (only when pertaining to hatchery fish)
<b>Smolt</b>	The stage that a salmon migrates to open ocean to begin feeding and growing
<b>Sockeye</b>	One of the five species of Pacific salmon, also called "red" salmon
<b>Spawn</b>	To reproduce through means of egg deposite and fertilization
<b>Subsistance</b>	The harvest of salmon for survival purposes, many rural areas of alaska depend on subsistance fishing as a food source, and a way of life
<b>Swim Bladder</b>	A small air sac that a fish inflates to control its buoyancy
<b>Ventral</b>	The belly area of a fish
<b>Weir</b>	A fence-like structure used in rivers to count and monitor fish runs
<b>Yolk Sac</b>	A sac of nutrients left over after an alevin hatches and emerges. A yolk sac is used as a source of food for the alevin until it can feed on its own

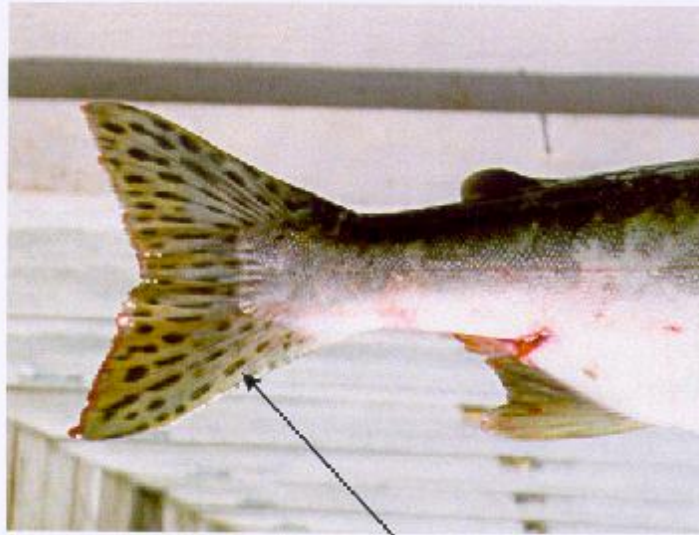
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## The Pink Salmon

### **PINK (HUMPY) SALMON**

**SIZE: 2 TO 6 POUNDS, UP TO 24 INCHES**



**TAIL HAS GOOD V-SHAPE AND HAS ELONGATED SPOTS OR BLOTCHES ON BOTH LOBES; TAIL USUALLY LACKS SILVERY PIGMENTATION**



**PINK SALMON ARE USUALLY BRIGHT SILVER AND TURN DARK IN COLOR AS THEY GET CLOSE TO SPAWNING**

**RELATIVELY LARGE SPOTTING ON BACK**





**ADULT PINK SALMON HAVE SMALL SCALES  
COMPARED TO THE OTHER ADULT SALMON**

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## Sample Footage

Video 5

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