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### First occurrence of blackspot wrasse, *Decodon melasma* Gomon 1974 (Pisces: Labridae), in California

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#### ABSTRACT

Although wrasses (family Labridae) are the second largest family of marine fishes, only three species have been reported from California: rock wrasse, *Halichoeres semicinctus*; señorita, *Oxyjulis californica*; and California sheephead, *Semicossyphus pulcher*. This paper reports the first occurrences of a fourth species, the blackspot wrasse, *Decodon melasma* Gomon 1974, in California. Following the 1997-1998 El Niño, three specimens were collected in southern California trawl surveys; two were collected in June 1998 near Dana Point and Laguna Beach at depths of 60 m and one in April 1999 off San Diego at a depth of 100 m. Although blackspot wrasse reaches a length of 200 mm standard length (SL), all specimens collected in California were small juveniles (51-57 mm SL). The species was previously found in the Gulf of California but not on the Pacific Coast of the Baja California Peninsula. The Laguna Beach record represents a range extension of 1,500 km from Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, Mexico.

#### Full Text

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