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Distribution, abundance, and recruitment of soft-bottomed rockfishes (scorpaenidae: *Sebastes*) on the southern California mainland shelf

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ABSTRACT

Data from nearly 400 small-mesh otter trawls taken throughout the southern California borderland between 1969 and 1979 were examined to reveal spatial and temporal patterns in the abundance and distribution of rockfishes. Rockfishes were common in all samples taken between 15 and 450 m. Predictably, species composition changed with depth. Catches were numerically dominated by either *Sebastes Saxicola* (from 1971-75) or *S. dalli* (from 1975-79) on the mainland shelf south of Point Dume and inshore of 60 m; variability in the recruitment of the young of these species was the major source of seasonal and year-to-year fluctuations in rockfish catches. These variation in recruitment were related to changing oceanographic conditions.