

Fishes

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INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we review information on the ecology of fishes in the major habitats of the Southern California Bight (SCB). The SCB is located in the transition area between Pacific subarctic, Pacific equatorial, and North Pacific central water masses (Svendrup et al. 1942), and the fish fauna contains representatives from each of these sources. The type and amount of ecological information on fishes are not equable among habitats or among species. What is known reflects various investigator interests, sampling logistics, and economic and political exigencies. For example, research on epipelagic fishes has concentrated on the distribution, abundance, and life-history parameters of commercial exploited species; thus more is known about this small group of fishes than any other group in the SCB. Research on mesopelagic and bathypelagic fishes has emphasized physiological and ecological adaptations to life in the deep sea. Research on shallow-water, soft-bottom fishes has focused on the effects of habitat alterations and pollution.

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