

Best baits

Shrimp are scavengers and grazers. A great way to attract them is to use oily bait that will leave a good strong scent trail, such as herring, canned cat food (punch holes in can), tuna fish in oil, and other substances soaked in fish oils, or blended with fish oils.

Be creative and do not limit yourself to one type of bait. But don't forget that there are regulations about using salmon and other sport-caught fish as bait. Check sport fishing regulations under "wasting of fish" and also "bait."

Regulation highlights

- Open season: April 15-September 15.
- **NEW!** As of 2009, a permit is required.
- Bag/Possession limits: Unlimited.
- Pots: 5 pots per person; a maximum of 5 pots per vessel. Check regulation booklet for pot construction regulations.
- There are waters near Valdez that are closed to subsistence shrimping. Please check regulations carefully.

Recommended gear

1. *Southcentral Alaska Sport Fishing Regulation Summary.*
2. Shrimp pots: Place some weight in the pot to help it stay anchored, and to avoid losing pots due to currents and tides. Covering a portion of the pot with fabric may make it more attractive to shrimp. Be sure to check pot construction regulations before covering your pots. Remember the currents, and set your pots so they swing into the current.
3. Line: Use stout, weighted sinking line. Line should be at least 10-15% longer than the depth you choose to drop, to allow for tides and currents.
4. Buoy: The easier to see, the better! By regulation, buoys must have certain information printed on them. Check the regulation booklet for specifics.

5. Bait: Nice and oily, to leave a scent trail. Be creative.
6. GPS, depth finder, and navigational charts: Find underwater structure such as pinnacles, rock slides, or drop-offs; and check the area from several angles before dropping the pots.

Nutritional value of shrimp

According to the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, not only is shrimp rich in protein, but also in calcium, phosphorous, potassium and vitamin A. In a 3-ounce serving of northern shrimp, there are only 105 calories, 0 grams of carbohydrates, 22 grams of protein, and only 1 gram of fat. So, you can eat guilt-free!

For more information

Contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Cordova area office at (907) 424-3212, or the Southcentral Region Sport Fish Information Center in Anchorage at (907) 267-2218, or by e-mail to sfreg2@fishgame.state.ak.us.

Weekly in-season fishing reports, including shrimping, are posted on our web site at www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us and click on "Fishing Reports." We also maintain a weekly in-season telephone recorded hotline for the Prince William Sound area at (907) 267-2516.

For information about camping, fishing guides, and other visitor services, contact the Alaska Division of Tourism at P.O. Box 110809, Juneau, Alaska, 99811, (907) 465-2012, or visit their web site at www.travelalaska.com

For accurate topographical maps, visit the U.S. Geological Survey's map web site at <http://mapping.usgs.gov>. For nautical charts, visit the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's chart web site at <http://chartmaker.ncd.noaa.gov>.

Weather and tides are tracked by NOAA's National Weather Service, at www.arh.noaa.gov.

*OEO statement: www.adfg.state.ak.us/oeostate.php
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Prince William Sound

Recreational Fishing Series

Southcentral Region Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Sport Fish

Prince William Sound Shrimp



Life cycle, management, and
fishing information

Shrimp life cycle

There are five species of shrimp (*Pandalus* family) found in Alaskan waters: northern (formally "pink"), humpy, sidestripe, coonstripe, and spot. Both northern and humpy shrimp are usually marketed as cocktail or salad shrimp. Sidestripes are usually found in much deeper water, while spots are usually the largest species.

Pandalid shrimp are among the relatively few animals that are hermaphroditic. Most individuals spend the early part of their mature lives as males, and then transform into females for the rest of their lifetimes. Females carry from a few hundred to as many as 4,000 eggs. Eggs hatch in the spring, and by mid-summer, the shrimp larvae have typically grown enough to settle into their preferred habitat as a juvenile shrimp.

Where to go, and how deep to set pots

Look for underwater structure, such as rock piles or pinnacles, and places where a rock slide has fallen into the water, and continues underwater for 200 - 300 feet. Areas where glaciers meet the ocean also seem to be good places to drop pots, but be very careful around the calving glaciers, as falling ice is heavier than it looks, and is very dangerous.

Shrimp live at various depths and in various habitats. Spots and coonstripes are generally found in rock piles, coral gardens, and on debris-covered bottoms. Northerns, sidestripes and humpies are usually found on flatter, muddy bottoms. Northern shrimp can be found over the widest depth range (60 - 4,800 feet) while humpies and coonstripes usually are found in shallower waters (18 - 1,200 feet). Spot shrimp seem to be caught in greatest concentrations around 360 feet, but range from 6 to 1,500 feet. Sidestripes are typically found from 150 - 2,100 feet, but most concentrations occur in waters deeper than 240 feet.

It appears that younger shrimp tend to be found in shallower areas, while older shrimp are in deeper areas.



Spot shrimp (*P. platyceros*).



Coonstripe shrimp (*P. hypsinotis*).



Top: Humpy shrimp (*P. goniurus*).

Bottom: Northern shrimp (*P. borealis*).

Also, older shrimp seem to be found offshore, while younger shrimp are generally found closer to shore. Most shrimp migrate nightly up and down the water column, and seasonally from deep waters in winter to shallow waters in summer. Northern shrimp, for example, have been observed moving off the bottom in the evening, occupying the whole water column for much of the night, and returning to the bottom in early morning.

Pandalid shrimp are opportunistic bottom feeders that will eat a wide variety of items such as worms, diatoms, detritus (dead organic material), algae, and invertebrates.

Keep in mind that many areas of Prince William Sound experience strong ocean and tidal currents. Add enough weight and line to keep your pot from breaking away. In order to be successful at shrimping, you may have to have several favorite spots.

Northwestern Prince William Sound seems to be where the action is.

Shrimping out of Whittier

Permit data shows that most shrimp harvest comes from Port Nellie Juan, Culross Passage, Squaw Bay, Blue Fiord, King's Bay, Port Wells, Bay of Isles, McClure Bay, Derickson Bay, Deep Water Bay, and Cochrane Bay.

Shrimping out of Valdez

Permit data shows that most shrimp harvest comes from Knowles Bay, Bligh Reef, Columbia Bay, Unakwik Inlet, Glacier Island, and Port Gravina.

Past harvests

Data from permit returns show over 10,700 gallons of shrimp were harvested in 2004, from over 1,600 permit holders. Most shrimpers recorded harvesting between 0 and 1 gallon of shrimp per pot-day of effort in 2004, while less than 5% recorded harvesting 2 or more gallons per pot-day.