



Hawaiian Monk Seal Food Consumption

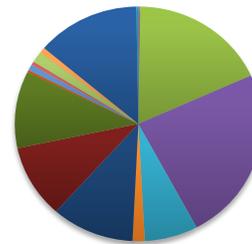
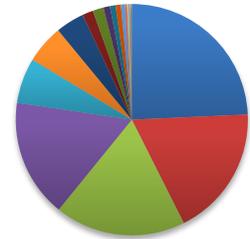


If the Main Hawaiian Islands monk seal population reached the current recovery goal of 500 seals, and there were no changes in the current biomass around the MHI, each day these seals would consume about 0.013% of the minimum estimated marine biomass in the MHI.

- ◆ The current population of Hawaiian monk seals in the main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) is around 150-200.
- ◆ Hawaiian monk seals forage in a variety of habitats ranging from coral reefs to deep, lightless slopes.
- ◆ Studies using GPS tags and cameras indicate monk seals feed almost entirely on the seafloor at depths less than 660 feet.
- ◆ A Hawaiian monk seal eats about 15 pounds per day, on average.
- ◆ NOAA studies of the monk seals' diet are conducted with the hard parts of prey found in seal feces and stomachs.
- ◆ The overlap between species targeted by Hawaiian monk seals, the commercial fishery, and the recreational fishery is quite small, as demonstrated in the figures.
- ◆ More than 70% of commercial landings and more than 60% of recreational landings by weight (excluding pelagic species) are of species NOT found in the monk seal diet.
- ◆ Recreational and commercial fisheries in the MHI (excluding pelagic species, which are not harvested by seals, e.x., Ahi, Mahi Mahi, and Ono) together are estimated to land about 3 times more nearshore marine fish and shellfish annually than are consumed by monk seals.

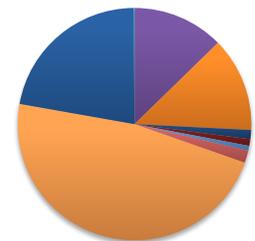


Hawaiian Monk Seal Diet

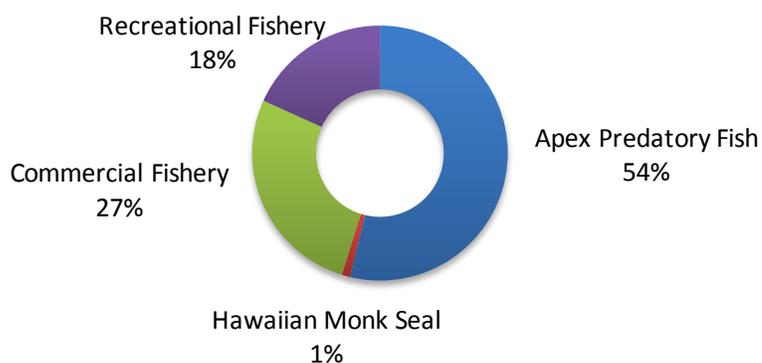


Commercial Fishery Landings

Recreational Fishery Landings



Comparison of Biomass Eaten by Fish Consumers



Apex predatory fish, including giant trevally, blue trevally, Galapagos sharks, whitetip reef sharks, gray reef sharks, and gray snapper, consume **more biomass daily** than do all MHI monk seals, commercial fishermen, and recreational fishermen combined. (The figure above shows relative consumption as a percentage of kilograms/day.)

The biomass taken by Hawaiian monk seals is less than the nearshore catch by commercial and recreational fisheries individually.



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Saving wild ocean places, for
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Since 2007, Marine Conservation Institute has advocated for the protection and recovery of the Hawaiian monk seal. Honua Consulting of Honolulu handles our conservation project for the Hawaiian monk seal. The Hawaiian monk seal is a unique and important element of Hawaii's marine ecosystems whose demise would be a tragic loss for the state and the world. Our monk seal campaign focuses on working constructively with fishermen and other stakeholders to meet the seal's conservation needs, while also educating the public on how to coexist with the growing number of seals that are appearing naturally in the main Hawaiian Islands.