

Fun Fact Sheet: Australian Herring

Region

Gascoyne Coast, West Coast, South Coast

Summary

Owing to similarities in shape, adult herring can easily be confused with juvenile Australian salmon.

Australian herring are generally caught at around 25 centimetres in length, but may grow as large as 41 centimetres. Along with Australian salmon, herring belong to the perch family. Adult herring can easily be confused with juvenile Australian salmon due to their similar body shape and distinguishing features. Australian herring however, have black tips on their tail, a larger eye and more rounded head.



Figure 1. Australian herring are easily confused with juvenile Australian salmon (Image: Sandy Clarke)

Juvenile Australian herring live in bays and nearshore waters of southern Australia, moving to more exposed coastal areas as they grow bigger and approach adulthood.

Australian herring feed on small fish and crustaceans living in weed and seagrass. They in turn,

are food for Australian salmon, mulloway, yellowtail kingfish, sea birds, seals and sea lions.

They school in large numbers, close to the surface, which is a defence mechanism against predators.

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