



## Orange Roughy

Also called the slimehead, deep sea perch or red roughy, the orange roughy is a sedentary fish that dwells in deep cold waters, it is also one of the longest-living fish (up to 149 years). In the United States, orange roughy is sold skinned and filleted, fresh or frozen. In restaurants they are seen as a delicacy.

### Where they live

Orange roughy live in the Atlantic and Indo-Pacific Oceans. In the eastern Atlantic, they range from Iceland to South Africa. In the Indo-Pacific, they are distributed around New Zealand and off Chile. Orange roughy sold in U.S. markets are primarily from New Zealand, China, Namibia and Australia.

### How they're caught

Orange roughy are primarily caught with bottom trawls on and around seamounts. Deep-sea coral and sponge ecosystems are destroyed by dragging huge weighted bottom trawl nets on these sensitive habitats that occur on seamounts. The main fishing season is from June to August, during the spawning season, when fish come together in aggregations and are easier to catch. Since they live in deep waters, it is only with the use of advanced technology that the fish can be located and caught.

### Why they're in trouble

Many orange roughy stocks have already crashed, namely in New Zealand and Australia where they were first exploited in the late 1970s; and recently discovered stocks are decreasing rapidly.

The fish are slow growing, late maturing and difficult to recover once depleted due to these life history characteristics. Orange roughy is the first commercially sought fish to be added to Australia's list of endangered species because of overfishing.

The United States continues to import up to 19 million pounds of orange roughy per year.