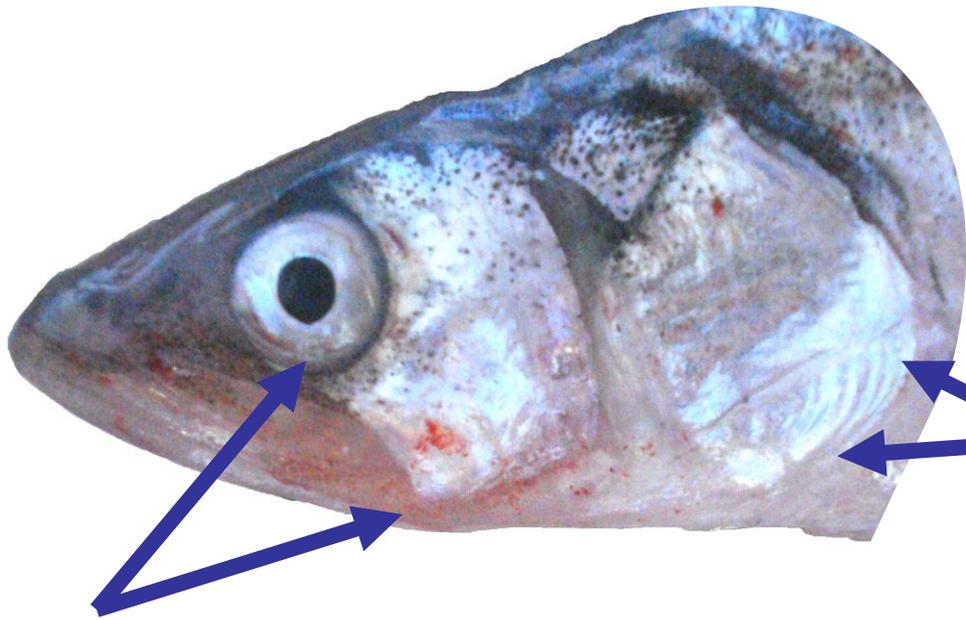


# Guide to Oregon's Common Marine "Baitfish" Species

- A number of fish species often lumped into the category of "baitfish" are caught along the Oregon Coast, and inside coastal bays.
- The typical "baitfish" species groups of herring, anchovy, sardine, silversides (jacksmelt and topsmelt), and smelt are included in an aggregate daily limit of 25 lbs. However, eulachon smelt are prohibited from bays, tidewater, and freshwater.
- Juvenile and shiner surfperch are often encountered while jigging for "baitfish". Surfperch species have a separate daily limit of 15 fish in aggregate, and are not part of the 25 lb. limit for "baitfish".
- Anglers need to be able to identify their catch in order to avoid bag limit violations and possibly retaining prohibited species. Prohibited species include juvenile salmon and eulachon smelt from inland waters. When these prohibited species are encountered they must be immediately released unharmed.
- The following fish identification guide addresses the two most commonly encountered species of smelt, herring, sardine, anchovy, shad, and jacksmelt.



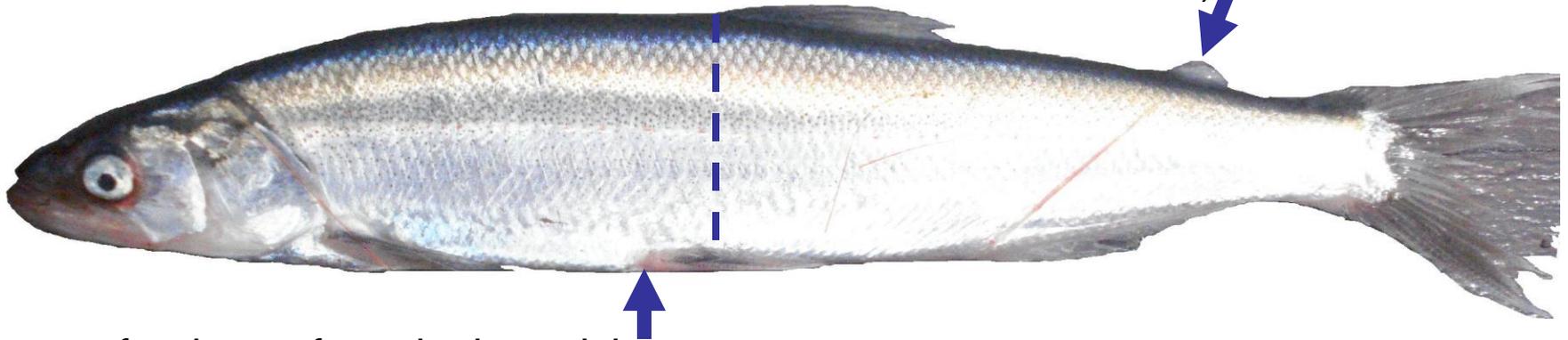
# Eulachon (Smelt) (*Thaleichthys pacificus*)



Eulachon have distinct curved striations on the gill cover

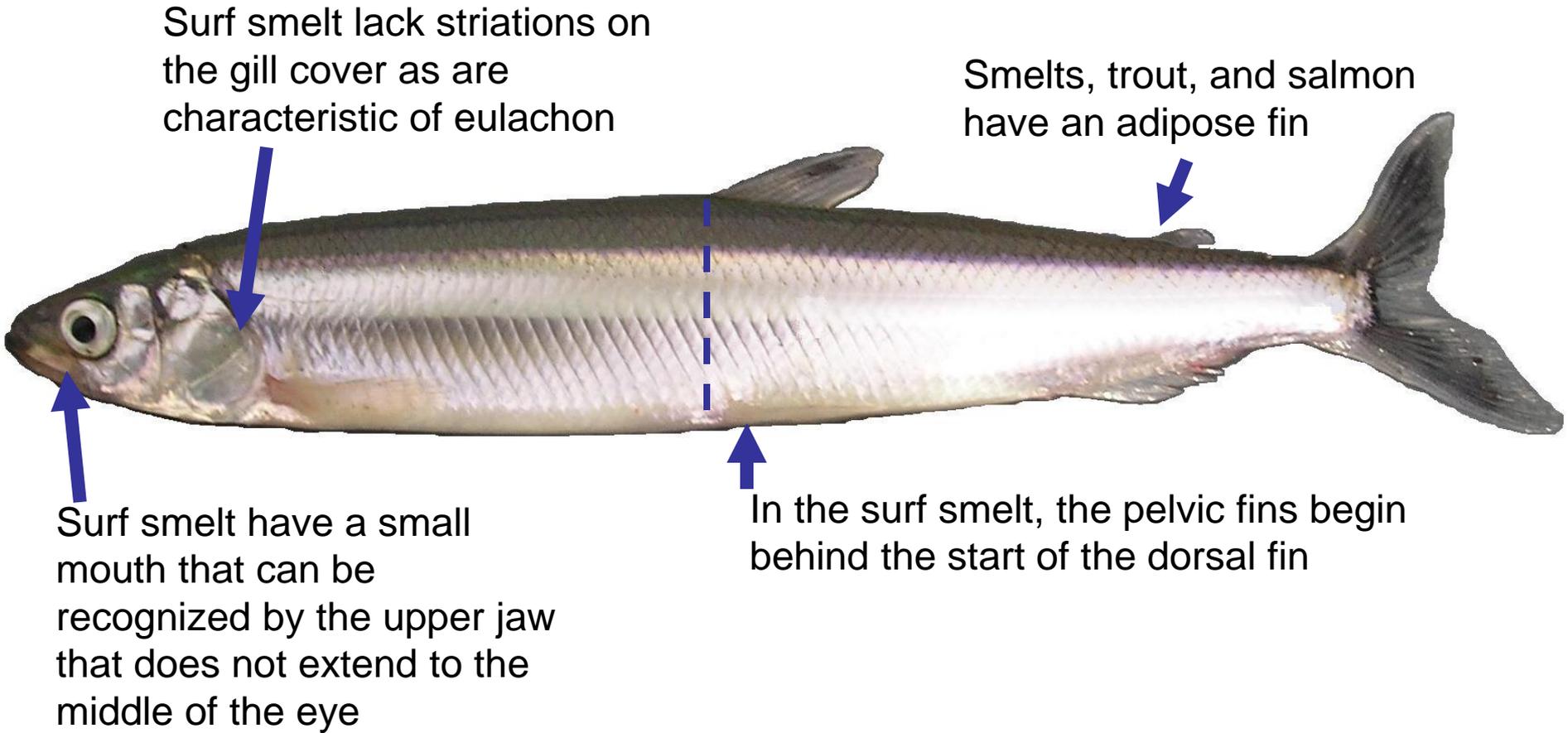
Except for the surf smelt, smelts have a large mouth that can be recognized by the upper jaw that extends beyond the middle of the eye

Eulachon and other smelts, trout, and salmon have an adipose fin (some salmon and trout will have clipped adipose fins)



Except for the surf smelt, the pelvic fins begin in front of the dorsal fin

# Surf Smelt (*Hypomesus pretiosus*)



Surf smelt lack striations on the gill cover as are characteristic of eulachon

Smelts, trout, and salmon have an adipose fin

Surf smelt have a small mouth that can be recognized by the upper jaw that does not extend to the middle of the eye

In the surf smelt, the pelvic fins begin behind the start of the dorsal fin

# **Pacific Herring (*Clupea pallasii*)**

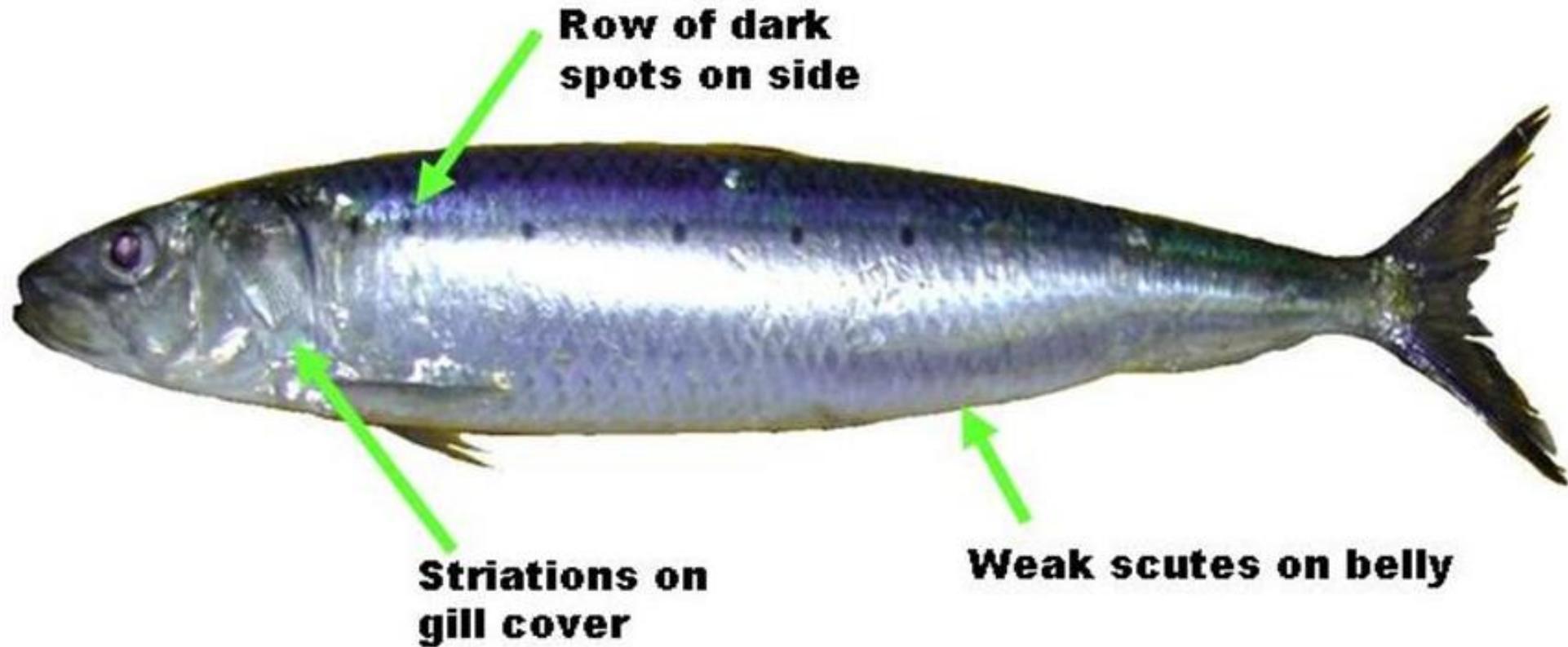
**No row of spots on side of body**



**Scutes on belly are weak**

**Pacific herring lack an adipose fin, have large round scales, and no spots along the body.**

# **Pacific Sardine (*Sardinops sagax*)**



**Pacific sardine lack an adipose fin, have large round scales, and a row of dark spots along the body. They also have striations on the gill cover.**

# American Shad (*Alosa sapidissima*)

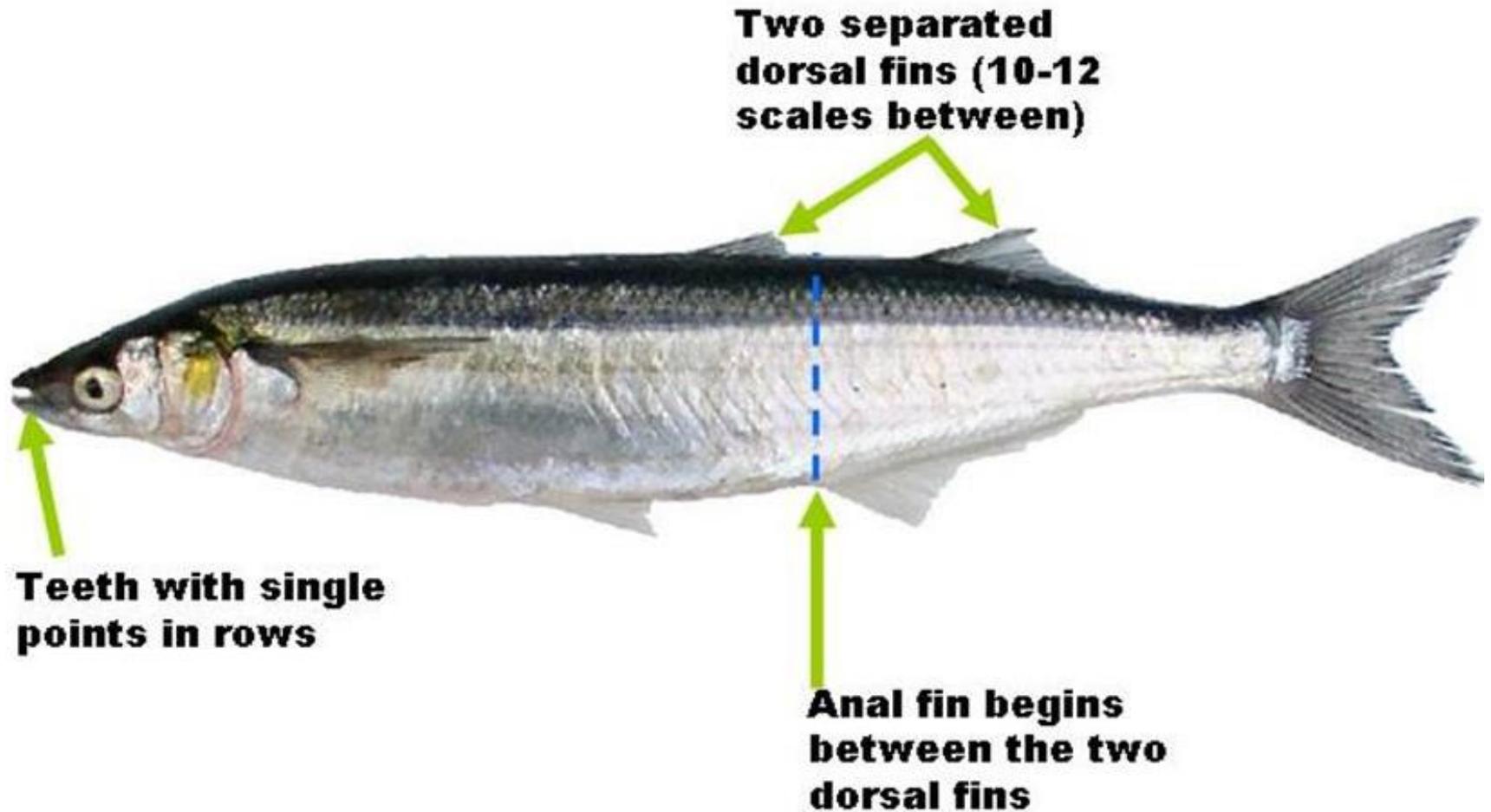
**Row of dark spots  
above mid-line**



**Sharp row of  
scutes on belly**

American shad lack an adipose fin, have large round scales, have a line of sharp scutes along the belly, and a row of spots along the body above the midline.

# **Jacksmelt (*Atherinopsis californiensis*)**



Jacksmelt, and the very similar species topsmelt, are not related to smelt, but are in a group of fish known as silversides. They are best identified by the presence of two separated dorsal fins. In the topsmelt, the anal fin begins directly below the first dorsal fin while in the jacksmelt it begins between the two dorsal fins.

# **Northern Anchovy (*Engraulis mordax*)**

**Snout projects well  
beyond lower jaw**



**Mouth very large**

**Northern anchovy are the little fish with the big overbite.  
Anchovies lack an adipose fin, do not have any spots, and do not  
possess scutes along the belly.**