

Miscellaneous species - Eastern Bering Sea

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Three species of eelpouts are predominant on the eastern Bering Sea shelf: marbled eelpout (*Lycodes varidens*), wattled eelpout (*L. palearis*) and shortfin eelpout (*L. brevipes*). For each species group, the largest catch over the time series was arbitrarily scaled to a value of 1 and all other values were similarly scaled. The standard error (+/- 1) was weighted proportionally to the CPUE to get a relative standard error. The relative CPUE of this group appeared higher in the early 1980s than in the late 1980s to present (Figure 65), and there was a significant drop in relative CPUE from 2006 to 2008 to the lowest level since 1999. The relative CPUE of poachers is dominated by the sturgeon poacher (*Podothecus acipenserinus*) and the poacher CPUE was low in the early 1980s but increased in the late 1980s to the mid-1990s. The relative CPUE appeared to be on the rise during since 2000 but took a sharp turn downward in 2006 and now are back to the 2000 level (Figure 65). The composition of echinoderms in trawl catches on the shelf are dominated by the purple-orange seastar (*Asterias amurensis*), which is found primarily in the inner/middle shelf regions, and the common mud star (*Ctenodiscus crispatus*), which is primarily an inhabitant of the outer shelf. The relative CPUE values for the echinoderm group have remained fairly level since 2001 but were lowest in 1985, 1986, and 1999, and highest in 1997. Fully understanding relative CPUE trends of eelpouts, poachers, and echinoderms will require more specific research on survey trawl gear selectivity and on the life history characteristics of each species.

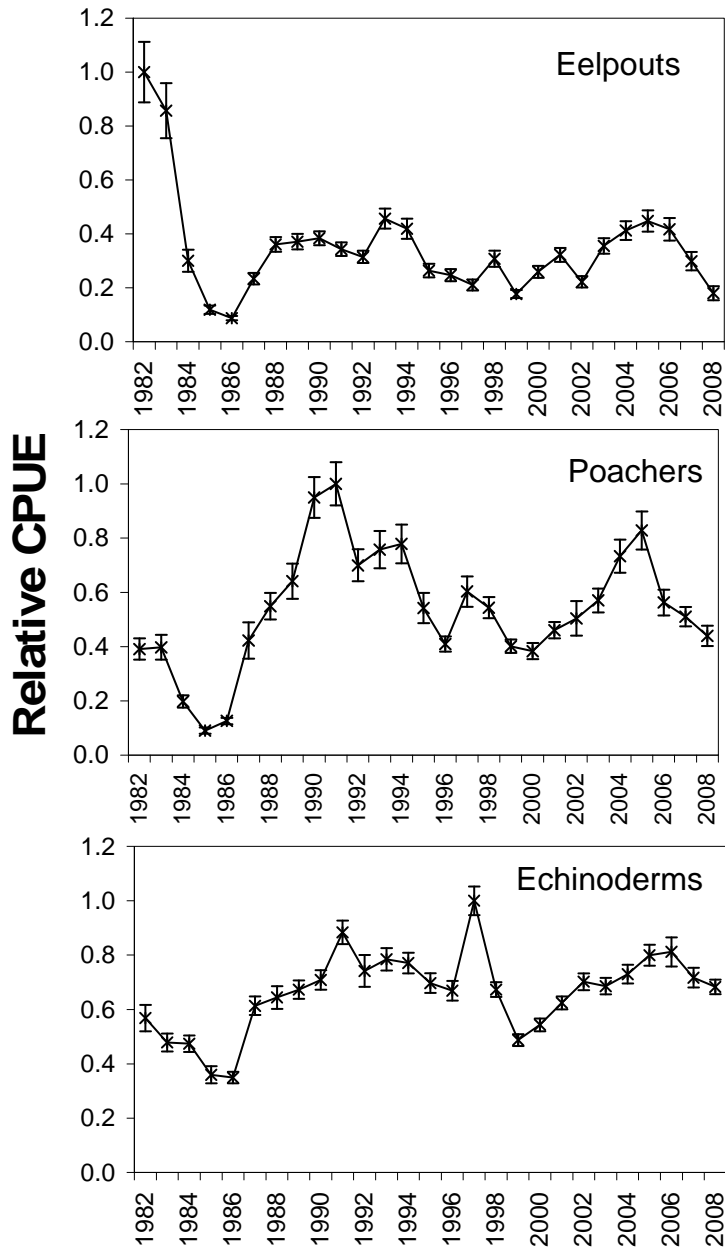


Figure 65. Relative CPUE of miscellaneous species caught in the eastern Bering Sea summer bottom trawl survey, 1982-2008. Data points are shown with standard error bars.