

Scientists wonder where salmon are

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Biologists and fish and wildlife experts in Washington State say only about 100,000 sockeye salmon have returned to spawn and they want to know why.

Scientists had expected nearly 400,000 fish to return to their spawning grounds in the Lake Washington watershed this year but nearly three-quarters of the fish haven't shown up.

"The ocean's kind of a mysterious entity," Jim Ames of the state Fish and Wildlife Department told the Seattle Times Wednesday. "It's really a black box out there. First of all we don't know where these fish go out in the ocean."

Biologists say 100,000 salmon would be the lowest spawning run ever for sockeye but it doesn't mean the species is endangered because the sockeye salmon run in Alaska could reach 32 million fish.

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