

The known range of this fish is from approximately the Aru Islands, in the Timor Sea, to Brisbane on the east coast and Fremantle on the west coast.

A fourth species, the oriental bonito, a small type of tuna, is in some years found in considerable abundance in Geographe Bay. This variety does not grow to any great size, 5 to 7 lb. being the largest.

On the recent "Lancelin" cruise bonito were taken in Geographe Bay in large numbers by means of trolled jigs. The catch of southern bluefin tuna was very satisfactory too, although the average size was not great - about 10 lb.

The behaviour of tuna on this side of the continent appears to fit in very well with the pattern observed in eastern Australia. In some years the fish are very abundant in a given area, whereas in the following year the concentration is in an entirely different area, very often far removed. This behaviour, for which no satisfactory reason has been advanced, makes it very difficult for fishermen to plan ahead, as it is not known where the fish will be found from year to year. At the same time there are some indications that the tuna occurrences in a given area follow some sort of cycle, and the work on which the Department is at present engaged is the collection of evidence to provide sufficient data to show whether there are cycles as supposed and if so whether they recur with any sort of predictable regularity.

DUCK SHOOTING SEASON ENDS EARLY

The Minister has announced that early nesting, the result of abnormal February rains, made it necessary to close the season for wild duck a month earlier this year. Normally the season closed at midnight on May 31, but departmental investigations showed that nesting was now well advanced.

Even early in March, many ducks shot were found to be full of eggs and in April, early clutches of grey teal and mountain duck had hatched. The season has been closed at midnight on April 30 therefore

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to allow what promises to be an excellent breeding season to take its course.

The Department is anxious to secure completed scorecards from duck shooters and inspectors are requested to use their best endeavours to see that as many as possible are completed and forwarded.