

In the rivers some at least of the chemical nutrients come from the land, being washed in by heavy rains. When rivers are dammed, as is now being done in the Serpentine, the runoff is greatly restricted, and the intake of nutrients reduced. This sort of process is probably now occurring in the Mandurah estuary, and it is possible that its productivity in relation to fish will be progressively reduced as the dam-construction programme advances.

I am afraid there is little the Department will be able to do to arrest the downward trend in productivity, if ever it does occur.

The reputed deterioration of angling could not be substantiated, the Minister said. While figures of fish production show violent year-to-year fluctuations, the catch at Mandurah has been reasonably stable. The principal angling species, whiting, represented only 2% of the professional fishermen's catch and it seemed that they were not doing any great harm to amateur fishermen, Mr. Hutchinson said. Indeed, recent press reports, he concluded, indicated that whiting were now present in great abundance.

IN APPRECIATION.

Dr. Mary Gillham, Lecturer in Botany at the University of Exeter, England, wrote a note of appreciation to the Director before returning to Melbourne recently. She expressed her thanks for all the assistance and courtesies extended to her during what she described as her all too short stay in Perth. "Thank you very much indeed", she wrote. "Your officers have been most helpful in every way."

ANOTHER RARE WHALE FOUND.

Following on the report in the previous issue of the recovery at Point Peron of a beaked whale of the genus Mesoplodon, it is of interest to read of the recovery of another beaked whale in the same area.

(178)

The Director of the Western Australian Museum, Dr. W. D. L. Ride, and his assistants conducted a post-mortem on a whale at Palm Beach on November 21. Although the identification was not yet positive, Dr. Ride said, it could be a specimen of the extremely rare Cuvier's Beaked Whale (Ziphius cavirostris). If it were, it would be only the twentyfirst record of the species anywhere since 1913, Dr. Ride said. He believed that the whale had been sick for some time and had not been feeding, although cuttlefish beaks in its stomach gave an idea of what it normally ate. From one kidney, parasites weighing $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb had been recovered.

The colouring of the whale has been described as unusual, the top being white and the underneath parts dark. The head had been brought back to the Museum where the skull will be examined. Crayfishermen quickly availed themselves of free craybait after the whale had been dismembered.

Cuvier's beaked whale is in the same family (Ziphiidae) as the Mesoplodon found at Point Peron on October 8.