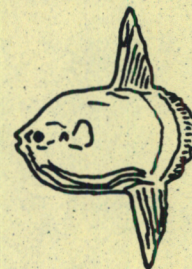


On Sunday, September 15, the people accompanying Dr. David Cairns on the trip to Fisherman's Bank to study the spawning habits of the Atlantic Herring had the chance to see an Ocean Sunfish (Mola mola). When first observed, the sunfish was lying flat on the surface. It then raised it's dorsal fin out of the water before returning to laying flat on the water. As the boat approached, the fish went from this position in which it appeared like a giant flatfish to it's normal position of straight up and down in the manner of a laterally flattened fish such as a bluegill. When we approached for a closer look, the fish slowly dove and moved away only to resurface at a further distance. We approached the sunfish for another look and it eventually moved off and dove. When the sunfish did not resurface after several minutes, the crew went back to searching for herring roe.

Several minke whales were also seen along with hundreds of Greater Black-backed Gulls and Herring Gulls. It was especially interesting to be able to observe the large quantities of herring eggs on the ocean bottom with the video camera being used for the herring roe study and to view cunner, herring, and winter flounder in their habitat.

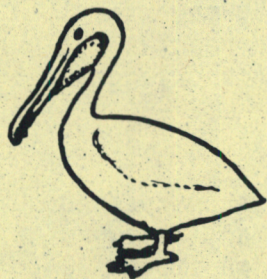


Upon returning to land, books at the Robertson Library were consulted to confirm the identification and to obtain more information on the fish. They revealed that the ocean sunfish can weigh up to 1 ton, with one specimen of slightly over 8 feet weighing 1,800 pounds (Guide to Marine Fishes, Alfred Parlmutter, 1961). These large pelagic fish are sometimes found drifting on the surface and they feed on jellyfish.

WHITE PELICAN DISCOVERED AT BRACKLEY

by Dan McAskill

On September 22, Geoff received a call from Rob Burnette that he had seen a large white bird with a flattened bill at the Covehead Harbour marsh. The information provided, especially the flattened bill, suggested the presence of a Roseate Spoonbill as strong winds in the days preceding this sighting suggested that a southern bird had been blown well off course. Geoff called several other birders and the call was networked out to others on the Island's rare bird alert list.



Before dawn the next morning, Bruce Pigot was on site watching for signs of the bird. He seen a large bird flying high land in a spruce tree near the marsh. Shortly after this, Ray Cooke arrived on the scene and Bruce pointed out the bird's location to him. Ray confirmed that the bird was an American White Pelican and, in the early light, he photographed the bird using a telescope, camera adapter, and camera. Later the same day the first photographs of the bird were proudly displayed.

Early the same morning Geoff arrived at the marsh and, starting at the western end of the Brackley Marsh, he started scanning the marshes as he proceeded eastwards. When his eyes scanned over the marsh just east of the