

"Missing Links," Marine Parks, and Sailfish

. . . A "missing link" in the ancestry of rock-building algae has been discovered and photographed off the coast of Belize (British Honduras) in Central America, the University of Miami reports. Specimens, looking like giant potato chips and collected from a precipitous ocean-facing reef wall to depths of 800 feet, resemble fossil forms found in limestone 200-300 million years old in West Texas, Kansas, New Mexico, North Africa, and the Soviet Union

. . . A 67-meter, 1,860 gross ton major research vessel is being built for Australia's Division of Fisheries and Oceanography, *Australian Fisheries* reports. Set for completion in 1978, the vessel will perform multiple tasks in oceanography, marine environmental studies, fisheries research, and commercial-type fishing operations. It will have biological, marine physics, and marine chemistry labs; a wet lab for fish, water, and plankton samples; another complex for data handling and computer operations; a scientific plotting room; and an electronics workshop. . . .

. . . Fifteen years of weather satellite data and its application to the forecasting and warning of destructive storms have been commemorated by NOAA's National Environmental Satellite Service. Said NESS Director David Johnson, "From a small beginning 15 years ago, the nation has developed a sophisticated and effective operational weather satellite system based upon the ac-

complishments of the world's first polar-orbiting weather satellite, TIROS I, launched by NASA from Cape Canaveral on April 1, 1960". . . .

. . . "Interocean '76," a marine technology conference, will be held in Dusseldorf, Federal Republic of Germany, 15-19 June 1976, the NMFS Office of International Fisheries reports. Exhibitions and discussions will feature marine mining, fisheries, research techniques, marine technology materials, desalination, pollution control, and underwater gear. For information contact Hans Teetz, German-American Chamber of Commerce, 666 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10019 (telephone 212-582-7788). . . .

. . . A Japanese refrigerated carrier vessel owned by Taiyo Fisheries Company returned to Hakata, Japan on 4 March with 6,200 metric tons of edible whale meat (4,000 tons of minke whale meat; 2,200 tons of sei and fin whale meat) to sell later that month according to a *Nihon Suisan Shimbun* report. The purchase was the first from a Soviet factoryship at sea and operating in the Antarctic whale fishery, and the company hopes to make similar future transactions. . . .

. . . Construction of a 10-million-egg sockeye salmon gravel incubation facility near Palmer, Alaska has been announced by the state's Department of Fish and Game. Salmon runs there have declined from escapements of 100,000 fish to only a few in recent years. It will

be at least 5 years before returning hatchery-raised salmon increase the runs. . . .

. . . The Australian Government will create a marine park on the Great Barrier Reef to protect it for its intrinsic value and tourist industry importance, reports *Australian Fisheries*. Oil drilling reportedly will be banned in any area of the park where it is considered harmful to the reef or the environment. . . .

. . . John L. Dupuy has been promoted to Senior Marine Scientist and head of marine culture studies at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, according to a VIMS report. His research unit has also been elevated from section status to Department of Marine Culture. . . .

. . . Florida's Department of Natural Resources, seeking data on the survival of sport-caught and released sailfish tagged and tracked four 15-30 pounders off the state's east coast in December 1974. Tracked for 3- and 6-hour periods with Woods Hole-type returnable tags and transmitting devices, all four moved generally northward and offshore at an average of 1.2 and 1.8 knots. One, with a strong Gulf Stream current, was tracked 26 miles northward in 6 hours. . . .

. . . Cyclone Tracey, which devastated Darwin, Australia on Christmas eve, also severely battered the Northern Territory fishing fleet, according to *Australian Fisheries*. Of the 40 vessels normally based in Darwin, four sank, two capsized, eight ran aground and were damaged, and two more were missing. . . .

. . . A National Whale Symposium, scheduled for 9-12 November 1975 at Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind., is set to draw attention to cetacean preservation according to program organizers. Leaders in the social and natural sciences, arts, and humanities will present lectures, discussions, exhibits, and concerts. Past and present relationships between man and cetacea will be explored through such fields as international law, biology, literature, folklore, and music. . . .