

Office Memorandum
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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release Upon Receipt

RECORD CATCH OF ATLANTIC TUNA LANDED
BY GOVERNMENT RESEARCH VESSEL

The largest catch of bluefin tuna ever made on the Atlantic Coast was landed at Gloucester, Mass., on September 16 by a Fish and Wildlife Service exploratory fishing vessel.

In making the announcement, Albert M. Day, Service Director, said that 120,000 pounds, or 60 tons of tuna, were caught on the morning of September 17 by the M. V. Western Explorer.

Ranging in size from 25 to 40 pounds, the tuna were taken with a seine from a single school of fish approximately 50 miles east of Cape Cod and just north of Georges Bank. The actual catch was around 100 tons of fish, but part was released as the ship was not equipped to handle more than 60 tons.

The Western Explorer is an 85-foot Pacific Coast-type purse seiner. Since June it has been exploring New England waters gathering information on the abundance and availability of Atlantic tuna to commercial fishing methods. Equipped with a West coast purse seine and manned partly by experienced California tuna fishermen, the vessel has already successfully located and landed several catches of bluefin in waters between Cape Cod and the southern coast of Maine. They were, however, much smaller than the record catch. The fish were distributed among a number of Atlantic Coast fish companies at bid prices ranging from \$140 to \$240 per ton. Most of them will be used for canning purposes.

John Murray, FWS fishery engineer in charge of the tuna survey, reported that wind and fog have hampered scouting and seining operations considerably. New England weather may prove an important factor in the success or failure of a commercial purse-seine tuna fishery in this region.

This year's tuna exploration of the Western Explorer will continue until the middle of October.

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