



## Old Streetcars Never Die

By Alan W. Farrant

SOUTHERN California is noted for boasting of its best, largest, highest, and lowest. And such adjectives as colossal, gigantic, and tremendous are used daily.

It should come as no surprise, then, to learn they furnish old streetcars as a home for ocean fish. Yes, off the coast of Redondo Beach, California, the fish are making homes in six old Los Angeles Transit Line streetcars. And this makes local fishermen very happy.

Site for the placing of the streetcars was selected after months of research by the California Fish and Game Department. Members of the department have spent many hours under water, learning the locations where there were the fewest fish. The lack of fish is because of no natural fish shelter.

The area decided upon was sandy, and for great distances had no shelter for the fish. Now with the streetcars located there, fish will quickly make the area their home. They, and the families they'll raise, will mean local fishermen will benefit greatly.

Creating artificial homes for fish is not a new idea. It has long been known that fish life is abundant about numerous old ships and boat wrecks. Apparently these artificial refuges encourage fish migration, and as a result more and more fish make it their living quarters. Other members of the sea move in, making it equal to natural surroundings.

No doubt the signs on the streetcars will puzzle the fish. These read, "Enter Front", and "Exit Only."

But because all windows were removed before the heavily ballasted cars were lowered into the sea, perhaps the signs won't matter too much.

Work of this type is hardly new to the California Fish and Game Department. Recently 250 old automobile bodies were placed on a sandy floor near Malibu, California. Shortly afterwards a group of artificial rocks—some weighing two tons!—were placed on the ocean floor near Huntington Beach, California. In each case, fish have shown up in rapidly increasing numbers.

Next on the list of jobs is the planting of kelp. Fish and Game divers will plant kelp around all of these artificial refuges. It will be tied with rope; but soon it will attach itself naturally.

Members of the Fish and Game team in charge of these projects spend much of their working hours under water. They are busy checking actions of the fish, and listing the species involved. Careful records are kept, which will help in other like projects.

Funds for these projects are derived 75 per cent from the Federal tax on sport fishing, and 25 per cent from the State Department of Fish and Game. Donated services of the Navy and Coast Guard have helped.

Fishermen are watching the projects with great interest. Each and everyone of them hopes soon to be able to have some exciting fishing at these locations. And if they do, it'll be because of old autos and streetcars.