

Story By

PELAGIC CHASER

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There is a lot more to chasing pelagic species than just jumping into a boat and racing around looking for birds. Reading the ocean and knowing what species you are chasing before you even get close to the school of fish will see you with a much improved strike and hook-up rate. Finding feeding birds is relatively easy but avoid the temptation of driving straight up to them and starting to cast as this will often spook (sending fish deep) the fish. Once you have found birds feeding approach them slowly and check whether you can actually see fish feeding under them and in which direction they are heading. Always try to get in front of the school of fish and let them come to you, they won't get spooked so easily if you are already there. Don't go too close to the school as you try to get in front of them as the extra noise of a motor under solid power is often all it needs to break up the school. Each species of fish feed in a slightly different manner and it is these differences that you are looking for to determine what species you may be chasing.

Mack Tuna feed highest in the water leaving white water everywhere as they feed whilst Yellow Fin Tuna often don't even leave a ripple on the surface. Once you have set yourself up in a location don't turn the motor off as they are now used to the sound of it and changing or shutting down that sound can also spook fish. So, what are we going to cast at them? Fish that are feeding in this manner have balled up small baitfish so casting appropriate sized chrome slugs and retrieving them at high speed across the surface will often see you hooked up in

seconds. Always try to cast in front of the school as the most aggressive fish are normally leading the way and it is these fish that normally strike the hardest and fastest as the rest of the school continue to follow them around. Keep the rod tip low to the water to keep the chrome from jumping to far out of the water as you retrieve then lean back solidly to set the hooks once you get a strike. When you get a fish on it will want to run to get away from the lure so just hold on and keep the rod pointed slightly toward the fish until it has completed that first run before trying to fight it. Tuna will often take three good runs on the line before they can be subdued and brought to the boat so if and when they run just let them and when they stop you can take up the fight again. Most of these fish will swim away quite well if speared back into the water after the photo session so only take those that are bleeding from around the gills and have a great day on the water. For more on this or any other style of fishing why not contact our club on 0408 848 564 or drop us an email at kevinc@bundysportfishing.com.au .

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