

2005 CHARTER CRUISE PROGRAMME

REPORT: ANGELLE MARIE 2/2005

(PROVISIONAL: not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF: M J Brown
J Keable

DURATION: 19 September – 23 September 2005

LOCATION: The Solent, Southampton Water, Chichester and Langstone Harbours

AIMS:

1. To carry out the annual spring trawl survey for pre-recruit bass in the Solent area.
2. To determine the relative abundance and distribution of juvenile bass and other species in the Solent and associated harbours.

NARRATIVE:

Staff travelled to Portsmouth on 18 September. The survey gear was unloaded that evening at Whale Island, Portsmouth. The survey commenced at 08.08 BST on 19 September using a newly made CEFAS bass trawl of standard design. In fine weather five stations outside and 8 stations inside Chichester Harbour were completed. The following day 5 stations in Southampton Water, 1 in Western Solent and 2 off Ryde, Isle of Wight were fished without incident. On 21 September the 5 tows inside and 3 outside Langstone Harbour were completed, The following day 6 outside tows in the Western Solent, and 1 in the mouth of the River Hamble were successfully fished. On the final day 4 tows outside Langstone Harbour were repeated. The fishing gear was unloaded at Whale Island, Portsmouth and staff returned to Lowestoft on the 23 September.

RESULTS:

39 valid tows on 35 core stations were fished (Figure 1). As in previous years some core stations were repeated to ensure fishing over different states of the tide. A total of 1362 bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) were caught, 904 in the harbours and 458 outside.

A total of 375 bass scale samples were taken and read during the survey, allowing an age length distribution to be produced before returning to the laboratory. The results indicate that 43.6% of the fish caught throughout the survey area were 2 year olds (the 2003 year class), 29.6% were 3 year olds (the 2002 year class) and 11.5% were 4 year olds (the 2001 year class), with modal lengths at 23 cm, 29 cm, and 34 cm respectively (figure 2). One hundred and twenty one (8.9%) of the bass caught were above the minimum landing size (36cm). Bass were the most abundant species of the survey.

Catch rates of bass were 6.03/minute towing in the harbours and 2.19/minute outside (3.79/minute overall). This overall value is just below the mean for the autumn surveys, but above the figure for last year (3.45/minute).

A wide variety of other species were caught, the most abundant apart from bass being bib *trisopterus luscus* (219 fish) and sole *Solea solea* (156 fish). Sixty one wrasse identified as baillon's wrasse *Symphodus bailloni*, and seven 15 spined sticklebacks *Spinachia spinachia* were caught. A twaite shad *Alosa fallax* was caught in Southampton Water, and a John Dory *Zeus faber* off Ryde, Isle of Wight.

CEFAS would like to thank the skipper and crew of the Angelle Marie for their help in the successful completion of this year's survey.

M J Brown
27 October, 2005

INITIALLED:

DISTRIBUTION:

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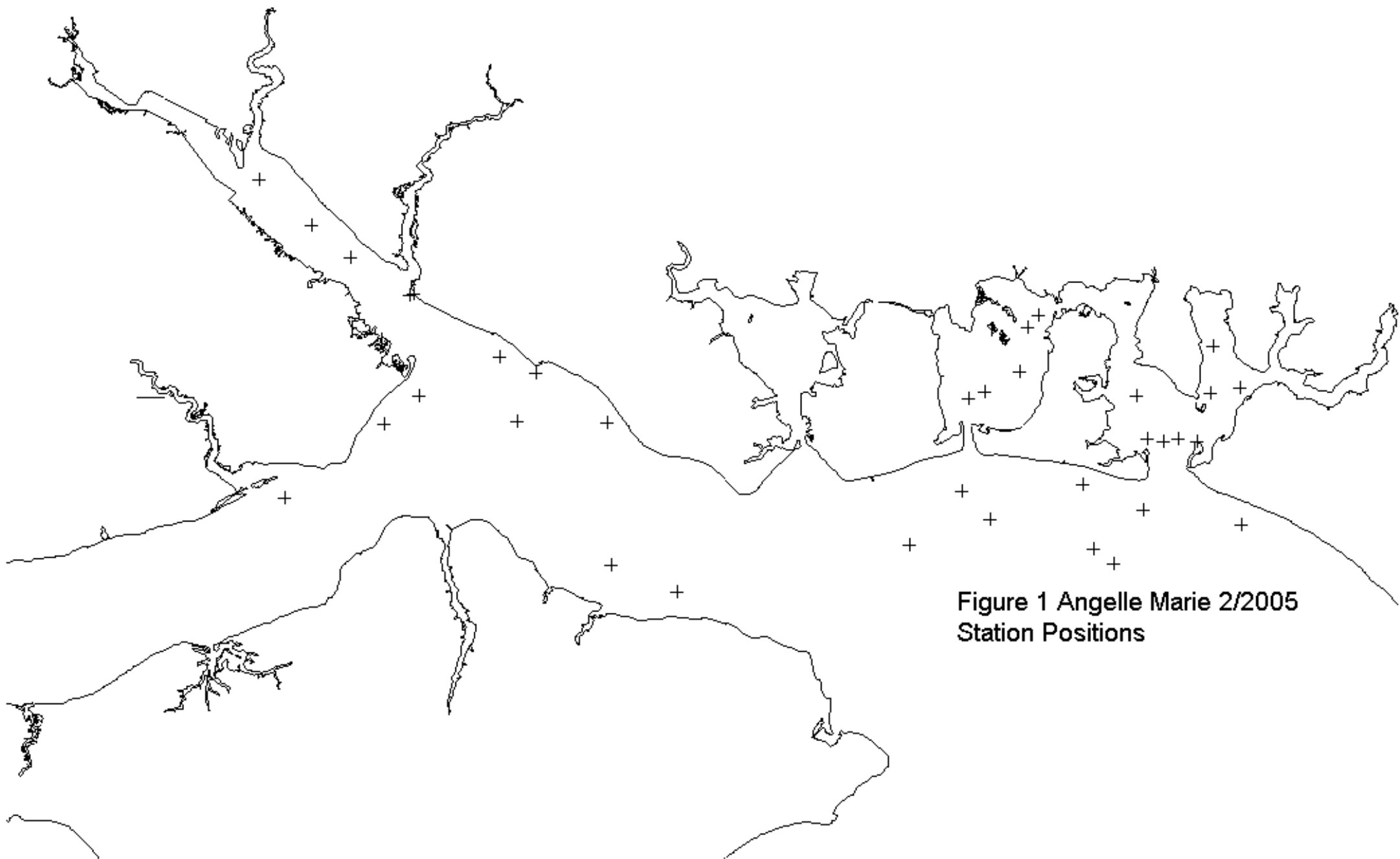


Figure 1 Angelle Marie 2/2005
Station Positions

Figure 2. Length frequency distributions at age of bass caught a) Inside harbours, b) Outside harbours during the Angelle Marie survey in September 2005

