

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science Division Fisheries and Aquatic Ecosystems Branch

Cruise Report: CO 3110 Vessel: RV *Corystes* Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010 Area: Irish Sea (north); ICES VIIa Survey Type: Nephrops Trawl and UWTV Survey

# **Personnel:**

R Briggs (SIC)	PSO	AFBI	3 – 15 August
P McCorriston	TSO	AFBI	3 – 15 August
J Peel	ASO	AFBI	3 – 15 August
I McCausland	ASO	AFBI	3 – 15 August
C McKenna	SO	AFBI	3 – 8 August
B Donnelly	SO	AFBI	3 – 8 August
M Service	PSO	AFBI	9–15 August
J Elson		CEFAS	9–15 August
A Leocadio		CEFAS	9–15 August
J Doyle		Marine Institute	9–15 August
A Archer		Univ of Ulster	9-15 August

## **Objectives:**

This cruise forms part of an ongoing study of the population dynamics of *Nephrops* of the Irish Sea. There were two phases: - Phase 1: trawl/beam trawl survey at established Stations; Phase 2-an ongoing cross border collaborative camera survey of the *Nephrops* grounds with the Irish Marine Institute and CEFAS. The survey is part-funded under the EU Data Collection Framework and is run according to protocols agreed by ICES.



Not to be cited without prior reference to AFBI (Fisheries and Aquatic Ecosystems Branch)

## Methods:

The fishing gear was the same as that used in earlier cruises and was a custom made 20fathom *Nephrops* net of nominal mesh size 50mm throughout. Catch bulk at Stns fished during previous surveys (Fig. 1) was quantified by weighing baskets filled from the catch. Sample baskets of catch after 30 minutes trawling were sorted to provide an assessment of species composition. The *Nephrops* in sub-samples of 6-10kg were divided into male and female components and the ovary maturity stage of female animals noted. Carapace length frequency distributions of both male and female *Nephrops* were measured and the prevalence of the parasitic dinoflagellate *Hematodinium* was assessed. Stratified sampling procedures used for sampling whitefish were similar to those used during AFBI groundfish surveys. The contribution of finfish to catches was quantified; their length compositions measured and the otoliths of cod were retained for age determination. A two-metre beam trawl was deployed for 5 minutes at each station and the catch identified and quantified.

During the UWTV survey the camera and sledge was deployed at stations within a randomized fixed grid design as in 2003-2009 surveys. A grid of Stns was also surveyed on the eastern Irish Sea as in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Film data from 10-minute tows at each Stn were stored on DVDs and re-counts of burrow cluster abundance were performed as proposed by WKNEPH09 of ICES. Two re-count Stations were established on the ship and staff performing recounts attended a one day refresher course whilst in Dublin on 9 August. A USBL system was used to track the course taken by the camera sledge during tows. This information is essential for estimation of the area swept by the sledge. Sampling continued 24 hours a day with scientific staff operating a rota system of 4 hrs on and 8 hours off.

## **Cruise Narrative:**

## Tuesday 3 August

Scientific staff boarded during the evening. RV Corystes sailed at 23.00 and a safety briefing was given to by the Fishing Master.

## Wednesday 4 August

Nephrops gear was shot at 08.00hrs at **Stn 1**. This was followed by hauls using both beam trawl and Nephrops trawl at Stns **2**, **35**, **17**, **30**, **15** and **20**. Very large catches of weed (mainly Laminaria spp) prevented catch bulk being estimated at **Stn 30**, despite an apparently good Nephrops catch. It was possible however, to carry out a full analysis of a Nephrops subsample. The night was spent dodging.

## Thursday 5 August

The first haul was at **Stn 208** followed by **Stns 209,109,10,7** and **8**. A torn net at **Stn 109** slowed progress, but despite this problem 6 Stns were completed using both gears.

## Friday 6 August

Stns 108, 210, 101, 102, 103 and 105 were fished in fine weather conditions.

## Saturday 7 August

Stns 207, 107, 104 and 200 were fished in fine weather and with all objectives for this phase of the survey complete, RV Corystes set course for Dublin and docked at 19.00hrs for a midcruise break.

#### Sunday 8 August

The day was spent in Dublin preparing for the second phase of the survey and implementing staff changeovers.

## Monday 9 August

With the arrival of Marine Institute and Cefas staff a one day training course on burrow identification and counting techniques was organized by Jennifer Doyle (MI) according to protocols recommended by the ICES Benchmark assessment group. With the training complete and equipment installed RV Corystes sailed at 22.00hrs.

#### Tuesday 10 August

In view of a poor weather forecast a decision was made to commence the UWTV survey on the eastern Irish Sea Nephrops grounds. A course was set for Cumbria coastal waters where work commenced at 08.00hrs on **Stn 37**. This was followed by a new station at the southern limit of the grounds (**Stn 38**), followed by a northward progression at the rate of approximately one station per hour. **Stn 36** had to be abandoned due to a recent wind farm development in the area.

#### Wednesday 11 August

Work on the main eastern grounds was completed with **Stn 4** at 13.45hrs and a course was set for the isolated gounds in Wigtown Bay, where work recommenced at 15.30hrs on **Stn 3**. This was followed by **Stns 2** and **1** which were completed by 17.00hs with reasonable footage being obtained for two stations (**1 & 2**). RV Corystes then set course for the western Irish Sea where work re-commenced at 22.50hrs on **Stn 172**.

## Thursday12 August

**Stns 171, 26, 18, 17** and **12** were completed with mixed success. NW winds forced the decision to move to the more sheltered Northern Ireland coastal waters where work commenced on **Stn 13**. The survey then worked southwards along the western side of the Irish Sea to **Stn 170**.

## Friday 13 August

Southern "redo" stations from RV Celtic Voyager's survey were re-visited after which the vessel moved NE via **Stns 90** and **47** to complete the remaining northern stations. This was hampered by windy conditions making it difficult to retain bottom contact with the camera sledge.

#### Saturday 14 August

Work was suspended for 4 hours at 01.00hrs on **Stn 24** due to weather induced difficulties in retaining bottom contact. The survey resumed at 05.00hrs when **Station 24** was repeated. Improved weather for the rest of the day enabled good progress to be made with some excellent footage being recorded. The good conditions provided an opportunity to re-visit nearby stations where earlier results were poor due to the inclement weather.

## Sunday 15 August

Continued fine weather allowed good progress through the remaining NW stations (**Stns 1-10**). The final station was on the mussel (Mytilus edulis) grounds off the Ards peninsula (**Stn 203**) and was completed by 07.45hrs. With all objectives complete RV Corystes set course for Belfast where she docked at 10.30hrs.

**Results:** 

#### **Trawl Survey**

During the fishing phase of this cruise all 24 Stations (Figure 1) were sampled by Nephrops trawl and 2-metre beam trawl. Although a good *Nephrops* sample was acquired at **Stn 30** the catch was mainly seaweed (Laminaria spp.) preventing a full assessment of catch composition, though it was possible to take a Nephrops sub-sample. Station details are presented in Table 1 and Table 2 shows the mean size, catch rate, proportion of female Nephrops along with the percentage (by number) of animals infected by Hematodinium. A total of 11,685 Nephrops were measured during the cruise and the combined size composition of Nephrops caught is shown in Figure 2 which includes the size of Nephrops caught in the beam trawl. Although catches varied between stations the average catch rate was lower than in 2009. Similarly the sex ratio differed between stations ranging from 35.9% to 74.7% female Nephrops (Figure 3) with an average of 61.4% females by number. This was higher than in earlier surveys. By-catch consisted of a range of taxa and details of the major groups are shown in Table 3. Apart from *Nephrops* the predominant burrowing species was *Calocaris* macandreae and their distribution by number is shown in Figure 4. The most common finfish species caught was whiting, though these were mainly below the minimum landing size of 27cm. The otoliths of 40 cod caught during the survey were removed for age determination. Length frequency distributions of the major commercial fish species are shown in Figure 5

## **UWTV Survey**

The UWTV sledge was deployed over 100 times during the cruise. In the western Irish Sea 65 Stns were surveyed (Figure 6) and included 6 stations requested by AFBI's Coastal Zone Management Programme (**Stns 201-206**). Several stations surveyed were repeats from the Celtic Voyager's survey which finished on 9 July. A total of 37 Stations were completed in the eastern Irish Sea (Figure 7) and good video footage was obtained which included information on the extent of the grounds. This is the fourth time the eastern Irish Sea *Nephrops* stock has been surveyed and is an expansion of the western Irish Sea study which commenced in 2003. All recordings made during the cruise were re-counted whilst at sea and the results will be combined with those from the Marine Institute's *RV Celtic Voyager* survey. After further analysis *Nephrops* density estimates will contribute to the provision of fisheries management advice through the ICES forum.

## **Acknowledgements:**

The Officers and Crew of *RV Corystes* are thanked for their enthusiastic help towards the success of this important survey. The scientific staff is commended for their teamwork and the valuable contributions by Jennifer Doyle (MI), Jon Elson (Cefas) and Ana Leocadio (Cefas) are sincerely acknowledged. Bill Clarke is thanked for installing the UWTV equipment and Jennifer Doyle (MI) is thanked for organizing a comprehensive training day in Dublin.

**Richard Briggs** 

Sam McBride (seen in draft)

Scientist in Charge

15 August 2010

Master

			Time shot	Shooting	Position	Hauling	Position		Distance	Wind	Surface
Date	Station	Haul		Latitude	Longitude	Latitude	Longitude	Depth (m)	towed (nm)	Speed (knts)	Temp ⁰C
04-Aug-10	1	1	06h.40	54 17 6	5 16 3	54 16 1	5 15 9	85	1 57	10	13.6
04-Aug-10	2	2	08h.54	54 15 1	5 19.0	54 137	5 18 9	68	1.37	8	13.8
04-Aug-10	35	3	09h.59	54 12.8	5 22 5	54 14 2	5 22 2	63	1.12	10	13.9
04-Aug-10	17	4	12h.24	54 86	5 27.6	54 9 9	5 27 2	57	1.11	8	14.3
04-Aug-10	30	5	13h.39	54 57	5 30.6	54 4 4	5 31 1	52	1.31	8	14.1
04-Aug-10	15	6	15h.24	54 7.6	5 34.9	54 6.4	5 35.8	75	1.38	12	14.4
04-Aug-10	20	7	16h.50	54 2.2	5 21.9	54 0.7	5 21.7	104	1.49	10	15.0
05-Aug-10	208	8	06h.28	54 8.1	5 0.8	54 6.8	5 2.1	88	1.44	12	14.8
05-Aug-10	209	9	08h.44	54 7.9	5 8.2	54 6.6	5 9.4	125	1.44	15	15.0
05-Aug-10	109	10	11h.35	54 6.1	5 19.1	54 4.8	5 18.4	125	1.35	9	14.1
05-Aug-10	10	11	14h.16	53 58.7	5 23.6	53 57.3	5 23.7	100	1.48	8	15.0
05-Aug-10	7	12	15h.30	53 54.6	5 27.8	53 53.3	5 28.4	110	1.38	5	15.0
05-Aug-10	8	13	17h.57	53 51.5	5 39.6	53 50.1	5 39.3	97	1.47	5	14.9
06-Aug-10	108	14	06h.22	53 52.3	5 6.0	53 51	5 6.7	75	1.38	22	14.8
06-Aug-10	210	15	08h.24	53 55.3	5 13.5	53 56.4	5 12	85	1.37	18	14.7
06-Aug-10	101	16	09h.50	53 55.8	5 20.9	53 54.4	5 21.3	115	1.4	15	14.9
06-Aug-10	102	17	12h.16	53 47.7	5 22.1	53 48.9	5 21.6	99	1.31	7	14.7
06-Aug-10	103	18	13h.56	53 40.4	5 24.7	53 39.2	5 25.7	96	1.32	18	14.8
06-Aug-10	105	19	16h.58	53 30.4	5 40.6	53 29.2	5 39.6	88	1.42	15	14.8
07-Aug-10	207	20	06h.17	54 1.2	5 45.2	53 59.9	5 45.6	48	1.33	8	14.7
07-Aug-10	107	21	08h.50	53 47.5	5 41.0	53 46.1	5 41.1	94	1.43	8	14.4
07-Aug-10	104	22	10h.33	53 37.5	5 38.9	53 38.9	5 38.5	103	1.38	6	14.8
07-Aug-10	106	23	12h.34	53 37.4	5 43.5	53 38.8	5 43.2	82	1.38	10	15.1
07-Aug-10	200	24	14h.09	53 34.6	5 52.9	53 35.7	5 54.2	58	1.37	8	15.7

TOW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
STATION	1	2	35	17	30	15	20	208	209	109	10	7	
MALE CL	24.8	24.1	27.2	27.7	31.3	24.4	26.5	26.6	28.9	29.4	24.4	27.0	
FEMALE CL	24.5	25.2	25.1	26.3	28.2	24.7	24.8	24.5	26.1	26.7	25.0	26.7	
No per Nm	3189	680	350	1350		4052	1031	6628	7997	3714	4327	1581	
kg per Nm	33.4	8.2	5.1	18.8		45.4	78.7	76.6	110.9	53.1	50.2	21.5	
% female	53.1	66.2	72.2	67.3	65.0	63.2	61.1	64.0	74.7	73.9	65.1	73.2	
% Hem Males	0.4	1.2	0.0	0.7	0.0	1.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.5	5.4	0.0	
% Hem Females	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.2	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.3	
% Hem Overall	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.4	1.2	0.7	0.0	0.6	2.1	0.2	
TOW	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
STATION	8	108	210	101	103	105	207	107	107	104	106	200	
MALE CL	26.5	28.2	26.4	27.2	24.6	25.9	29.9	0.0	24.6	24.6	24.5	29.9	
FEMALE CL	25.6	26.5	25.5	25.6	24.8	24.6	29.5	0.0	24.8	24.9	23.1	26.6	
No per Nm	3871	832	2418	184	5912	1636	2687	0	8015	2162	6779	649	
kg per Nm	48.9	11.8	29.1	2.2	65.3	21.0	52.8	0.0	90.1	23.5	74.0	13.2	
% female	55.9	70.5	71.9	70.8	67.5	51.7	68.3	0.0	60.9	59.2	64.1	34.5	
% Hem. Males	1.7	1.5	2.0	4.0	1.1	2.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	3.4	1.9	0.9	
% Hem. Female	0.0	0.3	1.0	0.5	0.8	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.6	1.9	0.0	

Table 2: Details of *Nephrops* catch by station

Ctra			GADOIDS PELAGI				LAGIC	FLA	FFISH	OTHER	OTHER	ELASMOBRA NCHS		TES		
501	COD	HAD	HKE	WHG	OTHER GADOIDS	HER	OTHER PELAGIC	DAB	PLE	FLATS	TELEOSTS	SHARKS+DO GFISH	NEP	CEPHA- LOPODS	OTHER INVERTS	
1		40.6		80.4	9.1	1.1			0.8	5.0	3.9	2.7	52.4	1.2	265.9	
2	0.4	19.5		40.5	0.6	10.2	0.7	1.5	2.2	3.0	8.1	0.6	11.6	0.2	72.5	
7	0.0	1.9		3.9	2.7	0.2	0.2			0.2	0.1		29.6	0.7	150.9	
8	0.1	11.8	0.1	6.5	1.3	0.1			0.1	2.6	0.3	0.6	71.8	0.7	432.4	
10		1.4		34.9	8.6	8.6	0.7			2.1	0.2		74.3	1.7	448.6	
15		19.8		20.6	0.3	2.8	0.0	0.4	1.1	2.2	2.8		62.6	0.7	377.0	
17	0.3	8.6	0.4	28.8	0.1	6.3	1.4	1.0	1.0 2.8		6.6	0.9	24.7	2.2	175.7	
20		2.7		15.9	19.5	2.7				3.8	2.2		117.3	0.5	705.9	
30	<sup>30</sup> Very weedy haul - not possible to quantify catch (Nephrops sample only)															
35		10.3	0.6	32.8	0.1	7.5	3.8	0.3	4.6	2.2	6.4		7.2	1.5	51.0	
101	11.7	0.5		2.5	5.8	0.0	0.0			0.5	0.1		3.1	1.1	25.0	
102	0.6	1.2		6.7	4.7	0.2		0.1		2.5	0.3		85.6	2.2	515.1	
103		0.9		2.5	1.4	1.4		0.4		4.1	0.3		27.8	1.0	140.0	
104	1.5	7.6		15.0	3.4	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.1	1.0	0.1	0.2	32.5	0.0	196.2	
105	0.9	52.5		25.2	7.3	3.4		1.0	2.5	4.3	7.0	21.9	74.9	1.2	529.7	
106	3.3	4.0		45.6	1.4	3.7		0.7		0.7	1.2	1.0	102.1		613.6	
107	0.1	16.7		24.3	1.7	0.4	1.1	2.3	0.8	1.9	0.7		128.9	3.0	908.1	
108	0.7	4.8	0.5	33.1	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.7	3.6	4.7	1.5	16.3	6.8	115.0	
109	3.9	0.3		1.6	6.7	0.1			0.0	3.0	2.5		71.7	1.6	506.1	
200	0.1	79.1		133.1	0.6	0.6	1.9	18.6	39.3	6.5	20.0	10.4	18.2	1.8	105.9	
207		17.8		16.4			0.8	12.2	38.6	0.8	16.5	2.3			21.5	
208		3.9		92.3	8.7	2.0			0.9	3.1	12.1	1.3	110.3	2.5	666.2	
209				1.1	10.2	0.1				0.0	4.0	0.5	159.7		798.7	
210	0.1	0.3		22.0	22.7	8.8	0.1			1.6	0.4	0.0	39.8	8.2	279.7	

Table 3: Summary of catches by station (kg)

# Table 4: Macro benthos catch from 5 minute beam trawl tows (CO31-10)

		2	3	1	5	6	7	8	۵	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	20	21	22	23	24
SPECIES	1	2	35	17	30	15	20	208	209	109	10	7	8	108	210	101	102	103	105	207	107	104	106	200
Aphrodite	1	-	00	17	00	10	20	200	203	105	10	'	Ŭ	6	210	101	102	100	5	201	107	104	100	200
Astorias rubons		1		1			2							0			-	2	15	2	1		1	16
Astronacton irrogularia		-		-	<u> </u>		2											4	60	2	-		1	10
Asuipactan anaraularia																		1	00	2				2
Aquipecteri opercularis							10		2	2	2	2	_						1	3				Z
Brissopsis							10		3	3	2	2	5		1			4			1			49
Buccinum undatum																		1						
														4.0								1		
Calilostoma zizypninum	4.4.0	05							00	100	0.1	055		10									_	
Calocaris macandreae	110	35	2	6		11	59		66	168	94	255	153		48	199	84	4	12		95	/1	5	
Callianassa spp		<u> </u>														_		12		1				
Crangon spp	2	1					1		1	1	4	25	4			5	1	4	138		10	13	16	
Dentalium entalis																			101					
Dichelopandalus bonneri	26	1	1				18		1		18	14	31			28	2	5			5	4	1	
Eledone																								2
Eupagurus spp														2				4	6			1		
Euphausids							2					6												
Glycerids		3	2	3		3			1	6		8			2	3		3		1	5	1		
Goneplax rhomboides			5	2														1	2	2			1	2
Golfingia elongata																		1						
Hyas spp																								2
Jaxea nocturna	5	14	2	6		16				5											5			
Liocarcinus depurator														2		2		5	17			2	3	4
Lepas spp																		2					1	
Macropodia spp																			7	2				
Mud tubes												8										2		
Nephrops norvegicus	98	15	15	42	0	39	24	20	24	24	20	45	49	2	34	49	90	204	15	3	118	45	33	2
Nereis spp															1									
Nephtys spp																				2				
Nucula	14	2									3	145	2	14		84		36						
Nudibranchs																							1	
Ophiothrix fragilis																		1						
Pasiphaea sivado									2									5	4		5	24		
Pectinaria koreni																				2				
Sepiola spp															1									
small pandalids																						7		
Tellina spp			17	5					7											3				
Turret shells		7	2	1				97.000	3					40.932				18					7	38.035
								,																
Limanda limanda				1																				2
Callionyrus lyra																								2
Rhinonemus cimbrius															1	1								
Lesueurigobius friesii		3	7	2		5																		
Hippoglossoides platessoides			5	2		11							4		6									8
Trisopterus esmarkii			2										1				1				1			
Pleuronectes platessa																								8
Agonus cataphractus									Ī															2
Arnoglossus laterna				3					Ì															
Buglossidium luteum																								14
Microchirus variegatus								4	Ì					4										4
Merlangius merlangus			8	6		3	1	1	Ī	1		6	3	2	3				1		1			8
Glyptocephalus cynoglossus	5	6	1	1		1	3	3		12	4	6	4	10	1	2					15			

Key scientific names of fish:-

Limanda limanda	dab
Callionyrus lyra	dragonet
Rhinonemus cimbrius	four bearded rockling
Lesueurigobius friesii	Fries goby
Hippoglossoides platessoides	long rough dab
Trisopterus esmarkii	Norway pout
Pleuronectes platessa	plaice
Agonus cataphractus	pogge
Arnoglossus laterna	scaldfish
Buglossidium luteum	solenette
Microchirus variegatus	thick backed sole
Merlangius merlangus	whiting
Glvptocephalus cvnoglossus	witch



Figure 1: Western Irish Sea Nephrops stations



Figure 2: Relative size composition of *Nephrops* captured in beam trawl and *Nephrops* trawl (sexes combined)



Figure 3: Percentage male and female *Nephrops* in catches. Horizontal line indicates a sex ratio of 0.5. Average for 2010 survey = 64.1% female.



Figure 4: Bubble plot showing abundance of *Calocaris macandreae* caught by beam trawl by station



Figure 5: Length frequency of fish for the Western Irish Sea



Figure 6: Western Irish Sea UWTV stations. Ellipse = Stations sampled by RV Corystes. Rectangle = surveyed by *RV Celtic Voyager*.) Stns 201-206 = Coastal zone management stations



Figure 7: Eastern Irish Sea UWTV stations.