

LIBRARY

R V TELLINA

Report for Cruise 5/1969

Staff

R J Wood
T J Hulme

Duration

16 June-7 July

Aim:

To investigate the distribution and abundance of young herring and sprats along the English east coast, using beach seine and midwater trawls, between approximately the Farn Islands in the north and Dungeness in the south.

Narrative

TELLINA sailed from Lowestoft at 1010 hours 16 June and made a good passage northwards, reaching Amble at 1425 hours next day. During the following nine days fishing was carried out at various localities between Dunstanburgh and Great Yarmouth both inshore with the beach seine and shrimp trawl, and offshore with the midwater sprat trawl. TELLINA returned to Lowestoft at 1840 hours 26 June. She sailed again at 0940 hours 30 June and the work was continued southwards as far as Dungeness under very good working conditions. TELLINA returned to Lowestoft at 1910 hours 5 July. Further work which was to have been carried out from Lowestoft on 7 July had to be abandoned due to gale force winds and heavy seas on that date, and the cruise was then terminated.

Results

The modal lengths of 0-group herring caught along the northeast coast were lower than usual for this time of year, and in fact herring both in the larval stage and on the point of metamorphosis were taken in some numbers in several localities. The small size of these herring undoubtedly resulted in a marked reduction in the numbers caught in hauls with the midwater trawl due to escape through the meshes, but beach seine catches inshore were also poor. The impression gained was that the 1968 yearclass in the Bank Stock of herring was a relatively weak one.

Further to the south modal lengths were similar to those in previous years. 0-group herring were found to be exceptionally abundant along the East Anglian coast, although their numbers in the Thames Estuary were not so high as in 1968. The overall strength of the 1968 yearclass in the Downs Stock of herring would therefore seem to be as good as, if not better than, that of the 1967 yearclass.

Sprat catches were generally light to the north of the Wash, but much better along the East Anglian coast and further southwards. 1-year old sprats were predominant in the catches and appeared to be quite abundant, although rather thinly scattered, over a wide area. The 1968 sprat yearclass therefore seems to be quite a good one in the south, although there was little trace of it in the northern half of the area covered by this cruise.

Miscellaneous

1. A number of herring from as wide a length range as possible were specially preserved and brought back to Lowestoft for Dr Walker.
2. Further samples of 0-group herring were collected for the Helminthology Unit.

R J Wood
8 July 1969

Seen in draft: WB, AJL

Distribution:

Basic list plus the following:-

R J Wood
T J Hulme