

R1/3

Not to be cited without prior reference to the Marine Laboratory, Aberdeen

MV *Audacious* BF 83

Charter Cruise 0900H

REPORT

3-14 September 2000

Personnel

K J Peach (In charge)
P L Clark
G Johnston Visitor (MIA Dublin)

Gear

Twin Rig: 2 x vessels own design 130 ft hopper nets with 90mm square mesh windows.
2 x vessels own design 180 ft scraper nets with 90 mm square mesh windows.

Objectives

1. To map the distribution of monkfish and megrim at 200, 400, 600 and 800 metres on and around the Rockall Bank.
2. To sample monkfish for length, total weight, gutted weight, liver weight, gonad weight, sex, maturity and age.
3. To obtain monkfish skin samples for genetic analysis.
4. To sample megrim for length, weight, sex and age.
5. To obtain temperature at depth using a minilog sampler.

Out-turn day per project: 12 days C660

Narrative

Audacious sailed from Lochinver at 2000 hours on 3 September 2000 and headed west to the first trawling position (5807N 1330W) arriving at 0100hrs on 5 September 2000. Fishing operations proceeded without incident until 1100 hours on 7 September 2000 when a severe southwesterly gale prevented trawling for 12 hours. Fishing recommenced at 0100 hours on 8 September 2000 and continued until 1600 hours on 13 September 2000. A total of 35 hauls of three hours duration were completed giving comprehensive coverage of the survey area see maps 1 and 2. *Audacious* returned to Lochinver at 1800 hours on 14 September 2000.

Results

After discussion with Skipper Gatt, it became apparent that sampling along specific depth contours would be impractical in view of the unpredictable nature of the seabed at Rockall. Consequently it was decided to sample by depth zones of 200 metres (0-200, 200-400, 400-600, 600+) within each Statistical rectangle. Catches ranged from 30 to 200 baskets of bulk with the largest haul comprising deepwater species predominantly ratfish (*Hydrolagus mirabilis*, *Chimaera monstrosa*).

Catches of *Lophius piscatorius* were steady throughout the survey (map 3), with large mature females making a very welcome appearance along the western edge of the survey area. A total of 1,351 *Lophius piscatorius* were caught, of which 896 were scored for length, weight, sex, maturity and age, the remainder were scored for length, sex and maturity. Skin samples were obtained from 100 immature and 400 mature fish for genetic analysis. Catches of *Lophius budegassa* were almost non-existent with three fish being scored for all parameters (map 4).

Megrim catches varied with depth *Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis* abundant in the shallow >400m zones (map 5) with *Lepidorhombus boscii* making a good showing in the <400m region (map 6). A total of 2,700 *Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis* were caught, of which 619 were scored for length; weight, sex and age, the remainder were scored for length and sex. A total of 664 *Lepidorhombus boscii* were caught and scored for length and sex.

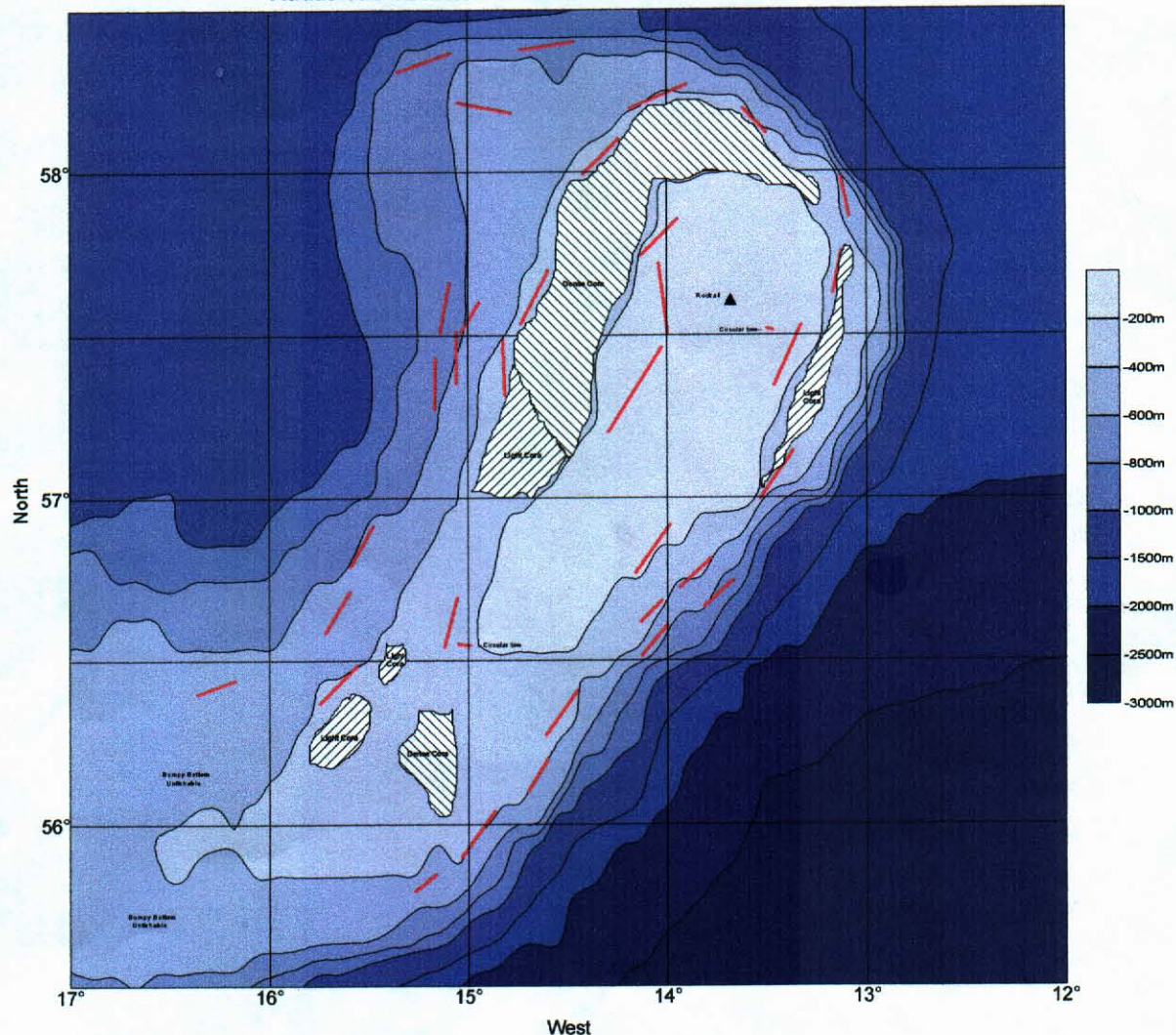
Two relative strangers to our shores were caught, a Seatoad *Chaunax pictus* in haul 5 (600 metres), and a Sailfin dory *Zenopsis conchifer* in haul 31 (218 metres), both species were frozen and returned to the lab for formal identification and photographing.

All survey objectives were met. The invaluable experience and hard work of Skipper Gatt and his crew ensured the success of this charter.

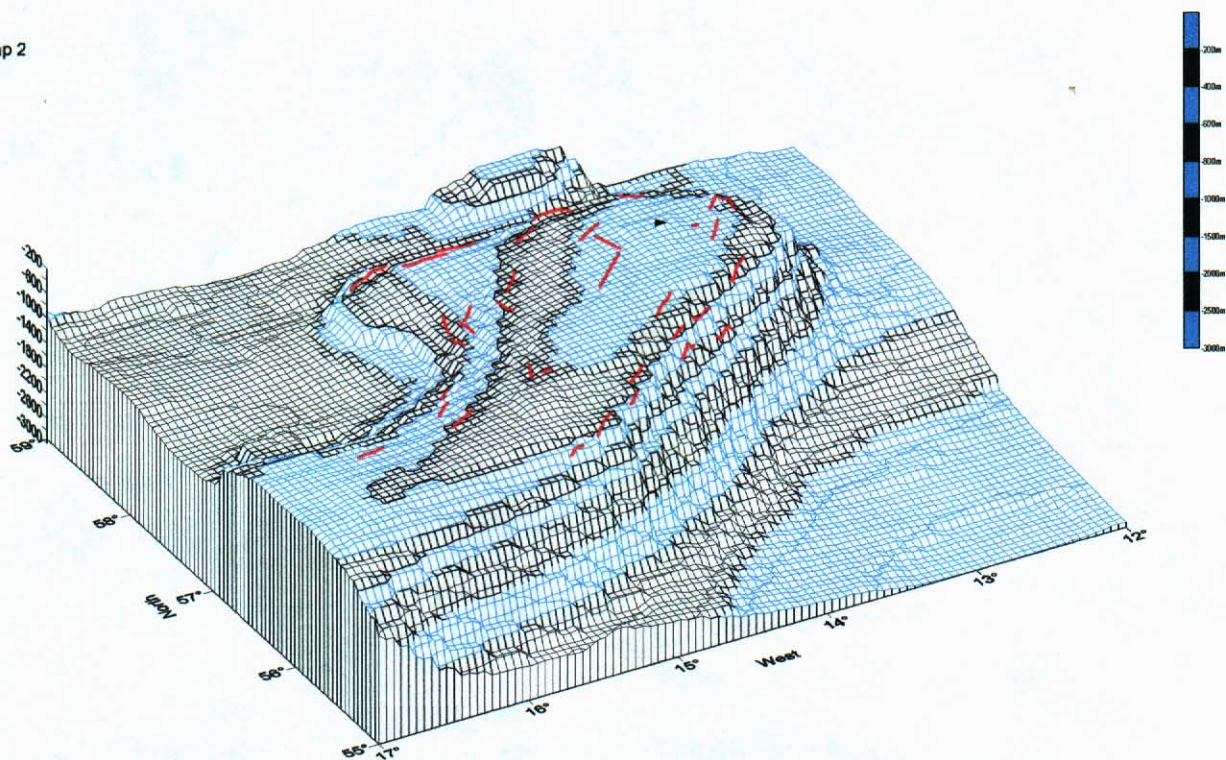
K J Peach
21 September 2000

Audacious Monkfish Charter Rockall 2000 Trawl Tracks

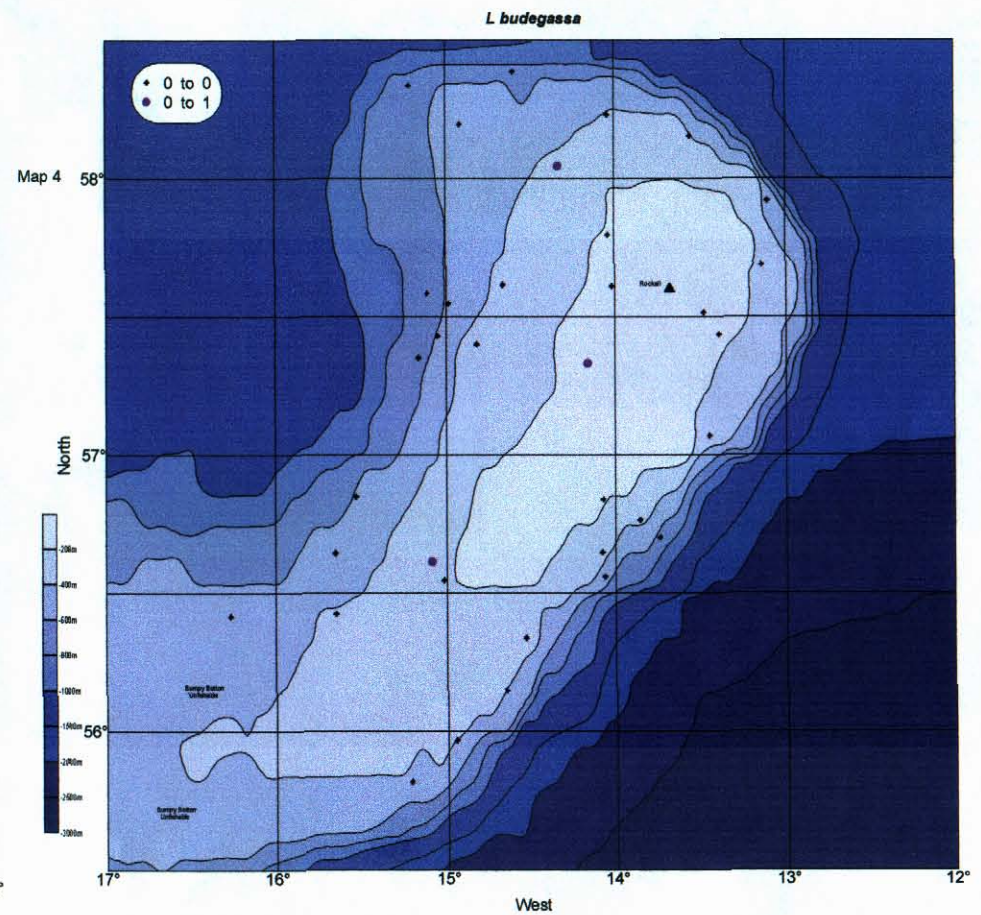
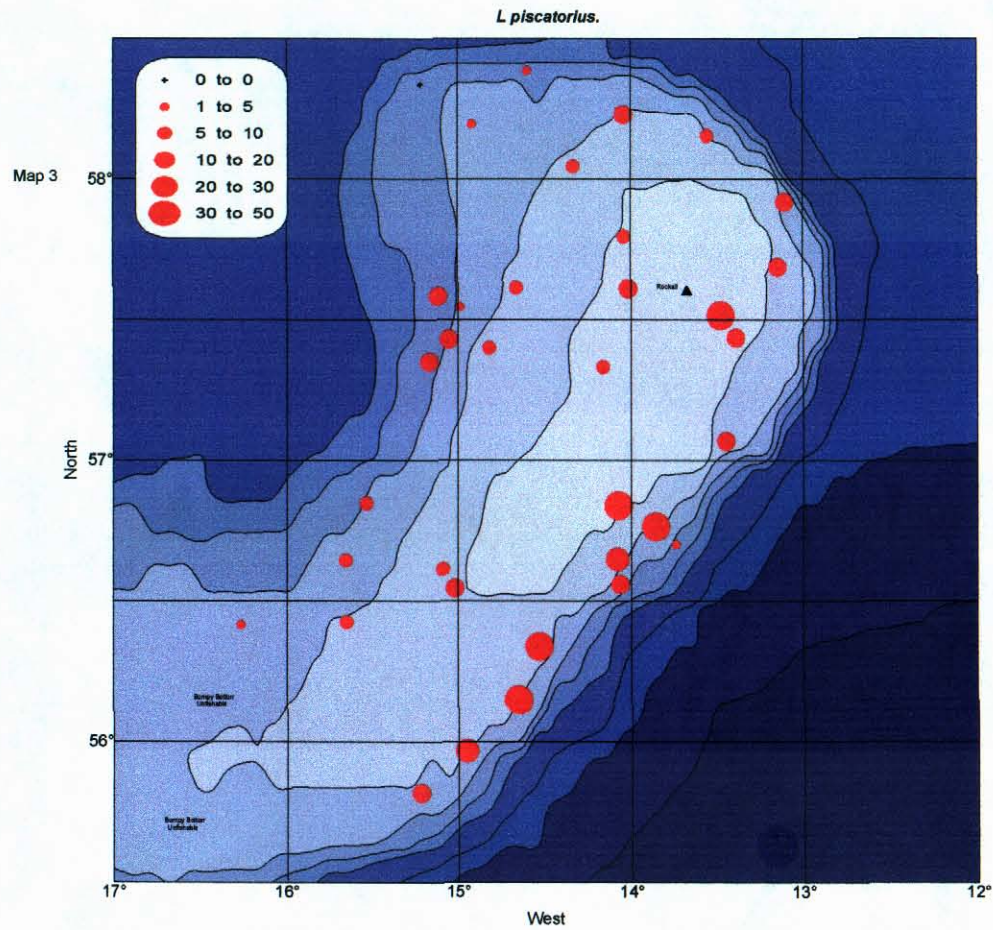
Map 1



Map 2



Audacious Monkfish Charter Rockall 2000 Numbers per hour.



Audacious Monkfish Charter Rockall 2000 Numbers per hour.

