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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

FISHERIES LABORATORY, PAKEFIELD ROAD, LOWESTOFT NR33 OHT, SUFFOLK

1989 CHARTER CRUISE PROGRAMME

REPORT: BALAENA 1/89

STAFF: G Pickett
C Whiting

LOCATION: Medway Estuary

DURATION: 4-6 July 1989

AIMS: To conduct a trawl survey of 'O' group and juvenile bass in the Medway/Thames/Swale, and to collect samples of bass for growth studies.

NARRATIVE:

Staff travelled to Queenborough via Kingsnorth Power Station late on 3 July. Equipment was loaded early on 4 July and surveying using small bass trawls commenced above Rochester. All stations in the Medway were completed on 5 July but strong NE winds prevented any work in the lower Swale and Thames Estuary.

On 6 July trawling was discontinued in favour of small mesh gill nets, used in the Kingsnorth Power Station outfall channel to catch bass for tagging and growth studies.

Staff returned to Lowestoft on 7 July.

RESULTS:

Due to the large quantities of weed and jellyfish, effective trawling was not possible at many stations in the Medway. No bass and few other fish were caught in 15 trawl stations worked in the main estuary. A total of 12 bass (11-17 cm total length) were caught in East Hoo Creek, which is an extension of the P.S. outfall channel. A 58 mm mesh nylon gill net was used to catch a total of 26 bass (21-28 cm total length) from the warm water outfall area; of these 12 were tagged, the rest retained.

Water temperatures (surface and bottom) were recorded along with dissolved oxygen, turbidity and salinity throughout the survey area. Temperatures ranged from 18.0°-19.5°C in the main estuary to 22.0°-25.0°C in East Hoo Creek and 28.0°-29.0°C in the outfall channel.

G D Pickett
15 August 1989

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