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IN CONFIDENCE: NOT TO BE QUOTED WITHOUT REFERENCE TO THE LABORATORY

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CRUISE REPORT

FRS "CLUPEA"

9 September - 19 October 1974

OBJECTIVE:

To carry out herring larval and hydrographic surveys off the north and east coasts of Scotland.

NARRATIVE:

"Clupea" sailed from Aberdeen at 17.30 on 9 September and began the larval survey at Stn 140. During that week sampling was confined to the Buchan area and all the stations between 56°05'N and 57°35'N were sampled before "Clupea" docked in Aberdeen for the weekend. Over the weekend repairs were carried out to "Clupea's" propellar and the survey was recommenced at 2000 on 17 September. "Clupea" again operated in the Buchan area completing 26 stations between 56°45'N and 57°45'N before returning to Aberdeen for the weekend.

"Clupea" sailed from Aberdeen at 1400 on 23 September and headed for Stn 109 to begin the first survey of the Orkney/Shetland area. During the week 50 stations were sampled. In addition to the survey grid sampling a series of 60 hauls were made as part of an experiment on the comparative efficiency of Gulf III samplers. "Clupea" spent the weekend of the 29 September in Kirkwall and after leaving at 0930 on 30 September completed the remaining part of the Orkney/Shetland grid before returning to Aberdeen for the weekend.

"Clupea" sailed from Aberdeen at 1800 on the 7 October. It was hoped to survey the Buchan area for a third time but after only 4 stations had been sampled, deteriorating weather conditions in that area necessitated a return to the Orkney/Shetland area. "Clupea" worked northward, spending the weekend of the 13 October in Kirkwall. During the final week of the cruise "Clupea" completed the remainder of the survey and docked in Buckie at 12.00 on 16 October.

During the cruise there were continuous moderate to fresh northerly winds and these caused a considerable loss of working time, accounting for approximately 1½ days per week. Had it not been for the excellent co-operation from the ship's staff the loss of working time could have been considerably greater.

RESULTS:

No detailed data on larval abundances are so far available but preliminary examination of the samples would indicate that larval were less abundant in the Orkney area than they have been in recent years. However there appears to have been significant hatchings on the more southerly spawning grounds namely Clythness and off Buchanness. During the six week cruise a total of 344 plankton samples were collected.

In addition hydrographic material was collected at most of the stations in the Orkney/Shetland Grid during the period of 23 September - 3 October.

David W McKay
5 November 1974