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CRUISE REPORT

F.R.S. "CLUPEA"

6th-30th June 1966

Narrative

"Clupea" left Buckie on 6th June and sailed to Orkney where work commenced next day and continued until the morning of 30th. "Clupea" returned to Buckie on that day and off-loaded gear for return to Aberdeen.

Lobsters were very scarce in depths over 2 fathoms. Amongst the commercial fleet only small boats working close inshore were getting reasonable catches. In these circumstances more attention was given on the cruise to crab fishing and scallop dredging whilst lobster data were collected whenever possible at commercial premises in Stromness and Kirkwall. The price of lobsters remained too high a level for purchasing for tagging.

ResultsCrabs

Six fleets, each of 8 creels with $5\frac{1}{2}$ " eyes, were used throughout the cruise. In each fleet, 4 creels had shuttered eyes and 4 were open; of each 4 creels 2 were baited with fresh fish and 2 with salt mackerel. Each fleet was set up to a random pattern which was unchanged throughout the cruise.

In the eye/bait experiment the crab catch, expressed as a percentage of the total catch was as follows:-

<u>Creel</u>	<u>Bait</u>	<u>% age of total catch</u>
Shuttered eye	Salt mackerel	20
Shuttered eye	Fresh fish	28
Open eye	Salt mackerel	21
Open eye	Fresh fish	30

The working area was divided into four sections:- (i) Scapa Flow, (ii) West side from Rackwick Bay to Marwick Head, (iii) Kirkwall and near islands to south Stronsay and (iv) South Ronaldsay. Most commercial crabbing is done in area (ii).

The catch/100 creels, mean size of crabs in mm, the percentage of undersized crabs and ratio of males to females from each area and overall is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

A R E A					
(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	Overall	
84	131	76	79	97	Catch/100 creels
106	152	119	118	128	Mean size in mm
64	6	40	51	36	% age undersized
1.5 : 1	1 : 2	1.6 : 1	1.4 : 1	1.04 : 1	Ratio ♂ : ♀

Lobsters

In all, 1,335 lobsters from commercial catches were sexed and measured and total weights taken; of these, 426 were males (mean carapace length 104.6 mm) and 909 females (mean carapace length 104.0 mm). The mean weight of the lobsters measured was 1.72 lb.

Scallops

Forty-eight hauls were taken by 6' dredge. The best hauls - 19 in ten minutes off Cava and 16 in ten minutes off Tay Ness - were taken in Scapa Flow, where scallops appear to be fairly widespread but not in dense concentrations. Many of the scallops were old, 59% being aged 10 years or over.

Mytilicola

A sample of mussels from Stromness Pier was examined for the parasite Mytilicola intestinalis. No infection was present.

C. Davidson
21st July, 1966.