

R1/6

In confidence: Not to be quoted without reference to the
Laboratory.

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F.R.S. "Clupea"

11th-22nd October, 1965.

Cruise Report

Objective:

To carry out an 0-1 group herring trawl survey of the Moray Firth.

All stations of the survey were completed successfully. In general there were more sprats caught than herring. The majority of the herring had a size range of between 15-23 cm, about one-third of the total being smaller herring with a range of 9-12 cm. The largest catches of herring were obtained at stations 9, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 18.

The size range of the sprats was 8-15 cm and the largest catches were obtained at stations 8, 18 and 21. The table below shows the herring and sprat catch, expressed as percentages, through the Moray Firth from East to West.

	Macduff Clythness	Buckie Berridaleness	Lossiemouth Helmsdale	Burghead Brora	Findhorn Golspie	Nairn Cromarty
Stations	1 to 6	7 to 10	11 to 12	13 to 14	15 to 17	18 to 21
Herring	3	63	35	70	60	17
Sprats	97	27	65	30	40	83

Some good echo traces were obtained, probably of sprats, especially in the inner Moray Firth and between stations 8 and 9. During the survey a large commercial fleet was pair trawling for sprats from Burghead westwards and some good catches were obtained. There was also a productive drift-net fishery for young herring in Inverness Firth.

The white fish catch was poor; at only two stations were reasonable catches obtained, mostly whiting with a mean size of 26 cms. About a quarter of the white fish catch was haddock.

D. P. SHARMAN

2nd November, 1965.