

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD  
FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

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1975 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CLIONE: CRUISE 17/1975

(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF

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DURATION

Left Lowestoft 1115 h, 6 December

Arrived Lowestoft 0730 h, 18 December

LOCALITY

Southern Bight and Eastern English Channel

AIMS

1. To tag adult plaice on spawning grounds in the Southern Bight and eastern English Channel
2. To tag eod and inject tetracycline for otolith growth studies.

NARRATIVE

CLIONE sailed from Lowestoft at 1115 h, 6 December 3 days later than the planned date, the ship having been used by RSG during this period to assist in the laying of Data Buoy 1 in position off Benacre Ness. Some further work on DB1 was still necessary on 6 December and the ship proceeded immediately to the buoy so that Mr Ramster and 2 Hawker Siddley engineers could complete this. These three were put ashore at Yarmouth by small boat at 1530 h, 6 December when CLIONE proceeded to Smith's Knoll where fishing was begun at 1800 h.

Good weather conditions prevailed for most of the cruise with only 13 and 17 December lost to gales. Grounds at Smith's Knoll, Brown Ridge, S.E. of Gabbard LV, off Texel, Rye Bay and North Foreland were all fished. The more northerly of these were worked during the period 6 to 12 December. A shift of ground to Rye Bay on the night of 12/13 December coincided with a northerly gale which continued until 14 December during the afternoon of which a return was made to the Southern Bight off North Foreland. During the night of 14/15 December CLIONE steamed to Felixstowe where Mr Howlett was put ashore by small boat to return to Lowestoft for family reasons. Fishing was resumed at North Foreland at midday 15 December and continued there until 2100 h, 16 December in exceptionally fine weather. A northerly gale developed early on 17 December preventing further work. CLIONE dodged northward during the day arriving off Lowestoft at 2300 h and finally docking at 0730 h, 18 December.

RESULTS

General: 79 hauls were made during the cruise, most of them being of 1 hour duration. Most grounds were found to be clear and little time was lost due to mending. In Rye

Bay however a complete trawl and bobbins were lost on an unmarked 'fastener' on a ground that had been fished successfully on a previous cruise. Further damage was sustained to the replacement trawl 2 hauls later and this led to the abandonment of fishing in Rye Bay.

Aim 1: Plaice catches generally were light in the whole area but fish in pre-spawning condition were found at all grounds. In most areas these adult fish were mainly small males the exception being at North Foreland where large (45 cm+) females were found. 629 adult plaice were tagged on all grounds. The distribution of these by individual grounds is as follows:-

Smith's Knoll	56
Brown Ridge	293
Gabbard area	20
Texel	135
N. Foreland	125

As well as these adult plaice a further 102 juvenile plaice were tagged and injected with tetracycline for otolith growth studies. All of these were at Brown Ridge and Texel.

Aim 2: Codling (approx. size range 35-55 cm) and a few large cod were present on all grounds with catches up to 3 baskets for a 1 hour tow.

520 cod were tagged of which half were injected with tetracycline for otolith growth studies. The distribution of tagged cod by individual grounds is as follows:

Smith's Knoll	10
Brown Ridge	231
Gabbard area	15
Texel	79
Rye Bay	-
N. Foreland	185

Miscellaneous:

- A few live plaice - female and male - were brought back for Dr Purdom.
- 6 live soles were brought back for the W.F.A. (Hunterston).
- Whole plaice of various sizes from different grounds were brought back for Dr Arnold.

B C Bedford  
31.12.75

SEEN IN DRAFT: GS  
WG

INITIALLED: AJL

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List  
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