

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

1977 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CLIONE: CRUISE 1

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

STAFF

R J Wood  
J Dann  
Mrs W A Dawson  
S Warnes  
Mrs T E Benford

DURATION

Left Lowestoft 1000h 7 January  
Arrived Lowestoft 1030h 24 January  
All times are Greenwich Mean Time

LOCALITY

North Irish Sea, eastern English Channel

AIMS

1. To investigate the distribution and abundance of Autumn-spawned herring larvae in the north Irish Sea.
2. To investigate the distribution and abundance of 1 and 2 ring juvenile herring in the north Irish Sea.

NARRATIVE

RV CLIONE sailed from Lowestoft at 1000h 7 January for the Irish Sea. The 20 inch high speed plankton sampler was calibrated the following morning whilst on passage in the English Channel and the collection of water samples for the Radiobiological Laboratory began at 1645 h next day 9 January in St George's Channel. The herring larval survey commenced off the Irish coast at 0011h 10 January and continued without interruption until 1130h 13 January when easterly gale force winds prevented any further work until 0545h 15 January. CLIONE put into Douglas (IOM) at 1445h 15 January for stores and water and whilst there was joined by the Marine Superintendent Captain T Sellers, who stayed for the remainder of the cruise. CLIONE sailed from Douglas at 0900h 16 January and completed the last station of the herring larval survey at 0200h 17 January. During daylight hours later that day 4 hauls were made with the 800 Engel pelagic trawl off the north coast of Wales. An overnight passage was made to St Bee's Head but a SE gale prevented any further fishing until 19 January when a further 4 daylight hauls were made with the Engel trawl off the Cumbrian coast. The wind rapidly increased to southerly severe gale force during the evening of that day and CLIONE was forced to seek shelter in Redwharf Bay until next morning, 20 January. In view of the very bad weather forecast for the following 2-3 days it was decided to abandon hope of further work in the north Irish Sea and so the return passage was commenced in poor weather conditions. Severe gale force southerly winds again forced CLIONE to shelter that evening, 20 January, off Fishguard. Moderating winds the next day enabled CLIONE to

finally make passage round Lands End into the English Channel. It was decided to utilise what time remained to carry out a restricted survey for Downs herring larvae in the eastern Channel. This was started at 2231h 22 January and completed at 0135h 24 January. Course was then set for Lowestoft where CLIONED docked at 1030h 24 January.

#### RESULTS

1. The 83 plankton hauls made in the Irish Sea produced small numbers of herring larvae, mainly in one patch between the Isle of Man and the Scottish coast. This year herring larvae were taken at several stations close to the Irish coast, mostly to the south and southeast of the Mourne spawning grounds.
2. Eight pelagic trawl hauls in the north Irish Sea produced some  $13\frac{1}{2}$  baskets of herring 11 of which were taken in one  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour tow off Great Orme's Head. Measurements and full biological sampling were carried out on all the herring caught.
3. 19 plankton hauls for Downs herring larvae were made in the eastern English Channel. A few herring larvae were caught but densities were very low, only 1-2 per station.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

20 water samples were collected from various localities in St George's Channel and the Irish Sea for the Radiobiological Laboratory.

One trial haul was made with an Isaac Kidd net using one of the new aluminium diving vanes and one of the old nets. This gear was found to be very difficult to use off the side of CLIONE. After a short 15 minute tow the net was found to be torn when hauled, but the catch included 6 herring from 16-24 cms in length together with a number of whiting and sprat.

R J Wood  
2 February 1977

SEEN IN DRAFT Captain J R French - Master  
Mr G F Lee - Fishing Skipper

INITIALLED: AJL

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List

R J Wood

J Dann

Mrs W A Dawson

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Mrs T E Benford

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