

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

1977 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CORELLA: CRUISE 2

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

STAFF

J Horwood
I Davies
H Faulkner
A Burgess

DURATION

Left Lowestoft 1830 h 17 January
Arrived Lowestoft 1145 h 27 January
All times are Greenwich Mean Time

LOCALITY

Southern North Sea
1. Kentish Knock to Brown Ridge
2. White Bank
3. Cleaver Ground and Botney Ground

AIMS: PRIMARY

1. To obtain plaice ovary samples from the three areas.

ANCILLARY

2. To collect eggs for genetic studies
3. To collect live rays, dabs and crabs
4. To test the new delagic trawl.

NARRATIVE

CORELLA sailed at 1830 h after a slight delay because of fog and steamed overnight for the Kentish Knock and North Falls grounds. This area gave poor catches of plaice along with the Gabbards the next day. Most of the plaice were spent and only a minimum sample obtained.

The Granton Trawl was changed for the DAFS delagic trawl for trials on the 20th. Tows were made from the Kentish Knock to the Western Deep Water as tests and to obtain more samples. Towing for live eggs was not attempted as the time to change the gear would have entailed loss of trawling time.

CORELLA docked at 2000 h on the 20th to change back to the Granton trawl and to land live dabs, rays and edible crabs. The ship sailed on the next tide, at 1100 h on the 21st, for the White Bank.

The White Bank was fished during the 22nd and 23rd with full samples taken during good weather conditions. Again tows for live eggs were not made because of the loss of trawling time that would have occurred.

The ship steamed to the Cleaver Bank area overnight and the good weather continued, although gale forecasts were made for all surrounding areas. Very good catches enabled all the samples from the Cleaver and Botney grounds to be taken in one day.

With the weather deteriorating it was again decided not to tow for live eggs but to attempt to get live rays which were urgently needed and several short hauls were made on the 25th before the storm set in. The ship steamed for Lowestoft to land the rays and more dabs and docked at 2300 h on the 25th.

In order to obtain the elusive live plaice eggs the 2 m Neuston net was rigged and the ramps put down. The ship sailed at 1415 h on the 26th in inclement weather to a position where the edge of the peak egg concentration has been found in earlier years, i.e. east of the Gabbard, and from where they were specifically requested. At this position catches were poor (about 100 per haul) but they increased towards the position where the centre of the spawning has been found previously. There catches were high (about 1000-2000 eggs per 30 mt haul). About 8500 eggs were obtained.

The ship docked at 1145 h 27 January.

RESULTS

1. Satisfactory samples of plaice ovaries in each length group were obtained from the three areas.
2. 8500 plaice eggs were obtained.
3. About 100 dabs, 18 rays, 9 edible crabs and a few plaice were returned alive to the laboratory.
4. The new delagic trawl was tested under the supervision of Mr I Davies and worked well with no problems.

J W Horwood
(Naturalist-in-Charge)

2 February 1977

SEEN IN DRAFT

J E Balfour
E T Bridge

INITIALLED AJL

DISTRIBUTION

Basic List
Staff on cruise
J Horwood
I Davies
H Faulkner
A Burgess
R C A Bannister
D Thompson
P Scholes
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