

22 AUG 1984

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

1984 CHARTER CRUISE PROGRAMME

REPORT: DAWN HUNTER

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

STAFF: T J HULME
A M WATSON
B C MUMFORD, 12-13 July
R PALMER, 12-13 July

DURATION: Left Lowestoft 1035h 13 July
Arrived Whitby 0400h 2 August

AIM: To investigate the distribution and abundance of young herring of the 1983 year class along the English east coast from the Farne Islands to Dungeness.

NARRATIVE:

DAWN HUNTER arrived at Lowestoft on the afternoon of 12 July and, after being made ready for sea, sailed from Lowestoft at 1035h 13 July to carry out trial hauls with the mid-water trawl before commencing the survey proper at 1348h. During the period 14-21 July, all stations within the area Dungeness - Thames Estuary - Cromer were successfully completed. Because of unfavourable tides in the Wash, DAWN HUNTER then steamed north to Blyth and between 23-31 July, worked all the stations from Dunstanburgh to Blakeney. With the survey completed, DAWN HUNTER returned to Whitby, her home port, docking there at 0400h 2 August. The fishing gear, cable winch, scientific equipment and fish samples were off-loaded and these and the scientific staff then travelled back to Lowestoft by road.

RESULTS:

Along the north-east coast and in the Wash, catches of 0-group herring (1983 year class) were much greater than last year (x 10 on average) and the best since the very strong 1977 year class sampled in 1978. The East Anglian coast and Thames Estuary however produced smaller catches than last year and numerically were only just over one third of the very strong 1978 year class sampled in 1979. Sprat by-catches were noticeably more frequent and on average much larger than last year, with catches along the East Anglian Coast and in the Thames Estuary being up on last year by factors of x 5 and x 4 respectively.

Length stratified samples of herring and sprat were preserved from all stations where catches allowed and brought back for stomach content analysis.

I would like to record my thanks to both Capt John Cole, owner of DAWN HUNTER, and Skipper Rodney Hunt for their invaluable contributions to the smooth running and success of the survey.

T J Hulme
8 August 1984

INITIALLED: DJG

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List +
T J Hulme
A M Watson
B C Mumford
R Palmer
Capt J Cole
Skipper R Hunt
FLR 4876;