

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

1986 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, 15 July only  
P Hudson, 15 July only

DURATION:

Left Lowestoft 1155h 15 July  
Arrived Whitby 0800h 24 July

AIM:

To investigate the distribution and abundance of young herring of the 1985 year class along the English east coast between R Humber and North Foreland.

NARRATIVE:

DAWN HUNTER docked at Lowestoft at 0600h 15 July and was loaded up and made ready for sea by 1155h when she sailed from the port to carry out trial hauls with the mid-water trawl, before commencing the survey proper at 1537h. During the period 16-20 July, all stations between North Foreland and Cromer were successfully completed. The vessel then moved up to Boston fishing the Blakeney station en route. On 22-23 July all the stations in the Wash south of the R Humber were fished before the vessel docked at Grimsby to off load the fishing gear, cable winch, fish samples and the scientific staff and equipment. DAWN HUNTER sailed from Grimsby at 2000h 23 July to steam back to Whitby.

RESULTS:

The survey this year was restricted to the area R Humber to North Foreland and in comparing the results from the same area with those from last year, the overall catches of 0-group herring (1985 year class) were down slightly, amounting to 81% of the very strong 1984 year class. The fish were distributed in a more normal way this year with the catches in the Wash being separated from those along the East Anglian coast by zero catches at Blakeney and Cromer. In the Wash, catches were up on last year by 7 times making this the strongest year class recorded in the Wash since the surveys began in 1966. Along the East Anglian coast and in the Thames Estuary catches were down on last year by a factor of 3, nevertheless this is still the second strongest year class recorded in the 1966-86 series for this area, being 2x greater than the very strong 1978 year class sampled in 1979. Sprat by-catches were double what they were last year with the Wash accounting for 94% of the fish caught.

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

INITIALLED: D J G

T J Hulme  
28 July 1986

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List +  
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B C Mumford                  P Hudson  
Capt J Cole                  Skipper D Bevan  
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