

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

1982 CHARTER VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: CHARTERED COMMERCIAL VESSEL: DEW-GENEN-NY

STAFF:

M R Vince

D W Palmer

DURATION:

23 August-4 September

LOCALITY:

South and West Ireland

AIMS:

1. To carry out exploratory fishing trials on grounds south and west of Ireland.
2. To observe commercial fishing practice on board a seiner, including discarding.
3. To obtain length compositions and biological samples of the main species, with emphasis on monk and megrim.
4. To assess the feasibility of tagging commercial fish species on board a seiner fishing these grounds and to carry out some preliminary tagging trials.

NARRATIVE:

DEW-GENEN-NY sailed from Newlyn 1200 hrs 23 August. Fishing commenced 0905 hrs the following day at a position approximately 30 miles south west of Fastnet. Conditions were far from good with a gale from the south west producing a big ground swell. During the following four days the weather slowly moderated and a total of 18 hauls were completed by the afternoon of 28 August when the ship docked in Castletownbere to take water and fuel.

DEW-GENEN-NY sailed at 1000 hrs 30 August only to find a very big sea running with a gale from the north-west. The ship laid and dodged until the following morning when fishing recommenced 30 miles west of Bull Rock. The following two days hauls were made working to the north until a position 35 miles west of the Blaskets was reached at a latitude of 52°N. The last days fishing, 3 September was completed approximately 32 miles south of the Fastnet.

The ship made good passage to Newlyn docking 1215 hrs 4 September.

RESULTS:

The DEW-GENEN-NY is the only seiner fishing from Newlyn, with a length of 79 feet she is powered by a 636 BHP motor and equipped with two rope drums carrying 14 coils of rope on each. The net used for the majority of hauls was a Gourock 620 with a light leaded footrope and a 80 mm cod-end. This vessel normally works the Nympe bank south-east of Ireland during the spring and summer months using the same gear. The catches made on this ground usually average 12-14 baskets per

haul of marketable fish. The bulk of the landing made up of good quality whiting, but with a quantity of hake, monk, megrim and other demersal fish.

The grounds fished during the charter are not normally covered by any groundfish surveys, and the trawlers that usually work there are the Spanish owned vessels registered in England and Ireland.

1. A total of 34 hauls were made, 7 of which were void, but only one of these resulted in serious damage to the net with a loss of 2½ coils of rope. Each haul took approximately 2 hours to shoot and retrieve. Catches were disappointing, averaging about 5 baskets of demersal fish per haul. The majority of hauls consisted of small or poor quality fish of mixed species with megrim, hake and monk predominating. (Table 1) The larger catches seemed to be associated with depths around 80 fathoms. The last area fished approximately 32 miles south of the Fastnet yielded better quality fish including some fine lemon sole, haddock, cod and monk. All the grounds apart from those fished on the last day were observed by the skipper to be fairly soft and not cause a second bottom echo on the sounder. This is in contrast to the very hard bottom found on that part of the Nymph bank where this vessel normally works.
2. Every haul was examined for discards after the crew had sorted the catch in their normal way. Of the commercial species discarded, megrim and hake predominated. On average 51% (by volume) of the megrim caught were discarded, although the percentage of undersize fish (25 cms) was considerably lower, about 20% by number. About 51% (by volume) of the hake caught were discarded. These were mainly undersize fish. The crew discarded fish below 33 cms. Other species discarded in small numbers were lemon sole, haddock, whiting, witch, lesser spotted dogfish, some very small monk and all horse mackerel. Total rejection by approximate volume is shown by ground on Table 1.
3. Good length compositions were obtained from the majority of valid hauls for hake and megrim. Cod, haddock, saithe, whiting, monk, witch, lemon sole, plaice and horse mackerel were sampled whenever possible. Otolith samples were taken for cod, haddock, whiting, megrim, plaice and monk, and a sample of scad were retained on ice for processing at the laboratory.

Both species of monk (*Lophius piscatorius* and *Lophius budegassa*) were found in approximately equal numbers, and all measurements consisted of total length and tail only length for every individual fish. This may contribute a useful set of data if market sampling of monk tails is ever introduced. Both species of megrim (*Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis* and *L. boscii*) were also found but only on haul 6 was there a noticeable number of *L. boscii*.

4. The opportunity to carry out extensive tagging trials was prevented by the inclement weather that predominated throughout the charter. On one occasion a small number of apparently lively and reasonable condition megrim were held over night in a running sea water tank in order that a measure of survival rate might be obtained. Some fish were very active 6-7 hours later, but all were dead after 10 hours. There appeared to be bruising on the underside. On the last day the weather was reasonable so twelve monk were selected from 3 hauls and tagged. These fish were not held but released immediately. All but one swam down strongly after first expelling air from the pectoral vents. The majority of roundfish although in excellent condition were so badly 'blown' that no attempt was made to tag them.

During the stay in Castletownbere an opportunity was taken to talk with an Irishman who sails as a navigating skipper on the Spanish owned trawlers operating from that port. He indicated that very little was discarded and it was obvious that much of the small hake and megrim that we had seen in our catches would

have been saved by the Spaniards. During the charter several of those vessels were seen to be fishing, usually in depths of water around 100 fathoms. In the winter months they fish in depths between 200-240 fathoms.

To summarize, it must be said that commercially the charter was not a success. It did, however, yield a satisfactory sample of what is on those grounds at that time of year. The majority of grounds did not have a sufficient quantity of quality fish to make it a commercial proposition for the UK market, although the skipper felt that the last ground fished may be worth an occasional visit by a beam-trawler from the south-west.

The help and enthusiasm shown by the skipper and crew despite poor weather and catches is gratefully acknowledged.

M R Vince  
29 September 1982

INITIALLED: DJG

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List +

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D W Palmer

## CATCH BY GROUND IN BASKETS (45 litre app. 33 Kgs)

HAULS SPECIES	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-18	20-22	23, 24 26	29-30	31, 32 33
DAB	f			f					
LEMON SOLE	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	f	1 D	$\frac{3}{4}$		f D		1 D
MEGRIM	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	7 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	16 $\frac{1}{2}$ D	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ D	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ D	4 D	5 D	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ D
PLAICE	f			f	f D	f	f		f
COD	f	$\frac{3}{4}$	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	1	$\frac{3}{4}$	1	2 $\frac{3}{4}$	1	2 $\frac{3}{4}$
HADDOCK	1 $\frac{3}{4}$				$\frac{3}{4}$ D	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	$\frac{1}{4}$ D	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ D
HAKE	3 D	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	2 D	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	3 D	$\frac{1}{4}$ D	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ D
POLLACK				f	3	4 $\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$		
SAITHE		f		f	f				
WHITING	f D				$\frac{3}{4}$	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$ D
GURNARDS	f D	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	f D					f D
MONK	$\frac{1}{4}$ D	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	3 D	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	1 D	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ D
DCGFISH(LSD)	f D	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	f D	f D		1 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	1 D	f D	
RAY	f	f			$\frac{1}{4}$				1
OTHER DEMERSAL	f	f	f D	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$ D	1 D
TOTAL DEMERSAL	7	18 $\frac{1}{4}$	15 $\frac{3}{4}$	23 $\frac{3}{4}$	10 $\frac{3}{4}$	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	20 $\frac{3}{4}$	7 $\frac{3}{4}$	16
DISCARDS DEMERSAL	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	9 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{3}{4}$	9 $\frac{3}{4}$	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	5 $\frac{3}{4}$	8	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	3 $\frac{3}{4}$
PERCENT DISCARDED	18%	53%	35%	41%	12%	24%	39%	42%	23%
HORSE MACKEREL	2 D	f D	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ D	$\frac{1}{4}$ D	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	$\frac{1}{4}$ D	$\frac{1}{4}$ D	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ D	$\frac{1}{4}$ D

f = Few fish

D = Some or all discarded

3

2

1

51

52

53

54

55

56

DEW-SENE-NY  
HAUL NUMBERS  
APPROX POSITS.  
24 AUG. 3. SEPT.  
1982

27-30

23-26

19-22

9-12

17-18

13-16

1-4

5-8

31-34

VIIK

[West of Great Sole Bank]

VIIJ

[Great Sole Bank]

VII G

[South East of Ireland]

VII F

[Bristol Channel]

VII H

[Little Sole Bank]

QQ

RR

SS

TT

UU

VV

WW

XX

YY

