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CRUISE REPORT

FRV "GOLDSEEKER"

19 - 30 January 1976

OBJECTIVES:

1. To carry out an echosounder and midwater trawling survey for sprats and immature herring in the Moray Firth.
2. To investigate the diurnal variation in behaviour of sprats and immature herring.

NARRATIVE:

Owing to refit delays, cruise did not begin until 19 January. The "Goldseeker" sailed from Buckie at 1030 to carry out an echosounder survey between Lossiemouth and Burghead. One trawl haul was made in the vicinity of the pair-trawl fleet off Hopeman and the boat returned to Buckie at 1700. Gales prevented further work until 22 January when a short survey was carried out in the vicinity of Buckie. The remainder of the week was again lost through bad weather.

The following week no work was possible on either 26 or 30 January. On 27 and 28 January a survey was done of the area from Lossiemouth to the Inverness and Cromarty Firths but there was very little evidence of sprat shoals. On 29 January a short survey was carried out close inshore in strong south easterly gales.

Echosounder Survey

Although the survey was severely hampered by bad weather, the coverage was fairly wide and extended from Portknockie to the Cromarty and Beaully Firths. The only evidence of sprat shoals was off Burghead in the first week and in the entrance to the Cromarty Firth in the second. In the weather conditions prevailing only one trawl haul was made.

R S Bailey
8 March 1976

Seen in draft - W B Reid