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In confidence: Not to be quoted without reference
to the Laboratory.

CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "GOLDSEEKER"

27th February-14th March 1968

Narrative

"Goldseeker" left Troon on the morning of 27th February. Prolonged periods of bad weather restricted the work to six trawl hauls in the Clyde and six in the Irish Sea and North Channel, before the cruise ended at Troon at mid-day on the 14th March.

During an enforced stay of a week in Peel, Isle of Man, the scientist-in-charge visited the Marine Biological Station, Port Erin, and was shown over the station's new research vessel "Cuma". Scientists from the Station also visited "Goldseeker".

Trawling

The standard "Goldseeker" otter trawl and a small-mesh shrimp trawl were used.

Pandalids were scarce in hauls in the Clyde, but more abundant in the Irish Sea, although the best haul, taken on the mud off Peel, contained only 198 Pandalus bonnierii weighing 1,000 g for half-an-hour's fishing. Up to 80% were females, most of them berried. They were of a good commercial size, with a mean carapace length of 17.1 mm. The smaller P. propinquus and P. montagui were also taken in small quantities.

Berried specimens of Pandalus bonnierii were kept alive for Mr. J. Wickins (M.A.F.F., Conway) and collected by him at the end of the cruise.

Good catches of Nephrops were taken, also off Peel, numbering up to 527 in a half-hour haul. They were very small, with a mean carapace length of 27.0 mm. The length frequencies are shown in the table below.

Carapace Length-Frequency of Nephrops
taken 12½ miles West of Peel

Carapace length (mm)	10- 14	15- 19	20- 24	25- 29	30- 34	35- 39	40- 44	45- 49	50- 54	Total mm	Mean
♂	-	14	77	120	83	35	12	5	1	347	29.1
♀	1	25	106	48	-	-	-	-	-	180	23.1
Total	1	39	183	168	83	35	12	5	1	527	27.0

Catches of white fish were generally poor, though one good catch of whiting was taken off Ayr and both Trisopterus esmarkii and T. minutus were fairly abundant in the Irish Sea.

James Mason
8th May 1968