

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

R1/10

8
3GR69

CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "GOLDSEEKER"

24th March-17th April 1969

Narrative

"Goldseeker" left Troon on 25th March and proceeded to Scalasaig, Colonsay. Creels were shot off the east coast of Colonsay and trawling carried out. Operations were hampered by adverse weather conditions during the cruise which covered the area east of the Outer Isles as far north as Loch Maddy. A limited programme of lobster measuring was undertaken at Oban and Mallaig during weekends spent at these ports. "Goldseeker" docked at Buckie on 17th April.

Trawling

Trawling was carried out at 11 positions, three using a shrimp trawl, and eight using the "Goldseeker" standard trawl with small mesh cover. Catches were light, consisting mainly of small haddock, whiting and T. esmarkii. Skate and dogfish were taken in most hauls.

Nephrops were found at most positions, the best results being obtained off Jura and in Loch Linnhe. The composition of the catch is shown in Table I.

TABLE I

The catch composition and length frequency of Nephrops norvegicus taken by trawl (all hauls)

Carapace mm	15/19	20/24	25/29	30/34	35/39	40/44	45/49	50/54	55/59	Total
♂	1	14	23	37	32	23	23	10	8	171
%	0.6	8.2	13.4	21.6	18.7	13.4	13.4	6.0	4.6	-
♀	3	18	16	21	10	2	-	-	-	70
%	4.3	25.8	22.8	30.0	14.3	2.8	-	-	-	-
♂ & ♀	4	32	39	58	42	25	23	10	8	241
%	1.7	13.3	16.2	24.1	17.4	10.4	9.5	4.1	3.3	-

The mean carapace length of males was 37.2 mm and females 28.2. One female examined was berried.

Pandalus sp. were caught in small numbers.

Creeling

Nephrops creels were shot at Colonsay, North Uist, Rum, and Loch Linnhe. The best results were obtained at Loch Skipport (N. Uist) where 71 males and 1 female were taken in 48 trap hauls. A total of 135 males and 8 females were caught by this method. The composition of the catch is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

The catch composition and length frequency of
Nephrops norvegicus taken by creel

Carapace mm	25/29	30/34	35/39	40/44	45/49	50/54	55/59	60/64	65/69	70/74	Total
♂	4	6	26	29	35	17	11	6	-	1	135
%	2.9	4.4	19.3	21.5	25.9	12.6	8.2	4.4	-	0.7	-
♀	1	1	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	8
%	12.5	12.5	-	37.5	37.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
♂ & ♀	5	7	26	32	38	17	11	6	-	1	143
%	3.5	4.9	18.2	22.4	26.6	11.8	7.6	4.2	-	0.7	-

The mean carapace length of males was 44.82 mm and the females 44.25 mm - five of the eight females examined were berried.

Dredging

A survey was made by echo-sounder for grounds suitable for scallop dredging and large stretches of ground in the area of operations were found to be unsuitable for towing. Fourteen hauls were made using a 4 ft scallop dredge. Results were very poor, the best hauls being taken off Loch Maddy and Faoileann Buoy (N. Uist), and these yielding only six Pecten maximus at each position for a 15-minute drag. The age composition of the samples consisted of over 50% of 9 years or older.

Plankton

Oblique hauls with 1 m (26 mesh) net and surface temperatures were taken in appropriate statistical squares.

J. A. Sinclair
28th May 1969