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CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "GOLDSEEKER"

29th April-23rd May 1968

Narrative

The cruise commenced on 2nd May, "Goldseeker" having been delayed by fog. Dredging for scallops was then carried out off the Kincardine and Angus coast. Trawling was started off St. Abb's Head on 3rd May. After some delay owing to north-east winds, trawling continued in the Farne Deep, the vessel working from Blyth, from 8th to 15th May, when scallop dredging was resumed in the area. After a programme of trawling inside the Firth of Forth "Goldseeker" docked in Leith on 23rd May.

Results

Twenty-five half-hour hauls were made with the "Goldseeker" trawl using standard cod end and fine mesh cover. Metal V doors were used for most of the cruise. Wooden doors were tried, but proved less satisfactory.

As there were no heavy concentrations of fish, the observations made during gear trials on 9th May were of a preliminary nature as an indication for further investigations.

Pink shrimps (mostly Pandalus borealis) were found to be fairly plentiful below 50 fathoms in the Farne Deep. Most hauls contained about 300 shrimps, with a volume of 3 litres (about 5 pints). They were mostly females with a mean carapace length of 19.1 mm. A few were berried. A few small gadoids and flatfish were also taken in these hauls. Myxine were present in numbers up to 40 per haul, and their slime made the working up of the shrimps very difficult. In the shallower water north of the Farne Deep there were no Myxine and very few shrimps. In the Firth of Forth small gadoids and Nephrops made up the bulk of the catches.

In the limited programme of dredging off the Kincardine and Angus coast, no scallops were caught. East of the Longstone Light, in 26 to 38 fathoms, a few scallops were obtained (up to 19 per 15 minute haul). They were mostly old, 79 per cent of them having 9 or more growth rings.

J. Drinkwater
2nd September 1968