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CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "GOLDSEEKER"

28th April - 15th May, 1969

Narrative

"Goldseeker" left Buckie on 28th April and arrived in Stronsay on 30th April.

A programme of dredging and creeling was carried out in Sanday Sound and in North Sound, but operations in Sanday Sound were severely limited owing to easterly gales. Fog also interrupted work during the cruise.

A standard 4ft. escallop dredge with 12 teeth per bar was used and each dredge haul was of 15 min. duration. Hauls were made on ground that, from the echo sounder trace, appeared suitable.

Two fleets, each consisting of eight Scottish-type creels were shot and hauled once a day.

Results

Dredging: In the limited programme in Sanday Sound only 11 dredge hauls were made. No Pecten maximus were caught. In North Sound a total of 66 Pecten were caught in 26 hauls. The best catches being made in depths of 30 fathoms and over, where up to 21 escallops were taken per haul. This could represent a commercial concentration.

84% of the Pecten were over 7 years old, and their mean length was 129mm.

The gonad stage of the majority was stage 6 (ripe and full), and 5 were at stage 7 (spawned).

Creeling:

Sanday Sound: In 32 creel hauls a total of only 15 Cancer pagurus was caught; of these only 6 were marketable with a mean carapace width of 144mm. The undersized crabs had a mean carapace width of 98mm of the total 4 were females and 11 males.

North Sound: 103 crabs were caught in 64 creel hauls, 55 were marketable and 48 undersized. The mean carapace width of the marketable crabs was 133mm and that of the undersized crabs 100mm.

72 were males and 31 were females.

Thus in neither area were crab catches good, though North Sound might repay further investigation.

Trawling:

Three $\frac{1}{2}$ trawl hauls were made in North Sound to obtain fresh bait for the creels. In one haul approximately 570 haddock were caught, these had a size range of 12-28cm. Those over 25cm were sexed and scaled.

Hydrography and Plankton:

Surface temperatures and oblique plankton hauls (1m 26 mesh net) were taken in each statistical rectangle.

F.G. HOWARD

17th June, 1969