

CRUISE REPORT

FRV "G O L D S E E K E R"

16 June-10 July 1970

Objectives

1. Scallop dredging west of Kintyre and off the Outer Hebrides from Barra to North Uist.
2. Fishing trials for queens in the Firth of Clyde.
3. Searching for young scallops in selected areas in the Firth of Clyde.
4. In conjunction with the above objectives, a limited programme of trawling and plankton sampling.

Narrative

Work started in the Clyde on 16 June and continued until 22 June when "Goldseeker" steamed through the Crinan Canal. Next day the grounds around Gigha were fished, but after this persistent strong westerly winds limited fishing to the more sheltered areas, and prevented working off the Outer Hebrides. Dredging was continued around Jura, Mull and the Firth of Lorne. The weather was unsuitable for trawling, and the plankton sampling had to be abandoned because of damaged gear. "Goldseeker" left for the Caledonian Canal on 8 July, and arrived at Buckie on 10 July.

Results

1. Scallops: 131 hauls were made using a 4 ft scallop dredge with 12 teeth. The grounds fished included Loch Fyne, Gigha, Jura, Colonsay, Sound of Mull, East of Mull, Easdale Bay and Lismore. Scallops were scarce everywhere, the best fishing being north and east of Gigha. The percentages of scallops in the different age-groups from the main areas fished were as follows:-

	1-6 rings	7-9 rings	over 9 rings
Loch Fyne	0	75	25
Gigha	48	13	39
Jura	11	9	80
Mull	17	27	56

Most of the scallops from Jura and Mull were very old, but the high proportion of young specimens from the Gigha grounds is a strong indication of good recruitment there in recent years.

2. Queens: 18 hauls were made using the 8 ft Manx dredge, and 10 hauls using the 8 ft beam trawl. After initial trials off Lady Isle, the Manx dredge was tried off Claonaig. The beam trawl was then used over the same ground in order to compare the catches. The results were:-

	No. of queens per foot width per hour	Mean size of queens mm
Manx Dredge	70.4	63.6
Beam Trawl	281.8	57.4

Large amounts of shell, stones and even large boulders were also taken in the Manx dredge, but the beam trawl catch was much cleaner. The queens showed mostly two and three growth rings.

3. Young scallops: As shown in the table in (1) above, no juvenile scallops were found in Loch Fyne. The wind at the time, however, prevented fishing in the particular positions where concentrations of juveniles had been reported. The young scallops from Gigha belonged mostly to the 4 ring group.

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11 September 1970