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## CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "GOLDSEEKER"

3rd-19th September, 1968.

Narrative

The cruise commenced at Kyle of Lochalsh on 3rd September. "Goldseeker" proceeded north about Scotland prosecuting fishing for lobsters using Parlour and Scottish creels, in depths of 3-10 fathoms. In addition, a programme of trawling (11 hauls), dredging (5 hauls) and plankton sampling (5 hauls, using a 1 metre 26 oblique net) with recording of surface temperature, was completed. The cruise ended at Buckie on 19th September.

ResultsCreeling

132 lobsters were caught in a total of 672 trap hauls. The average catch of marketable sized lobsters was 14.4, together with 26 marketable crabs, per 100 trap hauls. The mean size of these lobsters was 99 mm carapace length. 43 male and 136 female crabs of marketable size were caught, the mean size being 147 mm carapace width. Their condition was good.

The catches of lobsters and marketable sized crabs by Parlour and Scottish creels were:

|          |            |           | Scottish | Parlour |
|----------|------------|-----------|----------|---------|
|          | Undersized | No.       | 12       | 23      |
| Lobsters | Marketable | No.       | 42       | 55      |
|          |            | Mean size | 102 mm   | 97 mm   |
| Crabs    | Marketable | No.       | 88       | 91      |
|          |            | Mean size | 145 mm   | 149 mm  |

Dredging

5 hauls, of 15 minutes' duration each, in Loch Ewe yielded only 8 scallops and 28 queen scallops. These were generally of 6-7 rings and slow grown. The mean length was 116 mm.

Trawling

Of the commercially valuable species of white fish of marketable size taken in the trawl, the commonest were: haddock (average 45 per 1 hour haul); plaice (32); whiting (29) and common dab (14) in that order.

The best catch of Nephrops was obtained in Loch Eriboll where 324 were taken per 1 hour haul, with a high proportion of large individuals.

## Plankton

Coelenterates predominated in all samples, notably Muggiaea atlantica, occurring in extremely high numbers in association with the Doliolid Dolioletta gegenbauri, both of which usually have a more southern distribution. Other coelenterates included Laodicea undulata, Phialidium hemisphaericum, Leukartiara octona and Pleurobrachia pileus, all widely distributed in reasonably large numbers, and Proboscidaactyla stellata from off Loch Eriboll.

The samples were low in crustaceous material, the bulk of which was composed of Calanus helgolandicus.

## Temperature

Surface temperatures varied from 12.68°C to 13.14°C.

## Seals

Seals, numbering 15, were sighted in six areas.

H. J. THOMAS  
7th October, 1968.