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IN CONFIDENCE: Not to be quoted without reference
to the Laboratory

CRUISE REPORT

FRV GOLDSEEKER

6 September - 1 October 1971

Objectives:

1. To determine the catch composition and abundance of lobsters around the north-west and north coast of Scotland.
2. To investigate the crab stocks.
3. To undertake comparative creeling. Scottish creel v Parlour creel, for lobsters and crabs.
4. To take daily surface sea temperatures.

Narrative:

The cruise commenced at Corpach on 7 September when 'Goldseeker' proceeded to the Skye-Inner Sound area. Creeling commenced on the 8th and continued until the 30th. Two days were lost due to bad weather.

Seven fleets, each of 4 Scottish and 4 Parlour creels arranged in specified order, were used throughout the cruise. All baitings were made with salted fish. The ovaries from all mature female lobsters together with egg samples from berried females were preserved for further laboratory examination.

The cruise ended at Fraserburgh on 1 October.

Results:

A total of 139 lobsters and 520 crabs were caught in 782 creel hauls. The catch/100 creels of marketable sized lobsters was 16 and for marketable crabs 35. The lobster catch composition is shown in the following Table as a % age of total number in 10mm carapace length groups.

No.		Carapace length groups						
		60/69	70/79	80/89	90/99	100/109	110/119	120/129
Males	73	1.4	17.8	23.3	32.9	16.4	5.5	2.7
Females	66	3.0	18.2	42.4	19.7	6.1	9.1	1.5
All classes								
<u>Berried females</u>	11	-	-	1.5	6.0	1.5	6.0	1.5
Total females	66							

The mean carapace length of marketable sized lobsters was \bar{x} 93 mm. \bar{s} 91 mm. The mean carapace width for marketable crabs was \bar{x} 134 mm and \bar{s} 148 mm.

The comparison of the catch Scottish creel v Parlour creel is shown as under:

		Number		Mean size	
		Scottish	Parlour	Scottish	Parlour
Lobster	undersized	6	8	-	-
	marketable	45	80	90mm	94mm
Crab	undersized	126	124	-	-
	marketable	147	123	143mm	145mm

Hydrography:

Surface temperatures ranged from 12.2°C - 13.1°C off the north-west and north coasts. In the Sound of Mull off Tobermory the temperature was 13.8°C.

C DAVIDSON
11 October 1971