

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

CRUISE REPORT

FRV GOLDSEEKER

29 November 1971 - 6 January 1972

Objectives

1. To undertake a bottom survey in the coastal waters south of Aberdeen by means of underwater television.
2. To survey by diving the bottom in selected areas and the lobster population of these areas in detail.
3. To investigate the distribution and abundance of shrimps and Nephrops off the east coast of Scotland.
4. To search for 'queens' in the same area.
5. To take daily surface temperature readings.

Narrative

"Goldseeker" worked from Aberdeen during the cruise. Trawling was carried out east of Aberdeen during the first week, following which the underwater survey, started on the previous cruise, was resumed. Persistent bad weather limited operations. The cruise ended on 6 January when "Goldseeker" left Aberdeen for refit at Lossiemouth.

Results

Trawling

Seven half-hour hauls were made using the standard 70 mm Nephrops trawl and fine mesh cover. The grounds fished ranged from 14 miles north-east to 14 miles south east of Aberdeen. Catches varied between 2 and 15 baskets of fish, mostly small whiting and common dab to the north, small haddock and Trisopterus esmarki becoming more plentiful further south. No Nephrops or shrimps were caught.

Underwater Survey

The survey started on the previous cruise was extended southward as far as Muchalls. The underwater television camera showed several spots near Newtonhill having rocky bottom. This was later confirmed by divers, who found that there was a stretch of rocky bottom from the Brown Jewel (just north of Muchalls) to Berrymuir Head (north of Newtonhill). Echinoids, asteroids, sea anemones and Alcyonium were again seen. Just south of Newtonhill there was some new growth of Laminaria, together with remains of older plants with the fronds broken off. In Cammachmore Bay (north of Berrymuir Head) the bottom was sandy, but some Laminaria protruded from it in places. In the Muchalls area the bottom was mostly sand.

At the end of the cruise approximately 15 cwts. of concrete slabs were dropped in 6 fathoms south of Findon Ness, the Newtonhill area being unsuitable for working in the weather conditions prevailing at the time.

J DRINKWATER
25 January 1972