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Charter Cruise Commissioned by the HIDB

MFV *HERCULES*

## REPORT

30 May-10 June and 19 June-1 July 1989

### Personnel

D McKay

### Objective

To survey underexploited bivalve species in Orkney, the Outer Hebrides and the Scottish west coast south of Kyle of Lochalsh.

### Narrative

Marine Laboratory staff joined the vessel at St Margaret's Hope, Orkney on 30 May 1989. 30 May was spent making detailed plans for the survey of the Orkney area. For the period 31 May to 2 June *Hercules* sampled all the likely areas in Scapa Flow. On 3 June *Hercules* left Scapa Flow and headed for Kirkwall. On the way round sampling was carried out in the Wyre and Gairsay area. In the period 4-7 June sampling was carried out around the islands of Stronsay, Shapinsay, Eday and Westray and in Inganess Bay and Deerness. Because of poor weather no sampling was possible around Sanday or on the east side of Stronsay. On the evening of 7 June *Hercules* returned to Scapa Flow so that some sampling in deeper water could be carried out on 8 and 9 June. Marine Laboratory staff returned to Aberdeen on 10 June.

The second part of this survey was begun in Kyle on 19 June. During 19 and 20 June *Hercules* made passage to the Outer Hebrides area. A review of Charts of the area indicated that there was little or no ground likely to be suitable on the east coast of Lewis and Harris and it was decided to concentrate on the Uists and Barra. Survey work in this area was completed on 24 June when the *Hercules* headed for Mallaig. Bad weather on 25 June prevented any work. From 26 to 30 June *Hercules* surveyed likely areas around Morar, Arisaig, in Mull Sound, along the south coast of Mull, and in the Firth of Lorne. Marine Laboratory staff returned to Aberdeen on 1 July while the *Hercules* proceeded to survey the area south of Oban with scientific back up being provided by SFIA.

### Results

A total of 144 hauls were made during the cruise with 83 in the Orkney area, 39 in the Western Isles and 20 between Mallaig and Oban. Concentrations of the target species were widely distributed in the Orkney area, around Barra, in the Arisaig area and in the Firth of Lorne. The

species most commonly caught were *Ensis arcuatus*, *Dosinia exoleta*, *Dosinia lupinus*, *Venerupis rhomboides* and *Venerupis pullastra*. Detailed information on catches etc will be available in a report on the results of the complete survey.

David W McKay

10 August 1989



