

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK, ENGLAND**

1994 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

**REPORT: CHARTERS: MV MANX BEAUTY
MV CANDO**

(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without reference to the author)

STAFF: M R Vince
M W Easey

DURATION: 31 July-6 August (MV MANX BEAUTY)
14-18 August (MV CANDO)

LOCALITY: Liverpool Bay

AIM: To tag 2000-3000 pre-recruit plaice.

NARRATIVE:

Staff travelled to Birkenhead on 31 July. During the following five days, MANX BEAUTY made daily voyages to inshore grounds between New Brighton and Hoylake. Staff returned to Lowestoft on 6 August.

The second part of the programme began on 14 August when staff travelled to Fleetwood. The next two days CANDO worked close inshore off Blackpool, sailing from and docking each day at Fleetwood at around high water. On the 18th staff returned to Lowestoft after waiting one day in the hope of the fresh southerly winds moderating to allow one further day's work.

RESULTS:

During the first charter a total of 1456 plaice were tagged with mini-Petersen discs. The length range of the released fish was between 15 and 29 cm with a mode at 17 cm. In the two days of the second charter a total of 1054 plaice of a similar size to the first batch were tagged and released.

A small sample of plaice otoliths were taken on each charter from fish not tagged but of the same length range. From these it appears that the age composition of the tagged plaice is likely to consist of nearly 60% 1-year-olds with the bulk of the remainder being 2-year-olds.

Catches from the 15-minute hauls were small and consisted mainly of plaice.

The success of both charters was largely attributable to the intimate knowledge of the grounds by the skippers. Staff acknowledge their help and enthusiasm.

M R Vince
24 August 1994

INITIALLED:

MSD

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