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CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. MARA

1st - 26th February 1965

Narrative

"Mara" sailed from Fraserburgh on the 1st February and commenced work in the Clyde on the 5th. Work continued until the evening of the 23rd February. "Mara" then made a passage to Buckie, where she arrived on the 26th.

Only one working day was lost on account of the weather. Dredging for scallops (Pecten maximus) was carried out on the known commercial beds off the Ayrshire coast, round Arran in Kilbrennan Sound and in Loch Fyne. A 6-ft standard scallop dredge was mainly used, though a few hauls were made with a 4-ft standard or a 5-ft Baird dredge. In all 86 dredge-hauls were taken.

Two hauls were taken with a "Nephrops" trawl. Plankton samples were collected at ten stations by standard net and Icelandic high-speed sampler, and sedimentation samples were taken.

Results

The proportion of older scallops in the catches was generally low, and, in most places where comparisons were possible, lower than on the corresponding cruise of 1964. The percentage of scallops with seven or more growth rings, with the corresponding figure for 1964 in brackets, were as follows:-

Bennane Head	44 (-)
Girvan	40 (59)
S.W. Arran	41 (42)
Cock of Arran	14 (32)
Claonaig Bay	18 (53)
Inchmarnock	36 (-)
Inverneil Island	30 (25)
Rudha Dhu	59 (75)

Five- and six-ring scallops were the most abundant year classes in the catches in all areas except Claonaig Bay-Skipness and the Cock of Arran, where three-ring scallops were predominant.

The scallops from the Ayrshire coast (Bennane Head and Girvan) and S.W. Arran were in excellent condition, most having full or almost full gonads, and giving high yields of adductor muscle meat. Those from the Cock of Arran and Loch Fyne were poorer, having less well developed gonads and considerably smaller muscles.

Queens (Chlamys opercularis) were present in most areas, and large catches were taken off the Cock of Arran and Claonaig Bay. 17 baskets (some 20,000 queens) were taken in one 15-minute haul.

JAMES MASON
22nd March, 1965