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reference to the Laboratory.

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CRUISE REPORT

"F.R.V. "MARA"

18th February-4th March, 1964.

Narrative

"Mara" left Fraserburgh at 18.00 hrs. on the 18th February and proceeded via the Caledonian Canal to Loch Linnhe, where she arrived at 14.00 hrs. on the 20th. The hydrographic and biological sampling in Loch Linnhe were carried out in the afternoon of the 20th. During the next twelve days a search was made, using a 6 ft. standard commercial dredge, for commercial concentrations of scallops in the areas around Mull. Persistent gales between south and south-east prevented work on most shores exposed to these winds. "Mara" then made a passage to Aultbea, where this cruise ended at noon on the 4th March.

Results

Catches of scallops in commercial quantities (24 or more per 15-minute haul) were obtained in a number of areas, west of Maiden Island (56 and 44 scallops), in Easdale Bay (46), off Charlotte Bay, Kerrera (39), in Slatrach Bay, Kerrera (38), south of Tobermory Bay (25) and outside Loch Feochan (24). In addition, a number of other areas yielded twelve or more scallops per 15-minute haul and might well on further investigation, prove to contain commercial densities of scallops.

Most of the scallops caught were old, probably owing to lack of exploitation. Almost 70% of the catch had seven or more growth rings and 40% had ten or more. Consequently the condition of the scallops was apparently not as good as in the Clyde.

The scallop grounds around Mull are limited in area by the extent of the deep water with muddy bottom. Where scallops were found the bottom frequently was rough and stony in places, causing slight damage to the dredge. Local knowledge should help to overcome this problem.

James Mason

25th March, 1964.