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reference to the laboratory.

CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "MARA"

13th-24th June, 1960.

Objectives

- 1) To obtain data on the relative efficiency of the Nephrops trawl and the Standard seine, each with cod-ends of various mesh size, on Norway lobsters, together with the corresponding catch of other species.
- 2) To investigate the stock composition of Norway lobsters on the grounds and to gather measurements relating overall by/carapace length/tail width/body weight/tail weight.
- 3) As far as time permits, to examine cod for nematodes and note stomach contents.

Narrative

"Mara" sailed from Aberdeen to the Firth of Forth at 1200 hours on 13th June and started work next morning at 0325 hours. Two days' work gave no worthwhile result and it was therefore decided to change the venue to the Moray Firth. "Mara" called at Aberdeen on the way north to replace gear which had been lost and arrived in Buckie on the evening of the 16th. Next day successful fishing was found in 50 fm water north of Buckie.

A new Nephrops trawl arrived on the 20th and prolific grounds were found in 38 fm of water due north of Lossiemouth. This area was fished until the cruise ended. The last haul came aboard just before 0800 on the 24th. "Mara" then proceeded to Fraserburgh where she docked at 1300 hours.

Results

Fifteen hauls on the grounds off Lossiemouth gave good catches of Norway lobsters. Whilst the catch/haul varied widely, making interpretation difficult, preliminary examination of the overall results confirm that the Nephrops trawl is much more efficient than the seine net in the capture of Norway lobsters, whilst hauls made at dawn and dusk give better catches than those made during daylight.

The comparative fishing data are being worked up in detail. Over 400 Nephrops were measured and weighed to give the comparisons of overall by/carapace length/tail width/body weight/tail weight. Ten jars of mature female Nephrops were preserved and returned to the laboratory for fecundity determinations. A number of cod caught in the Firth of Forth were examined for nematodes, and stomach contents noted.

CHARLES DAVIDSON.
8th July, 1960.