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the Laboratory.

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CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "MARA" - 19th June - 14th July, 1961.

"Mara" left Aberdeen on June 19th and proceeded to the Moray Firth. Work commenced on the 20th in area A14b about five miles north of Lossiemouth. This ground was selected, the depth being suitable for seining with the gear aboard "Mara", and in 1960 good hauls of Nephrops had been taken there. This year, as the catch was poor, it was decided to change grounds to the deep water north of Buckie. Fairly good catches were obtained and this area was fished for the remainder of the cruise.

Fishing in fifty fathoms precluded any real comparison of the seine net - with the gear aboard - and the trawls, so comparative fishing with the prawn and modified trawls using cod-ends of 60 mm and 70 mm was carried out. An analysis of the results is being done in the laboratory and will be presented later.

A sample of female Nephrops was examined for maturity stages, the majority being threes and fours. Females were predominant in the catch, outnumbering males in the ratio 8:5. In August, on the same grounds, "Clupea" found the proportion of females to males to be 1 to 1:03, a slight predominance of males. Very few females were berried, just over 0.001%. Two per cent of the females and an insignificant fraction of the males were soft. The average number of prawns caught per hour trawl on the Buckie deeps ground was 4.06.

The catch of white fish was poor, the most abundant species being witch and small hake. Lemon sole, plaice, haddock, cod and whiting were taken in small numbers. The predominant fish on the grounds was long-rough-dab.

CHARLES DAVIDSON

25th October, 1961.