

1a1

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

1982 CHARTER CRUISE PROGRAMME

REPORT: PORTSMOUTH GILL NETTING DORIES: CRUISE 2

STAFF:

M Pawson
G Pickett

DURATION:

14-23 June

LOCALITY:

Solent

AIMS:

1. To determine gill net mesh selectivity for bass.
2. To investigate the Solent bass fishery.

NARRATIVE:

Each staff member attended a dory using monofilament nylon gill nets for bass on 15 and 16 June, and they worked together on one dory on 17 and 22 June. Fishing on other days was not possible owing to bad weather, and visits were made to several people with interests in the bass fishery.

RESULTS:

In general there was a scarcity of bass in areas fishable by gill nets (following very good catches in previous weeks) and insufficient fish were taken to satisfy aim 1. A total of 122 bass were caught in approximately 30 h fishing time in which most of the Solent east of Lymington was covered. Most of these fish were taken in a $3\frac{1}{4}$ " (82.5 mm) stretched mesh net and had a modal length of 38 cm (majority 36-40 cm), but this might reflect an abundance of 6 year old fish as much as the selectivity of the nets. Large shoals of 20-26 cm bass were, however, observed to pass through these nets.

The main fishing effort on bass in the Solent was found to be with rod and line (using live sandeels as bait) and an estimated 2t (with some fish from 1-3 Kg but mostly around 0.7 Kg) are being taken from the area Poole-Selsey each week. Other methods include trawling (small fish), long lining and gill nets, the latter accounting for big (100-400 Kg/day) catches when conditions are right. Attempts to determine size composition and quantities in these catches were frustrated by the multiplicity of landing areas and outlets, and the lack of records kept by merchants.

M G Pawson
5 July 1982

INITIALLED: DJG

DISTRIBUTION: