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Indexed 4/12
16

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

1987 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: FV SILVER STAR: CRUISE 3
(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF

C N Humphreys
S Warnes

DURATION

14-22 October

LOCATION

North-east Irish Sea

AIMS

1. To carry out a groundfish survey along the North Wales coast.
2. To collect samples of otoliths of commercial species.
3. To obtain accurate gutted weight-date of all plaice and sole selected for otoliths samples.
4. To obtain mesh selection data.
5. To obtain samples of ungutted plaice and whiting for contaminant trend analysis work by A Franklin (Burnham).

NARRATIVE

The staff travelled to Conwy by road on 13 October and commenced the survey on the morning tide of 14 October. Work in Red Wharf Bay, and the 6-12 mile belt off Conwy was completed during the next two days, but gale force winds prevented any work from being carried out on 16 October. A further days work was completed on 17 October in the comparatively sheltered waters of the 0-3 mile belt off Conwy, but no work was possible on 18 October. With moderating winds on 19 October, it was again possible to work in the inshore deep water area off Conwy, and after one further days delay, the final two days work was carried out in Liverpool Bay on 21 October, and 3-6 miles off Conwy on 22 October,

The staff returned to Lowestoft on 23 October, after first completing plaice and sole sampling ashore.

RESULTS

1. All 24 standard groundfish survey hauls were successfully carried out with only minor damage being sustained to the trawl. After 8 hauls, the cod-end and cover were replaced, signs of wear having been observed in the cover.

2. Stratified samples of otoliths were collected from commercial species. Totals were: 516 Plaice, 266 Whiting, 139 Cod and 31 Sole.
3. All plaice and sole otolith sampling was carried out ashore after docking, to provide accurate gutted weight data for use in stock assessments.
4. Using an ICES mesh gauge, 5 rows of mesh from each of the cod-ends used during the survey were measured when wet, the first after Station 8, the second after Station 20.
5. Samples of ungutted plaice and whiting were collected on 22 October from the Constable Bank area, for A Franklin; these were despatched to Burnham from Lowestoft on 27 October after being deep frozen.

The scientific staff would like to express their thanks to Skipper Craven and the crew of SILVER STAR, for the willing co-operation and assistance given in the sorting and handling of the catches throughout the cruise.

C N Humphreys
29 October 1987

INITIALLED: DJG

DISTRIBUTION.

Basic List+
North Western & North Wales Sea Fishery Committee
Skipper G Craven
Mr A Barr
Mr C N Humphreys
Mr S Warnes
Mr J W Horwood
Mr M R Vince
Mr A Franklin
Mr D J Symonds