

Provisional: not to be quoted without reference to the writer.

R.V. TELLINA

Report for Cruise 7/1969

Staff:

C N Humphreys
R N Tucker

Duration:

3-17 September

Aims:

1. To mark rays in the Thames Estuary.
2. To obtain data and otoliths from any haddock caught.

Narrative

TELLINA sailed from Lowestoft on the morning tide of 1030 hours 3 September and proceeded to the S.W. Bawdsey buoy area off Felixstowe. Here two trawl hauls produced moderate catches of ray. The boat then steamed to Felixstowe which was used as a base for the remainder of the cruise.

During the next 3 days (4-6 September) hauls were made at various positions in the North Thames area to establish which of the grounds would produce the highest catches. Generally ray fishing was found to be below expectations, however hauls made in the East Swin vicinity were rather better, and it was decided that future fishing should be concentrated in that area.

On 7, 8 and 9 September, reasonable catches of ray were made there. However, towards the end of this period catches became noticeably smaller, probably due to increasing tides and intensive fishing. On the 10 September, therefore, to give this ground a rest, fishing was carried out in the vicinity of the West Sunk Buoy. Here catches were also reasonably good but strong cross currents made towing on the rather narrow piece of clear ground very difficult: inevitably some damage was done to the trawl.

Strong S.E. Winds made fishing impossible on 11 September, and so TELLINA steamed to Ipswich for improved shelter and refueling.

On 12 September fishing was re-commenced in the East Swin and Sunk areas. Catches on both grounds were again down and straight tows were almost impossible owing to the increasing spring tides. It was therefore decided that the remainder of the cruise should be spent trawling on the more open grounds off Felixstowe where the risk of trawl damage would be considerably reduced.

On 13 September fog prevented any fishing and at approximately 1800 hours the skipper received a telephone call from the Marine Superintendent instructing him to steam to Queensborough for the purpose of towing NUCELLA from there to Burnham. This work was estimated to take at least 2½ to 3 days and it was therefore decided to abandon further trawling. The following morning the

scientific staff left the ship to return to Lowestoft by road.

I would like to express my particular thanks to Mr Ward of Whitstable who furnished us with extremely detailed information concerning the clear fishing grounds in the Thames Estuary. Without this information successful trawling could not have been done in the area.

Results

1. A total of 350 R. clavata and 3 R. montagui were tagged.
2. No haddock were caught on any of the grounds fished.
3. Samples of o-group whiting and R. clavata were brought back for further examination.

C N Humphreys
16.9.69

Seen in draft: WB, AJL

Distribution:-

Basic list plus the following:-
C N Humphreys (2 copies)
R N Tucker