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R.V. TELLINA

Report of Cruise 12/1968

Staff

R. J. Wood
T. J. Hulme

Duration

19 June-9 July

Aims

1. To investigate the distribution and abundance of O-group herring along the English east coast, using beach seine and midwater trawls, between approximately the Farn Islands in the north and Dungeness in the south.
2. To collect samples of sprats for Dr. Johnson.
3. To collect samples of O-group gadoids for Mr. B. Jones.
4. To collect samples of sand-eels for Mr. Macer.
5. To collect samples of O-group herring for Dr. Khalil (Commonwealth Bureau of Helminthology).

Narrative

Staff and crew travelled from Lowestoft by rail and joined the ship at Blyth on 19 June. The following day was spent making a benthos survey off Blyth for Dr. P. Wood (Burnham), in connection with the shellfish poisoning on the northeast coast. TELLINA sailed from Blyth to commence the O-group herring survey at 0630 hours, 21 June and returned to Lowestoft at 0115 hours, 29 June. During the intervening period fishing was carried out at various localities, both inshore with the beach seine and offshore with the midwater sprat trawl, between Embleton Bay and Bacton. TELLINA sailed again at 1025 hours, 1 July and continued the work southwards as far as Dungeness during the next six days. TELLINA returned to Lowestoft at 1210 hours, 6 July and the remainder of the cruise was spent working from there on a daily basis. The cruise was terminated at 1610 hours, 9 July.

Results

1. Only a very small number of benthic animals were obtained from the grab survey carried out off Blyth for Dr. P. Wood. These were passed on to D.I., North Shields on the morning of 22 June.
2. In marked contrast to the previous year, both O-group herring and sprats were distributed over practically the whole of the coastal area covered by this survey. O-group herring were much more abundant, particularly to the north of Lowestoft, and the indications are that the 1967 year-class in the Bank herring stock is very much stronger than the 1966 year-class, while in the Downs stock it is perhaps a little stronger than the 1966 year-class.
3. Sprats were abundant in several localities and particularly good catches were obtained with the midwater trawl in Tees Bay, off Lowestoft, in the Thames Estuary in Prince's Channel and near the N.E. Gunfleet, and off Dungeness. Sprats caught in Tees Bay and further northwards were mainly about 10 cm in length, but further south they were often 2-3 cm smaller. In all areas the majority appeared to belong to the 1966 year-class, which must be a very strong one. The following year-class (the 1967) was however very poorly represented in the catches, and must be an extremely weak one.

4. Numerous samples of sprats were preserved from all areas for Dr. Johnson.
5. A number of samples of sand-eels were preserved for Mr. Macer.
6. Several samples of O-group herring were preserved for Dr. Khalil.
7. Samples of small gadoids were preserved for Mr. B. Jones, and in addition a number of live whiting were brought back to Lowestoft on the last two days of the cruise.

R. J. Wood
16 July 1968

Seen in draft: W.B.

Initialled: A.J.L.

Distribution

Basic list, plus the following:

Mr. Wood)
Mr. Hulme) Scientific staff on cruise