

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK, NR33 0HT, ENGLAND

1988 CHARTER CRUISE PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV VALDEZ: CRUISE 1

(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF:

G Pickett
S Jennings (Swansea University)
M Pawson (Part-time)

DURATION:

25-26 September and 29-30 October 1988

LOCATION:

Carmarthen Bay and adjoining estuaries.

AIMS:

1. To carry out a survey of the distribution and abundance of pre-recruit bass in Carmarthen Bay and adjoining estuaries using a high-headline trawl with cod-end liner and adapted sand-eel trawls.
2. To obtain 1+ group bass for ecological and energy budget studies.
3. To tag bass over 35 cm total length.

NARRATIVE:

All staff travelled to Saundersfoot on 23 September and met the charter vessel for gear loading. No work at sea was possible on 24 September due to gale force winds. In slightly improved conditions 13 stations were worked on 25 September and 11 on 26 September. This accounted for all work required to the west of Pendine Firing Range. As permission to work in or cross the Range was not given it was necessary to postpone the next part of the survey until a suitable weekend (when the Range is not in use). Continuous severe weather delayed further work until 29-30 October when a further 21 stations in and around the 'Three Rivers Area' and Burry Inlet were worked (SJ only). With the exception of one tow, with the small modified sandeel trawl, the high-headline trawl with cod-end liner was used throughout.

RESULTS:

1. Bass were widespread throughout the inshore areas in the survey occurring at 27 out of 45 stations. Densities appeared generally low, a total of 63 being caught. Fortyeight percent of the catch of bass was from the 1984 yearclass (scarce in other regions) and these fish had a length range of 30-36 cm.

2. Only three 1+ group (1987 year class) bass were caught.
3. Due to low catch rates it was not considered worth tagging the larger fish (over 35 cm - 9 fish) caught. Future surveys in this area will take place on consecutive weekends, subject to weather.

G D Pickett
23 November 1988

INITIALLED: D J G

DISTRIBUTION:

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