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Catches in 1971 and their Seasonal Break-down

by

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The total Irish catch of salmon and grilse in 1971 are given in Table 1A. It shows a substantial decrease in salmon when compared with the 1970 figure (CM.1971/M : 2). Up to 1970 there was no separate statistics available for salmon and grilse in the country except on a seasonal break-down (fish taken before 30th May were salmon and thereafter 95% were grilse). There was also a reduction noted in the grilse catch in 1971 but the figure for grilse is still well above the average for the decade.

To illustrate the decline in catch in salmon (taken mostly before 30th May in Irish rivers) four rivers have been chosen where records are available on a seasonal breakdown for a number of years and the decline in salmon which occurred in the mid sixties is in evidence.

The estimated monthly run of fish is given for the River Shannon from 1950 to 1971. From scale reading it has been shown that all fish running up to the end of May are salmon and thereafter grilse. The column "Total Spring fish" gives an indication of the decline in the numbers of salmon from 1966 to 1971.

The catch statistics for the River Bandon from 1961 to 1971 are given in Table 2. This river always had a substantial run of salmon but in the years 1970 and 1971 the number of salmon taken dropped to a mere 8% and 7% respectively.

A similar decrease in the numbers of early run salmon is evident in the case of the River Blackwater (Table 3) where catch figures from 1953 to 1971 are available. Up to 1966 the proportion of salmon to grilse was approximately 1 to 3 but from 1967 onwards there was a substantial reduction in the proportion of salmon in the catch.

In Table 4 monthly statistics for the River Slaney are given. The data presented is rather short term (1963-71) but at the same time illustrates the decrease in Spring fish when the catch figures from 1963 to 1966 are compared with the post 1966 catch figures. The River Slaney differs from both the Bandon and River Blackwater by not having a compensatory increase in grilse.

1A Salmon Grilse Statistics for Ireland 1971 (Provisional figures)

District	Salmon		Grilse		Total	
	No.	Wt. in lb.	No.	Wt. in lb.	No.	Wt. in lb.
Dublin	49	478	1,229	7,429	1,278	7,907
Wexford	1,270	10,799	1,088	7,072	2,358	17,871
Waterford	13,313	127,902	35,599	231,400	48,912	359,302
Lismore	5,850	52,660	33,553	214,193	39,403	266,853
Cork	1,388	11,276	26,391	184,954	27,779	196,230
Kerry	3,409	30,443	44,113	300,736	47,522	331,179
Limerick	5,007	45,063	65,509	453,094	70,516	498,157
Galway	1,442	12,978	11,398	77,361	12,840	90,339
Connemara	NIL		1,728	12,193	1,728	12,193
Ballinacill	200	1,800	3,783	26,238	3,983	28,038
Bangor	770	6,160	14,617	107,006	15,387	113,166
Ballina	2,873	25,857	49,046	345,025	51,919	370,882
Sligo	738	6,650	7,518	49,181	8,256	55,831
Ballyshannon	768	6,912	37,646	251,910	38,414	258,822
Lettorkenny	1,622	14,598	81,516	566,424	83,138	581,022
Dundalk	243	2,474	3,428	26,343	3,671	28,817
Drogheda	939	11,527	5,774	49,523	6,713	61,050
Foyle Fisheries Commission 50% only	1,690	17,330	40,539	304,921	42,229	322,251
TOTAL	41,571	384,907	464,467	3,215,003	506,038	3,599,910

Salmon (2 or over sea winter fish)	=	175 metric tons
Grilse (1 + sea winter fish)	=	1,460 " "
Total	=	1,635 " "

Table 1. Estimated runs of fish in the Shannon based on the returns to Thomond Weir up to July 19.

Year	Jan/ Feb.	March	April	May	Total Spring Fish	June	July	Total Summer Fish	Combined Total
1950	245	763	1,760	485	3,253	7,724	3,457	11,181	14,434
1951	153	800	1,740	1,768	4,461	6,242	4,031	10,273	14,734
1952	223	958	1,287	760	3,228	6,004	1,310	7,314	10,542
1953	483	526	659	1,661	3,329	9,027	5,185	14,212	17,541
1954	139	730	1,412	1,272	3,553	5,253	5,187	10,440	13,993
1955	101	586	1,419	1,343	3,249	2,934	2,797	5,731	8,980
1956	194	863	1,037	1,437	3,531	4,989	4,479	9,465	12,999
1957	62	552	787	1,352	2,753	6,600	3,774	10,374	13,127
1958	70	572	924	785	2,351	4,943	4,687	9,630	11,981
1959	361	667	1,034	1,011	3,073	3,264	5,170	8,434	11,507
1960	81	283	356	653	1,373	3,424	3,169	6,593	7,466
1961	54	252	247	333	886	2,850	1,358	4,208	5,094
1962	206	288	427	1,180	2,046	7,301	8,975	16,276	18,322
1963	80	427	849	805	2,161	8,701	6,100	14,801	16,962
1964	168	390	772	1,306	2,631	4,339	5,872	10,211	12,842
1965	77	544	964	984	2,569	7,414	8,807	16,221	18,790
1966	26	135	81	532	775	3,298	5,821	9,119	9,894
1967	92	45	381	735	1,253	9,392	6,209	15,601	16,854
1968	86	139	258	732	1,215	10,108	5,288	15,396	16,611
1969	42	184	489	1,144	1,859	13,493	4,789	18,282	20,141
1970	13	54	82	430	579	8,603	3,377	11,980	12,559
1971	15	56	163	559	793	8,687	3,744	12,431	13,224

Table 2 River Bandon monthly catch figures 1961-1971.

Year	Month									
	Feb.	March	April	May	Total Spring	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Combined Total
1961	58	382	435	356	1,231	506	669	299	-	2,699
1962	21	359	364	427	1,071	1,198	3,122	839	92	6,322
1963	71	1,435	1,337	968	2,843	1,173	2,967	964	71	8,016
1964	283	1,951	1,108	1,073	4,415	1,517	3,303	1,273	41	10,454
1965	38	801	993	1,208	1,832	1,528	1,881	514	47	5,802
1966	57	614	788	945	2,404	1,251	2,071	687	73	6,486
1967	51	307	435	1,059	1,852	1,221	3,251	697	71	7,092
1968	22	194	220	980	3,852	2,436	3,735	2,100	62	9,745
1969	55	349	473	865	1,742	1,814	5,008	2,847	26	11,437
1970	63	259	244	276	842	2,409	4,479	1,771	64	9,565
1971	54	177	204	226	661	2,445	4,060	1,673	81	8,911

Table 3 River Blackwater monthly catch figure 1953-71

Year	February	March	April	May	Total Spring Fish	June	July	Total Summer Fish	Combined Total
1953	1,818	1,253	1,841	2,369	7,281	5,265	10,050	15,315	22,596
1954	3,532	6,279	6,253	3,388	20,452	5,004	6,239	11,243	31,695
1955	2,118	2,667	3,534	4,113	12,432	2,993	2,741	5,734	18,166
1956	1,582	1,828	1,874	2,546	7,830	2,955	5,282	8,237	16,067
1957	2,258	1,565	1,826	2,048	7,697	4,242	6,785	11,027	18,724
1958	1,280	1,389	2,168	2,123	6,960	3,812	10,547	14,359	21,319
1959	2,038	3,150	2,672	2,139	9,999	3,339	9,958	13,297	23,296
1960	1,645	1,445	1,779	2,039	6,908	3,403	5,429	8,832	15,740
1961	753	1,261	896	1,191	4,101	3,321	5,764	9,085	13,186
1962	904	1,028	929	1,915	4,776	10,478	21,659	32,137	36,913
1963	1,913	3,512	3,365	4,040	12,830	7,912	20,008	27,920	40,750
1964	8,823	1,835	2,346	4,619	11,623	8,136	20,927	29,063	40,680
1965	1,431	3,248	2,714	3,955	11,348	8,426	15,761	24,187	35,535
1966	1,567	2,808	1,857	3,462	9,694	6,608	13,781	20,389	30,083
1967	631	1,002	1,112	2,685	5,430	8,274	16,796	25,070	30,500
1968	481	357	460	1,417	2,715	6,367	19,351	25,718	28,433
1969	622	749	1,343	2,896	5,610	13,162	20,214	33,376	38,986
1970	434	882	766	1,813	3,895	15,246	24,113	39,359	43,254
1971	512	467	748	2,381	3,908	11,069	20,859	31,928	35,836

Table 4 River Slaney monthly catch figure 1963-1971

Year	April	May	Total Spring	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Total Summer	Combined Total
1963	2,400	1,380	3,780	722	462	556	235	1,975	5,755
1964	1,808	1,269	3,077	791	664	404	120	1,979	5,056
1965	1,703	1,414	3,117	706	620	256	66	1,648	4,765
1966	1,836	1,506	3,342	583	990	336	90	1,999	4,741
1967	1,060	892	1,952	690	63	300	129	1,182	3,694
1968	515	478	993	289	222	176	42	729	1,718
1969	587	385	972	428	882	533	106	1,949	2,921
1970	918	756	1,674	861	751	201	93	1,906	3,580
1971	558	588	1,146	339	268	274	83	964	2,010