

Serial No. 2805
(B-g.14)ICNAF Res.Doc. 72/78
(also ICES/ICNAF Salmon
Doc. 72/14)

ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 1972

Grilse Salmon Relationship in two Irish Rivers

by

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Details of the fluctuations in the catches etc. in the Rivers Foyle and Shannon up to and including 1969 have been given in Went and Twomey (1971) and additional information has been added for 1970 and 1971 in the tables below.

Both in the River Foyle and the River Shannon samples of scales have been taken for age determination for a considerable period of time. Scale sampling has been continuous in the River Shannon since 1944 and in the River Foyle intermittently since 1954. The results have been processed to obtain a division into the four dominant age groups found in Irish rivers. In the River Shannon there are also records of 3 sea winter fish but since the '60s the numbers in the total catch have been very small.

It can be seen from Table 1 that the River Foyle is predominantly a grilse river. However, there were more of the older age groups present in the catches in the 1950s than in the 1960s. The data presented for the River Shannon cover the period from 1944 to 1971 (Table 2), Grilse were the dominant age group throughout. The 2 and 2+ sea winter fish were fairly constant up to 1959. The years 1960 and 1961 were poor both for salmon and grilse. There was an increase in the runs of salmon from 1962 to 1965 but from 1966 onwards a decline set in.

REFERENCE:

Went, A.B.J. Twomey E. (1971) Fluctuations in the Characteristics in Irish Salmon. Irish Fish Invest. Series A. No.7

Table 1. Fluctuations in the catches in the River Foyle of the different age groups 1954/8, 1962/3 and 1967/71, (numbers to the nearest 1,000).

Year	Age Groups (sea winters)				
	1 +	2	2+	With Sns	Total
1954	618	37	36	60	751
1955	413	22	52	31	518
1956	515	37	54	27	633
1957	849	14	86	45	994
1958	824	38	42	32	936
1962x	1,155	1	9	53	1,218
1963m	1,197	3	15	24	1,239
1967	1,186	22	55	14	1,277
1968	1,134	21	53	13	1,221
1969	995	7	61	6	1,069
1970	1,057	20	56	3	1,136
1971	917	2	20	4	943

x Catches only from June to August included, therefore, the 2 and 2+ age groups would be greatly understated compared with conditions in the river.

m The figures given in Went, 1964, have been revised and the final figures for this year have been used instead of the provisional figure as in the previous report.

Table 2. Number of fish in the different age groups (to the nearest 10) for each year. (Based on Went, 1964a Twomey, 1957 and 1967, and Went and Twomey, 1971.

AGE GROUPS (SEA WINTERS)

Year	1+	2	2+	3	With Sms	Total ⁺
1944	8,860	1,860	550	250	410	11,940
1945	4,350	1,280	460	140	380	6,610
1946	8,500	1,150	590	180	310	10,740
1947	6,470	1,150	180	130	420	8,390
1948	7,060	2,290	160	140	230	9,880
1949	9,260	3,200	330	230	230	13,280
1950	11,020	2,700	610	160	360	14,880
1951	10,190	2,430	790	260	450	14,130
1952	7,030	2,500	460	240	310	10,540
1953	13,910	1,900	820	70	730	17,430
1954	8,600	3,190	1,860	30	300	13,990
1955	5,280	1,670	1,120	360	460	8,980
1956	9,390	2,070	980	160	390	12,990
1957	9,920	1,750	1,300	-	160	13,130
1958	9,260	1,800	570	110	240	11,980
1959	7,230	2,380	1,110	100	700	11,520
1960	6,440	870	190	100	320	7,920
1961	4,230	690	110	10	50	5,090
1962	14,660	1,320	1,530	-	810	18,320
1963	14,320	1,630	410	20	530	16,960
1964	7,830	1,750	1,590	-	1,660	12,830
1965	12,150	1,250	1,850	-	970	16,220
1966	8,850	440	360	-	240	9,890
1967	15,520	710	450	-	170	16,850
1968	15,340	850	350	50	10	16,650
1969	18,180	1,020	660	20	140	20,020
1970	11,700	340	480	40	-	12,560
1971	12,470	620	130	-	-	13,220