

SOME MARINE RECORDS FROM NOVA SCOTIAN
FISHING WATERS.*

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ABSTRACT.

Mention is made of the occurrence of the following six rather rare fishes,—*Cetorhinus maximus*, *Coregonus clupeaformis*, *Notacanthus chemnitzii* (*nasus*), *Decapterus macarellus*, *Dactylopterus volitans*, *Anarhichas latifrons*. The possible maximum size records for *Hippoglossoides platessoides* and *Sebastes marinus* are reported and the capture of a beaked whale, *Mesoplodon densirostris*, is recorded, as well as the distribution of the salp *Salpa* (*Jasis*) *zonaria* during 1939.

INTRODUCTION.

The following notes on the occurrence of these forms are presented with a view to having them recorded permanently for the use of naturalists in the future. Each record is put forward because some feature it possesses is deemed worthwhile.

Appreciation is herewith extended to Professor J. R. Dymond, Mr. J. T. Nichols and Mr. Wm. C. Schroeder for their assistance on many occasions.

FISHES.

Cetorhinus maximus (Gunnar) 1765. Basking Shark.

Until recently (McKenzie, 1939)¹ there were no positive records of the capture of this species in Nova Scotian waters. Two further records are herewith submitted.

On July 4, 1939, a large specimen was taken in the fish trap at Sandford, Yarmouth. This fish, a male, measured 7.7 m. (25½ feet) in length and according to Schultz² should have weighed 3,266 kgm. (7,200 lb.).

About August 16, 1939, E. W. Maynard of Wilmington, Delaware, caught the other specimen off Digby, N. S. It measured 3.7 m. (12 feet) in length and actually weighed 353.8 kgm. (780 lb.) when bled. It is interesting to note that ac-

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¹ McKenzie—*Proc. N. S. Inst. Sci.*, 20, Pt. I, 13-20, 1938-39 (1939).

ording to Schultz's² graph this fish should have weighed 408.2 kgm. (900 lb.). The bleeding of this specimen may account to some extent for the actual weight being less than the calculated weight.

Coregonus clupeaformis (Mitchill) 1818. Whitefish.

In 1927 Piers³ reported the occurrence of this species in the Petite Riviere at Millisigate Lake, Lunenburg County, which had probably been artificially introduced.

In the early summer of 1938, a small male specimen 24 cm. (9½ inches) in length was taken, along with several others, below a mill dam on one of the headwater tributaries of the west branch of the Lahave River, Lunenburg county, Nova Scotia. This stream is located several miles southwest of Hemford and about fifteen miles north of the lake mentioned by Piers. There is no apparent connection between these two river systems, though they are close together.

This specimen is in Anderson's museum at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

Notacanthus chemnitzii (nasmus) Bloch 1787. Spiny Eel.

This species or a closely related one was first recorded for our waters (south of Sable Island, February 10, 1935) by Bigelow and Schroeder⁴.

However, the two present specimens, 91 cm. (36½ inches) and 78 cm. (31¼ inches) in length respectively were taken, along with several others not saved, by the steam trawler *Administrator de Bournat*, (Capt. Chas. LeMesle), March 10, 1940, in 56-125 fathoms along the southern edge of the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, approximately Lat. 44° 30' N., Long. 53° 30' W.

The only other capture of this species in the Grand Banks area was recorded by Goode and Bean, 1895⁵.

Hippoglossoides platessoides (Fabricius) 1780. Canadian Plaice.

When fishing May 6, 1939, off the northwest lighthouse of

² Schultz—*Jour. Mammology*, vol. 19, no. 4, November 14, 480-487, (1938).

³ Piers—*Proc. Trans. N. S. Inst. Sci.*, 16, 92-95, 1927.

⁴ Bigelow and Schroeder—*Proc. Boston Soc. of Nat. Hist.*, vol. 41, no. 2, 13-18, (June, 1935).

⁵ Goode and Bean—*Oceanic Ichthyology, Smithsonian Institution U. S. Nat. Mus., Spec. Bull. no. 2, 553 pp., 1895.*

Sable Island (Lat. 44° 8' N., Long. 60° 10' W.) in 30-40 fathoms, the schooner *K. V. Colin* captured an exceptionally large specimen of this species. It measured 81.2 cm. (32½ inches) in length and weighed 6.3 kgm. (14 lb.) gutted. The largest specimen known previously, 70.6 cm. (28½ inches) taken on Western bank in September, 1934, was recorded by Vladykov and McKenzie⁶.

Decapterus macarellus (Cuvier and Valenciennes) 1883. Mackerel Scad.

The present specimen, 6.9 cm. long, was seined by Dr. A. H. Leim at Lawlor's island, Halifax Harbour, on October 3, 1928. Previously, the only other specimens of this species captured in our waters and recorded (Cornish⁷) were taken in trap-nets in Chedabucto bay near Canso.

Sebastes marinus (Linnaeus) 1758. Rosefish.

An exceptionally large specimen of this species was taken by the steam trawler *Administrator de Bournat* (Capt. Chas. LeMesle) about January 25, 1940, along the southern edge of the Grand Banks of Newfoundland in the vicinity of the Whale Deep. This specimen was 68.7 cm. (27½ inches) long and when landed gutted weighed 3.5 kgm. (7½ lb.). The usual maximum size is considered to be about 61 cm. (24 inches).

Dactylopterus volitans (Linnaeus) 1758. Flying Gurnard.

A small (5.5 cm. approximately) specimen of this species was found in September, 1939, by Stanley McKinley, Wedge Island, Sonora, N. S. (a short distance west of Country Harbour, N. S.) in a dry, hardened condition among the eel-grass and kelp that had washed ashore the previous night. He suspected it had been carried this far north dead on the deck of some steamer from southern waters.

The specimen in reaching its present destination went first to the *Family Herald and Weekly Star*, Montreal, then to Dr. A. Gibson, Dominion Entomologist, Ottawa, and thence to Dr. A. H. Leim, St. Andrews, N. B., who kindly forwarded it to the author.

⁶ Vladykov and McKenzie—*Proc. N. S. Inst. Sci.*, 19, Pt. 1, 17-113. 1934-35 (1935).

This species was included by several early authors in their lists of Maine and New Brunswick fishes, but full credence cannot be given their records as no locality was recorded.

Mr. McKinley reports that "about seven years ago he (his father) saw one in Bayport, Guysboro Co., N. S. It was about 8 inches long. Some boys had found it on the shore — — — —."

Because of the indefiniteness of the above reports, this species should not, as yet, be included among the Maritime fishes of Canada.

Anarhichas latifrons Steenstrup and Hallgrimsson 1842.
Broad-headed Catfish.

Up to the present, there have been but three records of the capture of this species in our waters⁴⁷⁻⁸. A number of them have come to hand, however, more recently.

On October 16, 1937, the schooner *Cachelot III* caught a specimen of this species, 128 cm. (51½ inches) long on the "eastern shoals" of Banquereau.

The *Cachelot III* again caught two more specimens on November 25, 1937, at Lat. 45° 00' N., Long. 59° 20' W. These specimens were 135 cm. (54 inches) and 141 cm. (56½ inches) in length and 18 kgm. (40 lb.) and 19.3 kgm. (43 lb.) in weight.

On December 1, 1937, the schooner *Leah Beryl*, fishing Lat. 44° 55' N., Long. 57° 30' W. in 35-70 fathoms caught a specimen 121 cm. (48½ inches) long and 16.4 kgm. (36.5 lb.).

On December 2, 1937, the schooner *I. E. Spindler* fishing Lat. 44° 58' N., Long. 57° 32' W. caught two more specimens, 110 cm. (44 inches) and 122 cm. (48¾ inches) in length.

On March 10, 1940, the steam trawler *Administrator de Bournat* (Capt. Chas. LeMesle) when fishing off the Whale Deep region of the Grand Banks of Newfoundland (Lat. 44° 30' N., Long. 53° 30' W.) captured a specimen of this species measuring 112 cm. (44¾ inches) in length. While actual records of the capture of this species in the Newfoundland area

⁷ Cornish—*Contr. Can. Biol.*, 1902-05, 81-90 (1907).

⁸ Bean—*Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus.*, 3, 75-116 (1881).

are scarce (Goode and Bean⁵ record one and Thompson^{9a,b,c} records none) still Canadian fishermen who operate in this region report that this species is quite common in the deeper water.

WHALE.

Mesoplodon densirostris (Blainville). Beaked Whale.

This Cetacean, or sea-going mammal, was killed February 4, 1940, at Peggy's Cove, N. S., under the wharf of Richard Crooks. It measured 43.4 m. (14 $\frac{1}{4}$ feet) in length and according to Schultz² it should have weighed about 635 kgm. (1,400 lb.).

According to the many persons, both in the St. Margaret Bay region of Nova Scotia and in Halifax, who viewed this specimen, such a whale has never before been captured in these waters.

On request, this specimen was sent to the Museum of Natural History, New York. Mr. H. C. Raven, a specialist there in this group, specifically identified it on arrival. Specific identification had not been made previously, through fear of damaging it as a scientific specimen, for diagnostic characters are in the mouth which was frozen tightly shut.

SALPS.

Salpa (Jasis) zonaria (Pallas 1774).

Unlike 1938, when this form of life was so extraordinarily abundant along the Nova Scotian coast (McKenzie¹), 1939 was practically a barren year in this respect.

Early in June, a fisherman found some salps attached to the hooks on his line-trawl as he fished in the mouth of Halifax Harbour. The water temperature ranged from about 0° C. at the bottom in 35 m. to 8° C. at the surface.

During the autumn of 1939, no salps were seen in Halifax Harbour or St. Margaret Bay. The many fishermen questioned also reported that they too had not seen any this year in contrast to their great abundance in 1938.

⁹ Thompson—(a) *Rept. Nfld. Fish. Res. Comm.*, vol. 1, no. 4, 107-110, 1931 (1932).
 (b) *Rept. Nfld. Fish. Res. Comm.*, vol. 2, no. 1, 125-127, 1932 (1933).
 (c) *Rept. Nfld. Fish. Res. Comm.*, vol. 2, no. 2, 115-117, 1933 (1934).