

International Council for the  
Exploration of the Sea

C.M. 1980/K : 33  
Shellfish Committee  
Ref. Biological Oceanography  
Committee

Population dynamics of brown shrimp (*Crangon crangon*)

in the Belgian coastal waters\*

2. Predation mortality

F. Redant

Fisheries Research Station, Ostend, Belgium

Abstract.

The fish species, present in the Belgian coastal waters, are classified according to their abundance and according to their food preference for postlarval shrimp (*Crangon crangon*).

The presumed importance of the various fish species as predators of shrimp is deduced from this classification. The abundance and biomass of the most important predators are estimated. The results of quantitative stomach analyses on these species lead to the calculation of their daily shrimp rations. The combination of the data on abundance and biomass of the predators with the data on their daily food uptake results into estimates of the yearly predation mortality of postlarval shrimp.

Résumé.

Les espèces de poissons, présentes dans les eaux côtières belges, sont classées selon leur abondance et selon leur préférence alimentaire pour les crevettes postlarvaires (*Crangon crangon*).

L'importance présumée des différentes espèces de poissons comme prédateurs de crevettes est déduite de cette classification. L'abondance et la biomasse des plus importants prédateurs sont estimées. Les résultats d'analyses quantitatives sur la nourriture de ces espèces mène à la calculation de leurs rations journalières en crevettes. La combinaison des données sur l'abondance et la biomasse des poissons prédateurs avec les données sur leur ingestion journalière aboutit à une estimation de la mortalité annuelle de crevettes postlarvaires due à la prédation.

---

\* This study was performed in cooperation with the Laboratory for Ecology and Systematics, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium.

### 1. Introduction.

Predation is considered as one of the most important causes of mortality among brown shrimp (Crangon crangon) (TIEWS, 1965, 1975 ; SCHUMACHER and TIEWS, 1976 and others). This contribution deals with predation-mortality of postlarval shrimp in the Belgian coastal waters, during the period 07.1973-06.1976 ; a study which was performed in the context of investigations on the population-dynamics of shrimp (see also C.M. 1980/K : 32). The aim of this study was to estimate the yearly predation-mortality of Crangon caused by demersal fishes.

### 2. Evaluation of shrimp predators.

During the period 07.1973-06.1976 about 60 different fish species were observed within the Belgian coastal area (up to 10 miles offshore)(table 1). These species were grouped according to their abundance on the one hand and according to their food preference for postlarval Crangon on the other hand. This classification permitted a reliable evaluation of the importance of each species as a predator of shrimp. The predators which are abundant enough and which prey regularly enough on shrimp to cause a substantial mortality were subject to a detailed quantitative study on predation.

The average densities observed during the spring and autumn sampling surveys on 30 stations along the entire coast, were used as an index for the abundance of each fish species. Corrections for the sampling efficiency of the gear were not introduced at this stage of the investigations. Pomatoschistus species (6934 individuals/ $10^5 \text{ m}^2$  on average) appeared to be the most abundant fish species, followed by Limanda limanda ( $415/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), Sprattus sprattus ( $346/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), Agonus cataphractus ( $334/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), Solea solea ( $288/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), Trisopterus luscus ( $268/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), Callionymus lyra ( $194/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ) and Odontogadus merlangus ( $128/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ). The average densities of the other species were below 100 individuals/ $10^5 \text{ m}^2$ . The fishes were classified into five abundance categories, namely rare (average density below  $1/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), rather rare ( $1-10/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), rather abundant ( $10-100/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ), abundant ( $100-1000/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ ) and very abundant (more than  $1000/10^5 \text{ m}^2$ )(table 1).

The food preference of the fishes for postlarval shrimp was deduced from bibliographic data (a complete list of references can be found in REDANT, 1978). The fish species were grouped into four semi-quantitative predation categories, namely not or only occasionally feeding on shrimp, sometimes feeding on shrimp, frequently feeding on shrimp and predominantly feeding on shrimp (table 1). During the evaluation of the bibliographic data several factors were taken into consideration : the origin, size-range and numbers of fishes analysed and the type of analyses (qualitative, semi-quantitative or quantitative data on food composition). For some, especially rare species no data on the food composition could be found.

The above mentioned classifications result into a grouping of the fish species in an abundance/food-preference diagram (table 1). Species close to the left-hand top corner of the diagram are negligible as predators of postlarval shrimp because (1) they are rare or rather rare and (2) they do not or only sporadically feed on shrimp. Species close to the right-hand bottom corner of the diagram can be expected to be important shrimp predators because (1) they are abundant or very abundant and (2) they feed frequently or predominantly on shrimp. It is obvious that the quantitative analysis of predation was started with the latter, i.e. Pomatoschistus species, Odontogadus merlangus, Trisopterus luscus, Agonus cataphractus, Trigla species, Ciliata mustela, Liparis liparis and Gadus morhua. The food composition of the three gurnards Trigla lucerna, T. gurnardus and T. cuculus show such a high degree of resemblance that they were considered as one species (T. species).

### 3. Abundance and biomass of predators.

Predation-mortality of postlarval shrimp, caused by any predator, can be computed from (1) the density (abundance or biomass) of the predator and (2) the amount of shrimp eaten by the predator per unit of time (see sections 4 and 5).

### 3.1. Sampling methods.

The estimates of abundance and biomass of the shrimp predators are based on the results of monthly and half-yearly sampling surveys in the coastal waters. Detailed information on the sampling methods can be found in C.M. 1980/K : 32. The laboratory analyses of the fish samples included measurements of individual length and countings and weighings of the total numbers of fishes per species.

### 3.2. Estimates of abundance and biomass.

The calculations of the yearly average abundance and biomass of each shrimp predator were performed in analogy to these for brown shrimp. A description of those methods is also given in C.M. 1980/K : 32.

During the calculations gross correction factors for the efficiency of the sampling gear were introduced. Scientific data on the catchability and selectivity of shrimp trawls for other organisms than shrimp are rather scarce (BOHL, 1963 ; DE GROOT, 1973 ; VAN DEN BROUCKE, 1975 ; JOHANNESSEN, 1976). For some, especially commercial fish species useful information could be gathered from the literature. For most, especially non-commercial species, the correction factors were established in analogy to the correction factors cited in the literature for commercial or non-commercial fishes. These extrapolations were made, taking into account the similarities or differences in size, physiology and behaviour between the respective fish species.

Pomatoschistus is the most abundant shrimp predator in the coastal area, followed by Odontogadus, Agonus, Trisopterus, Trigla, Liparis, Gadus and Ciliata (table 2). Odontogadus has the greatest biomass, followed by Trisopterus, Pomatoschistus, Gadus, Trigla, Agonus, Liparis and Ciliata (table 2).

Their seasonal occurrence in the Belgian coastal waters can be summarized as follows. Gadus, Pomatoschistus, Agonus and Liparis are most abundant or exclusively present during autumn and winter. Odontogadus is observed

year-round but its biomass tends to a maximum during autumn and winter. Trigla occurs almost exclusively during summer. The same applies to some extent to Trisopterus but this species is still locally abundant during autumn. Ciliata is observed year-round in small numbers. From this it clearly appears that the predation on postlarval shrimp is heaviest in the second half-year, i.e. during the period of highest density of postlarval shrimp.

### 4. Stomach analyses.

Although the food of many fish species is described extensively in the literature, only few publications deal with the quantitative composition of fish food. Most investigations are only qualitative or semi-quantitative (e.g. giving incidence frequencies of preys only). For this reason quantitative stomach analyses were performed on the shrimp predators, except on Pomatoschistus, in order to quantify the importance of postlarval shrimp in their food. The literature on Pomatoschistus (KUHL, 1961, 1964) contained enough information on its food composition and prey size to enable us to make a reliable estimation of the predation-mortality caused by this species.

#### 4.1. Methods.

The fishes used for the stomach analyses were all collected during daytime. Sampling was spread over the year as representatively as possible, taking into account the seasonal variations in abundance and in length composition of the fish populations. In total about 6000 specimens were examined (table 3).

The fishes were analysed the day they were captured. When this was impossible they were temporarily preserved in a deep freezer (- 25 °C). Each fish was measured and weighed. Afterwards its stomach content was isolated, weighed and preserved in a 5 % formaline solution. Fishes with regurgitated, partly digested food in their oral cavity or oesophagus were rejected. Fishes with empty stomachs, but without indications of regurgitation,

however were not omitted. In analogy with many authors these empty stomachs were considered as a normal feature of the seasonal or daily feeding periodicity of the fishes (RAE, 1956, 1967; WAGNER, 1959; DE GROOT, 1964; ARNTZ, 1971, 1974; THYSSEN et al. 1974 and others). In all species the percentage of fishes with empty stomachs was below 5 %.

After at least two weeks the preserved stomach contents were analysed on shrimp. Meanwhile the Caridea got their typical pink colour, which made them - even the smallest debris - easily recognizable among the other food particles. The Caridea were isolated, determined, counted and weighed. The intact or broken Crangon crangon were measured: either total length ( $L_{cc}$ ), either carapax-length (CL) or - width (CW). In the latter case the total length was calculated using the formulas:

$$L_{cc} = 6.267 CW + 4.372$$

$$(r = 0.998)$$

$$(\text{number of observations } n = 1200)$$

$$\text{and } L_{cc} = 4.394 CL + 2.755$$

$$(r = 0.998)$$

#### 4.2. Results.

For each length class and for each fish species the following parameters were computed from the stomach analyses: incidence frequency of Caridea and of Crangon crangon in the stomachs ( $IF_c$  and  $IF_{cc}$ ), mean number of Caridea and of Crangon crangon per stomach ( $N_c$  and  $N_{cc}$ ), mean body weight of fishes ( $W_f$ ), mean weight of stomach content ( $W_s$ ), mean weight of Caridea and of Crangon crangon per stomach ( $W_c$  and  $W_{cc}$ ) and also the relations between these parameters (e.g.  $W_c/W_s$ ,  $W_{cc}/W_s$ ,  $W_{cc}/W_c$ , ...). Only the most important findings are discussed in this report (table 3).

##### 4.2.1. Incidence frequency and mean number of shrimps per stomach.

Caridea were very frequently observed in the stomachs of Trigla, Gadus and Liparis. Slightly more than 50 % of the stomachs of Trisopterus, Ciliata

and Odontogadus contained Caridea. Agonus showed the lowest incidence frequency of Caridea (table 3). The incidence frequencies of Crangon crangon were, according to the fish species, 10 to 20 % lower than those of Caridea (table 3).

The mean number of Caridea and of Crangon crangon per stomach were highest in Trigla, followed by Gadus, Liparis, Ciliata, Trisopterus, Odontogadus and Agonus. In most cases nearly all the Caridea in the stomachs were Crangon crangon. Other shrimp species only rarely occurred in the food of fishes. Exception however must be made for Hippolyte varians which was observed regularly, especially in Agonus (incidence frequency 9.1 %, mean number per stomach 0.34) and in Liparis (incidence frequency 12.1 %, mean number per stomach 0.23).

##### 4.2.2. Weight of shrimps in the stomachs.

The relative contribution of Caridea and of Crangon crangon to the stomach contents, respectively  $W_c/W_s \cdot 100\%$  and  $W_{cc}/W_s \cdot 100\%$ , was highest in Trigla (72.9 and 72.4 %), followed by Liparis (56.1 and 54.3 %), Gadus (41.6 and 41.3 %), Trisopterus (41.6 and 40.1 %), Ciliata (28.8 and 28.4 %), Odontogadus (27.3 and 27.0 %) and Agonus (22.8 and 15.5 %). In all species, except Agonus, postlarval brown shrimp represents at least 25 % of the food of the fishes (table 3).

##### 4.2.3. Length distribution of shrimps in the stomachs.

The percentage of brown shrimps whose total length could be measured or calculated (from carapax measurements) varied between 30 and 45 %, according to the predator species. The majority of these shrimps was smaller than 45 mm. Larger shrimps were observed almost exclusively in larger specimens of Odontogadus, Trisopterus, Gadus and Trigla (figure 1).

The maximum length of the shrimps in the stomachs increases in all fish species with increasing body size of the fishes. In the largest predators (Odontogadus, Trisopterus, Gadus and Trigla) the relation between maximum size of shrimp eaten and length of fish reaches an optimum, corresponding

to the maximum shrimp size which still abundantly occurs in the population. In the smaller predators such an optimum was not observed (figure 2). On the other hand even the stomachs of the largest fishes (e.g. Odontogadus and Gadus up to 27 cm and Trisopterus up to 24 cm) still contained shrimps as small as 18 mm. These observations show that, although larger fishes also feed on adult shrimp, predation mainly will affect the stock of small, juvenile shrimp.

#### 5. Daily shrimp ration of fishes.

The quantities of postlarval Crangon eaten daily by its predators were expressed in numbers of shrimps and in weight units of shrimp. The computations of the daily rations were based on (1) the results of the stomach analyses and (2) bibliographic data on digestion time and daily food uptake of fishes.

##### 5.1. Daily ration in numbers.

The numbers of Crangon consumed daily by its predators ( $C_{cc}$ ) were calculated from the mean number of shrimps per stomach ( $N_{cc}$ ) and from the average digestion time of shrimps (D) :

$$C_{cc} = N_{cc}/D$$

Digestion or gastric evacuation in fishes depends upon the fish species, fish size, size of the meal, biochemical composition of the meal, temperature and experimental conditions (WAGNER, 1959 ; BREGNBALLE, 1961 ; KIONKA and WINDELL, 1962 ; MOLNAR and TOLG, 1962 ; PANDIAN, 1967a, b ; KIRAYA, 1969 ; WINDELL et al., 1969 ; TYLER, 1970 ; KIONKA and WINDELL, 1972 ; SWENSON and SMITH, 1973 ; JONES, 1974 ; RESHETNIKOV et al., 1974 ; KAPOOR et al. 1975 and others). A critical evaluation of the bibliographic data resulted in an estimation of the average digestion time of Crangon, taking into consideration the water temperature in the Belgian coastal waters and the fact that Crangon has a hardly digestible exoskeleton. The digestion time of shrimp in the stomachs of its predators (D) was assumed to be on average 3 days, with a minimum and maximum of 2 and 4 days. In similar investigations on the predation mortality of brown shrimp in the German Bight the

same average digestion time was used (TIEWS, 1965, 1975).

For each predator species three values of the daily shrimp ration, expressed in numbers of shrimps, were calculated, corresponding to the minimum, average and maximum value of the digestion time (table 4).

##### 5.2. Daily ration in weight units.

The simplest way to calculate the daily food ration, or daily ration of any food component, expressed in weight units ( $C_d$ ), is by Daan's formula, originally designed for cod (DAAN, 1973) :

$$C_d = 2 \cdot W_s/D$$

$W_s$  = mean weight of stomach content,

D = digestion time.

This formula can be used on the condition that gastric evacuation is described by a linear function, no feeding takes place during stomach depletion and stomach analyses are spread homogeneously over 24 hours.

The curves describing gastric evacuation or depletion however differ greatly from one fish species to another : they may be exponential, logarithmic or linear (PANDIAN, 1967a ; HERTING and WITT, 1968 ; KITCHELL and WINDELL, 1968 ; KARIYA and TAKAHASHI, 1969 ; BRETT and HIGGS, 1970 ; TYLER, 1970 ; DAAN, 1973 ; KAPOOR et al. 1975 and others). For a same species, viz. Gadus morhua, different curves have been published (TYLER, 1970 ; DAAN, 1973).

Bibliographic data on the question whether fishes feed or not while they still have food in their stomachs are also contradictory, even when the same fish species is considered (WILSON, 1937 ; HEMPEL, 1964 ; KARIYA and TAKAHASHI, 1969 ; TYLER, 1970 ; KUHL, 1973 ; DAAN, 1973 ; ARNTZ, 1974 ; JONES, 1974 and others).

The exact determination of the mean weight of stomachs in the population ( $W_s$ ) implies some supplementary difficulties. After capture, during the

stay of the fishes in the trawl and on deck, and after death, digestion slowly proceeds, until all the digestive enzymes are used up (i.e. the post mortem digestion) (EGGERS, 1977). Consequently the observed mean weight of the stomachs is an underestimate of their real mean weight in vivo.

It is clear that Daan's formula, which is subject to very strict conditions, cannot be extrapolated (in its original form) to any other fish species. Such an extrapolation in fact would imply a serious risk of under - or over - estimating the daily shrimp rations of most predators. For this reason Daan's method was abandoned and an indirect method was introduced to estimate the quantities of Crangon eaten daily by its predators ( $C_{cc}$ ) :

$$C_{cc} (\%) = C_d (\%) \cdot W_{cc}/W_s$$

$C_d$  = daily food rate in % of body weight,

$W_{cc}/W_s$  = relative contribution of brown shrimp to the stomach contents.

In this formula the daily shrimp ration ( $C_{cc}$ ) is expressed as a percentage of the body weight of the fishes. The values of  $W_{cc}/W_s$  are produced by the stomach analyses ; the values of the daily food rations  $C_d$  were derived from the literature. The above formula is valid under the assumption that the stomach composition perfectly reflects the food composition.

The food uptake of fishes depends upon their energy requirements (PHILIPS, 1972) and is influenced by fish species, size, age, activity, physiological condition, composition of the food and environmental conditions (BALDWIN, 1956 ; HUNT, 1960 ; PANDIAN, 1967a, 1970 ; BRETT et al., 1969 ; MULLER, 1969 ; LIPSKAYA et al., 1972 ; DAAN, 1973 ; SWENSON and SMITH, 1973 ; ARNTZ, 1974 ; UZARS, 1975 ; MURAI and ANDREWS, 1976 ; ZALACHOWSKI et al., 1976 and others). The following general values for the daily food ration, expressed as a percentage of body weight, were deduced from the literature : larval and first postlarval stages 40-10 %, juveniles 10-2.0 % and adults 2.0-0.5 %. The variations due to activity, physiological condition and environmental temperature are included within these ranges.

For each predator two values of the daily shrimp ration were calculated, corresponding to the minimum and maximum value of the daily food ration (table 4). A daily food rate ranging from 2.0-10 % was used for those species of which only juveniles were observed in the coastal waters (i.e. Odontogadus and Gadus). For the others, whose coastal populations comprise adults as well as juveniles, a range of 1.0-10 % was used.

The daily shrimp rations of Pomatoschistus, on which no stomach analyses were performed (see section 4), were calculated from (1) the mean number of shrimps per stomach (KUHLE, 1961, 1964), (2) the mean weight of these shrimps and (3) the mean weight of the fishes (table 4).

#### 6. Predation mortality of postlarval shrimp.

The average yearly predation mortality of postlarval Crangon, expressed in numbers of shrimps, was calculated from the average yearly abundance of its predators and the mean daily shrimp rations (in numbers) of these predators. For each predator species three values were calculated, corresponding to the minimum, mean and maximum value of the daily shrimp ration (table 5).

Pomatoschistus caused, on average, the greatest predation mortality of postlarval shrimp (77.0 % of the total predation mortality), followed by Odontogadus, Trisopterus, Trigla, Agonus, Liparis, Gadus and Ciliata. Total predation mortality during the period 07.1973 - 06.1976 amounted to  $14.12 \pm 5.66$  Crangon/m<sup>2</sup>/year on average (table 5). The real value of predation mortality probably is higher than this estimate, which, in fact, only refers to mortality caused by the most important vertebrate predators and which does not yet include estimates for the invertebrate or less important vertebrate predators.

The average yearly predation mortality of shrimp, expressed in weight units, was computed from the average yearly biomass of the predators and their daily shrimp rations (in % of body weight). For each species two values were calculated, corresponding to the minimum and maximum value of the

daily shrimp ration (table 5).

Odontogadus is on average the most important predator (53.4-66.6 % of the total predation mortality), followed by Trisopterus, Trigla, Gadus, Liparis, Pomatoschistus, Agonus and Giliata. Total predation mortality during the period 07.1973-06.1976 was minimally  $126 \pm 40$  and maximally  $789 \pm 236$  mg C/m<sup>2</sup>/year (table 5).

The results of these investigations were incorporated into the quantitative consumption-production-model for postlarval brown shrimp (see C.M. 1980/K : 32).

#### 7. Bibliography.

- ARNTZ, W. (1971) : Die Nahrung der Kliesche (Limanda limanda L.) in der Kieler Bucht.  
Ber. Dt. Wiss. Komm. Meeresforsch., 22 (2).
- ARNTZ, W. (1974) : Die Nahrung juveniler Dorsche (Gadus morhua L.) in der Kieler Bucht.  
Ber. Dt. Wiss. Komm. Meeresforsch., 23 (2).
- BALDWIN, N. (1956) : Food consumption and growth of brook trout at different temperatures.  
Trans. Amer. Fish. Soc., 86 (3).
- BOHL, H. (1963) : Weitere Untersuchungen über die Selektivität der Garnelenkurren vor der nordfriesischen Küste.  
Protok. zur Fischereitechnik, 38 (8).
- BRENNBALE, F. (1961) : Plaice and flounder as consumers of microscopic bottom fauna.  
Medd. fra Danm. Fisk. og Havunders., NS 3 (6).
- BRETT, J. and HIGGS, D. (1970) : Effect of temperature on the rate of gastric digestion in fingerling sockeye salmon, Oncorhynchus nerka.  
J. Fish. Res. Bd. Can., 27 (10).
- BRETT, J., SHELBURN, J. and SHOOP, C. (1969) : Growth rate and body composition of fingerling sockeye salmon Oncorhynchus nerka, in relation to temperature and ration size.  
J. Fish. Res. Bd. Can., 26 (9).
- DAAN, N. (1973) : A quantitative analysis of the food intake of North Sea cod, Gadus morhua.  
Neth. J. Sea Res., 5 (4).

- DE GROOT, S. (1964) : Diurnal activity and feeding habits of plaice.  
ICES, Rapp. et Proc. Verb. Réun., 155.
- DE GROOT, S. (1973) : De invloed van trawlen op de zeebodem.  
Visserij, 26 (7).
- EGGERS, D. (1977) : Factors in interpreting data obtained by diel sampling of fish stomachs.  
J. Fish. Res. Bd. Can., 34 (1).
- GABRIELS, I. (1977) : Quantitatieve studie van de predatie-mortaliteit van Crangon crangon L. door Agonus cataphractus (L.).  
Licentiaatsverhandeling VUB.
- HEMPEL, G. (1964) : Diurnal variations in catch, feeding and swimming activity of plaice (Pleuronectes platessa L.).  
ICES, Rapp. et Proc. Verb. Réun., 155.
- HERTING, G. and WITT, A. (1968) : Rate of digestion in the bowfin.  
Prog. Fish Culturist, 30 (1).
- HUNT, B. (1960) : Digestion rate and food consumption of Florida gar, warmouth and largemouth bass.  
Trans. Amer. Fish. Soc., 89 (2).
- JOHANNESSEN, A. (1976) : Tank observations of prawns and small cod in relation to a moving model trawl.  
ICES, Gear and Behaviour Comm., CM 1976/B : 29 (mimeo).
- JONES, R. (1974) : The rate of elimination of food from the stomachs of haddock Melanogrammus aeglefinus, cod Gadus morhua and whiting Merlangius merlangus.  
J. du Conseil, 35 (3).
- KAPOOR, B., SMIT, H. and VERIGHINA, I. (1975) : The alimentary canal and digestion in Teleosts.  
Advances Marine Biology, 13.
- KARIYA, T. (1969) : The relationship of food intake to the amount of stomach contents in merabu, Sebastes inermis.  
Bull. Jap. Soc. Scient. Fish., 35 (6) (Japanese with English summary).
- KARIYA, T. and TAKAHASHI, M. (1969) : The relationship of food intake to the stomach contents in the mackerel Scomber japonicus.  
Bull. Jap. Soc. Scient. Fish., 35 (4) (Japanese with English summary).
- KIONKA, B. and WINDELL, J. (1972) : Differential movement of digestible and indigestible food fractions in rainbow trout Salmo gairdneri.  
Trans. Amer. Fish. Soc., 101 (1).

- KITCHELL, J. and WINDELL, J. (1968) : Rate of gastric digestion in pumpkinseed sunfish Lepomis gibbosus.  
Trans. Amer. Fish. Soc., 97 (4).
- KUHL, H. (1961) : Nahrungsuntersuchungen an einigen Fischen im Elbe-Mündungsgebiet.  
Ber. Dt. Wiss. Komm. Meeresforsch., 16 (2).
- KUHL, H. (1964a) : Protokolle zu den Nahrungsuntersuchungen an einigen Fischen der Elbemündung.  
Veröff. Inst. f. Küsten- und Binnenfisch., Hamburg, 32.
- KUHL, H. (1973) : Nahrungsuntersuchungen an einigen Gadiden im Elbe-Mündungsgebiet.  
Arch. Fischereiwiss., 24 (1/3).
- LIPSKAYA, N., UZARS, D., CHEKUNOVA, V. and SHATUNOVSKY, M. (1972) : Some aspects of energy metabolism in Baltic cod, Gadus morhua.  
All Union Res. Inst. Mar. Fish. and Oceano. (VNIRO), 85 (Russian with English summary).
- MOLNAR, G. and TOLG, I. (1962) : Relation between water temperature and gastric digestion of largemouth bass Micropterus salmoides Lacépède.  
J. Fish. Res. Bd. Can., 19 (6).
- MULLER, A. (1969) : Körpergewicht und Gewichtszunahme junger Plattfische in Nord- und Ostsee..  
Ber. Dt. Wiss. Komm. Meeresforsch., 20 (2).
- MURAI, T. and ANDREWS, J. (1976) : Effects of frequency of feeding on growth and food conversion of channel catfish fry.  
Bull. Jap. Soc. Scient. Fish., 42 (2).
- PANDIAN, T. (1967a) : Intake, digestion, absorption and conversion of food in the fishes Megalops cyprinoides and Ophiocephalus striatus.  
Marine Biology, 1 (1).
- PANDIAN, T. (1967b) : Transformation of food in the fish Megalops cyprinoides. I. Influence of quality of food.  
Marine Biology, 1 (1).
- PANDIAN, T. (1970) : Intake and conversion of food in the fish Limanda limanda exposed to different temperatures.  
Marine Biology, 5 (1).
- PHILLIPS, A. (1972) : Caloric and energy requirements.  
In : Fish Nutrition, Ed. J. Halver, Academic Press, New York.
- RAE, B. (1956) : The food and feeding habits of the lemon sole, Microstomus kitt.  
Marine Res., Scottish Home Dept., vol. 1956 (3).

- RAE, B. (1967) : The food of cod in the North Sea and on West of Scotland Grounds.  
Marine Res., Scottish Home Dept., vol. 1967 (1).
- REDANT, F. (1978) : Konsumptie en produktie van post-larvale Crangon crangon in de Belgische kustwateren.  
PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Brussel.
- RESHETNIKOV, Y., CLARO, R. and SILVA, A. (1974) : Ritmo alimentario y velocidad de digestion de algunos peces depredadores tropicales.  
Acad. Ciencias de Cuba, Serie Oceanologica, 21.
- SCHUMACHER, A. and TIEWS, K. (1976) : On the population dynamics of the brown shrimp (Crangon crangon) off the German coast.  
ICES, Spec. Meeting Pop. Assessm. Shellfish Stocks, paper 31 (mimeo).
- SWENSON, W. and SMITH, L. (1973) : Gastric digestion, food consumption, feeding periodicity and food conversion efficiency in walleye (Stizostedion vitreum vitreum).  
J. Fish. Res. Bd. Can., 30 (9).
- THIJSEN, R., LEVER, A. and LEVER, J. (1974) : Food composition and feeding periodicity of 0-group plaice (Pleuronectes platessa) in the tidal area of a sandy beach.  
Neth. J. Sea Res., 8 (4).
- TIEWS, K. (1965) : An attempt to estimate the predation of shrimps (Crangon crangon) caused by predatory fishes on the German coast.  
ICES, Shellfish Comm., paper no 24 (mimeo).
- TIEWS, K. (1975) : Prey-predator-relationship between fish populations and the stock of brown shrimp (Crangon crangon L.) in German coastal waters.  
ICES, Shellfish and Benthos Comm., CM 1975/K : 4 (mimeo).
- TYLER, A. (1970) : Rates of gastric emptying in young cod.  
J. Fish. Res. Bd. Can., 27 (7).
- UZARS, D. (1975) : Peculiarities of feeding and quantitative food consumption of Eastern Baltic cod.  
ICES, Baltic Fish Comm., CM 1975/P : 4 (mimeo).
- VANDEN BROUCKE, G. (1975) : Verdere proeven met dubbelboomnet voor garnalen en roadvis.  
Minis. Landbouw, Meded. Rijksstat. voor Zeeviss., rapport no 120-TZ/76.197.
- WAGNER, G. (1959) : Untersuchungen über die Tagesperiodizität der Nahrungsaufnahme bei Pollachius virens L.  
Kurze Mitt. Inst. Fisch. Biol. Univ. Hamburg, 9.
- WILSON, D. (1937) : The habits of the angler-fish (Lophius piscatorius L.) in the Plymouth aquarium.  
J. Mar. Biol. Ass. UK, 21 (2).



WINDELL, J., HUBBARD, J. and HORAK, D. (1972) : Rate of gastric digestion in rainbow trout fed three pelleted diets.  
Prog. Fish. Culturist, 34 (3).

WINDELL, J., NORRIS, D., KITCHELL, J. and NORRIS, J. (1969) : Digestive response of rainbow trout Salmo gairdneri to pellet diets.  
J. Fish. Res. Bd. Can., 26 (7).

ZALACHOWSKI, W., SZYPULA, J., KRZYKAWSKI, S. and KRZYKAWSKA, I. (1976) :  
Composition and amount of food consumed by sprat, herring and cod in the Southern Baltic in the years 1971-1974.  
ICES, Baltic Fish Comm., CM 1976/P : 23 (mimeo).

Correspondence address : Dr. F. Redant,  
Werkgroep Biologie,  
Rijksstation voor Zeevisserij,  
Ankerstraat 1,  
B-8400 Oostende,  
Belgium.

Table 1 - Synoptic diagram of the importance of the fish species in the Belgian coastal waters as predators of portlarval Crangon crangon.

| Abundance<br>Food preference                     | Rare   | Rather rare    | Rather abundant | Abundant       | Very abundant |
|--|--|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Food unknown                                     | 03 29<br>06 32<br>27   | -              | -               | -              | -             |
| Not or only occasionally feeding on brown shrimp | 01 25<br>04 31<br>09 34<br>10 35<br>12 46<br>14 48<br>19 51<br>24 56 | 22<br>26<br>33 | 07<br>23<br>36  | 08<br>52-juv.  | -             |
| Sometimes feeding on brown shrimp                | 15 50<br>20 55<br>30   | 11<br>28<br>53 | 54              | 47<br>57       | -             |
| Frequently feeding on brown shrimp               | 02   | 13<br>18-adu.  | 52-adu.         | -              | 37            |
| Predominantly feeding on brown shrimp            | 38 42<br>40 45<br>41 49  | 05<br>18-juv.  | 21<br>39<br>44  | 16<br>17<br>43 | -             |

numbers refer to species in faunistic list : see overleaf

all abundance data refer to the period 07.1973-06.1976

#### PETROMYZONES

01 Lampetra fluviatilis (L.)

#### ELASMOBRANCHII

02 Galeorhinus galeus (L.)  
03 Mustelus mustelus (L.)  
04 Scylliorhinus canicula (L.)  
05 Raja clavata L.  
06 Dasyatis pastinaca (L.)

#### TELEOSTOMI

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 07 Clupea harengus L.            | 33 Ammodytes laceolatus (le Sauvage)    |
| 08 Sprattus sprattus (L.)        | 34 Ammodytes lancea Yarrell             |
| 09 Alosa alosa (L.)              | 35 Gymnammodytes semisquamatus Jourdain |
| 10 Alosa fallax (Lacépède)       | 36 Aphia minuta (Risso)                 |
| 11 Engraulis encrasicolus (L.)   | 37 Pomatoschistus species               |
| 12 Salmo trutta L.               | 38 Trigla gurnardus L.                  |
| 13 Anguilla anguilla (L.)        | 39 Trigla lucerna L.                    |
| 14 Belone belone (L.)            | 40 Trigla cuculus L.                    |
| 15 Pollachius pollachius (L.)    | 41 Myxocephalus scorpius (L.)           |
| 16 Odontogadus merlangus (L.)    | 42 Taurulus bubalis (Euphrasen)         |
| 17 Trisopterus luscus (L.)       | 43 Agonus cataphractus (L.)             |
| 18 Gadus morhua L.               | 44 Liparis liparis (L.)                 |
| 19 Merluccius merluccius (L.)    | 45 Liparis montagui Donovan             |
| 20 Enchelyopus cimbrius (L.)     | 46 Cyclopterus lumpus L.                |
| 21 Ciliata mustela (L.)          | 47 Callionymus species                  |
| 22 Gasterosteus aculeatus L.     | 48 Scomber scombrus L.                  |
| 23 Syngnathus species            | 49 Arnoglossus laterna (Walbaum)        |
| 24 Zeus faber L.                 | 50 Scophthalmus maximus (L.)            |
| 25 Mugil labrosus Risso          | 51 Scophthalmus rhombus (L.)            |
| 26 Atherina presbyter Cuvier     | 52 Limanda limanda (L.)                 |
| 27 Morone lagrax (L.)            | 53 Platichthys flesus (L.)              |
| 28 Trachurus trachurus (L.)      | 54 Pleuronectes platessa L.             |
| 29 Spondyliopsis cantharus (L.)  | 55 Microstomus kitt (Walbaum)           |
| 30 Mullus surmulletus L.         | 56 Bugglossidium luteum (Risso)         |
| 31 Trachinus vipera Cuvier       | 57 Solea solea (L.)                     |
| 32 Blennius gattorugine Brünnich |   |

Table 2 - Abundance and biomass of shrimp predators in the Belgian coastal waters.

| Predator species       | Abundance<br>$n/10^4 \text{ m}^2$ | Biomass<br>$\text{g ww}/10^4 \text{ m}^2$ |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Odontogadus merlangus  | 98.1<br>$\pm 79.3$                | 7392<br>$\pm 3206$                        |
| Trisopterus luscus     | 47.3<br>$\pm 21.1$                | 2886<br>$\pm 1753$                        |
| Gadus morhua           | 1.6<br>$\pm 0.4$                  | 436<br>$\pm 115$                          |
| Ciliata mustela        | 1.4<br>$\pm 1.0$                  | 36<br>$\pm 17$                            |
| Pomatoschistus species | 4461.0<br>$\pm 2264.0$            | 1490<br>$\pm 782$                         |
| Trigla species         | 8.8<br>$\pm 4.9$                  | 425<br>$\pm 72$                           |
| Agonus cataphractus    | 48.4<br>$\pm 35.6$                | 148<br>$\pm 78$                           |
| Liparis liparis        | 4.0<br>$\pm 2.3$                  | 86<br>$\pm 67$                            |

all figures refer to the period 07.1973-06.1976

Table 3 - Most important results of the stomach analyses on shrimp predators.

| Parameter   | Odontogadus<br>merlangus | Trisopterus<br>luscus | Gadus morhua       | Ciliata<br>mustela | Trigla<br>species  | Agonus<br>(a)<br>cataphractus | Liparis<br>liparis |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Number of fishes analysed   | 2219                     | 1235                  | 790                | 326                | 320                | 1059                          | 257                |
| IF <sub>c</sub> Incidence frequency of <u>Caridea</u>                   | 53.7                     | 58.0                  | 85.9               | 58.0               | 86.6               | 32.9                          | 84.4               |
| IF <sub>cc</sub> Incidence frequency of <u>Crangon</u>                  | 44.3                     | 45.8                  | 74.8               | 47.6               | 67.8               | 10.4                          | 63.0               |
| N <sub>c</sub> Mean number of <u>Caridea</u> per stomach                | 1.26                     | 1.64                  | 3.38               | 1.70               | 3.89               | 0.77                          | 3.19               |
| N <sub>cc</sub> Mean number of <u>Crangon</u> per stomach               | 1.24                     | 1.54                  | 3.33               | 1.65               | 3.82               | 0.43                          | 2.94               |
| W <sub>s</sub> Mean weight of stomach (grammes)                         | 1.68<br>$\pm 2.15$       | 1.03<br>$\pm 1.07$    | 3.39<br>$\pm 3.84$ | 1.32<br>$\pm 1.60$ | 1.47<br>$\pm 1.44$ | 0.070<br>$\pm 0.082$          | 1.43<br>$\pm 1.76$ |
| W <sub>c</sub> Mean weight of <u>Caridea</u> in the stomachs (grammes)  | 0.46<br>$\pm 0.88$       | 0.43<br>$\pm 0.65$    | 1.41<br>$\pm 1.80$ | 0.38<br>$\pm 0.60$ | 1.07<br>$\pm 1.16$ | 0.016<br>$\pm 0.056$          | 0.80<br>$\pm 1.02$ |
| W <sub>cc</sub> Mean weight of <u>Crangon</u> in the stomachs (grammes) | 0.45<br>$\pm 0.85$       | 0.41<br>$\pm 0.61$    | 1.40<br>$\pm 1.81$ | 0.37<br>$\pm 0.59$ | 1.06<br>$\pm 1.18$ | 0.011<br>$\pm 0.045$          | 0.78<br>$\pm 1.04$ |

a : after GABRIELS (1977)

Table 4 - Daily shrimp rations of demersal predators.

| Predator species       | Daily ration in number of<br>shrimps per fish |         |         | Daily ration in percent<br>of fish body weight |         |
|------------------------|---|---------|---------|--|---------|
|                        | mean  | minimum | maximum | minimum  | maximum |
| Odontogadus merlangus  | 0.41  | 0.31    | 0.62    | 0.54 %   | 2.70 %  |
| Trisopterus luscus     | 0.51  | 0.38    | 0.77    | 0.40 %   | 4.01 %  |
| Gadus morhua           | 1.11  | 0.83    | 1.67    | 0.83 %   | 4.13 %  |
| Ciliata mustela        | 0.55  | 0.41    | 0.82    | 0.28 %   | 2.84 %  |
| Pomatoschistus species | 0.07  | 0.05    | 0.10    | 0.07 %   | 0.14 %  |
| Trigla species         | 1.28  | 0.96    | 1.91    | 0.72 %   | 7.24 %  |
| Agonus cataphractus    | 0.14  | 0.11    | 0.21    | 0.16 %   | 1.55 %  |
| Liparis liparis        | 0.98  | 0.74    | 1.47    | 0.54 %   | 5.43 %  |

Table 5 - Predation mortality of postlarval Crangon crangon caused by demersal fishes.

| Predator species       | n/m <sup>2</sup> /year |                 |                 | mg C/m <sup>2</sup> /year |                  |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
|                        | mean                   | minimum         | maximum         | minimum                   | maximum          |
| Odontogadus merlangus  | 1.48<br>± 1.20         | 1.11<br>± 0.90  | 2.22<br>± 1.80  | 84.2<br>± 36.5            | 421.1<br>± 182.6 |
| Trisopterus luscus     | 0.89<br>± 0.40         | 0.66<br>± 0.30  | 1.33<br>± 0.59  | 24.4<br>± 14.8            | 244.2<br>± 148.3 |
| Gadus morhua           | 0.06<br>± 0.02         | 0.05<br>± 0.01  | 0.10<br>± 0.02  | 7.6<br>± 2.0              | 38.0<br>± 10.0   |
| Ciliata mustela        | 0.03<br>± 0.02         | 0.02<br>± 0.02  | 0.04<br>± 0.03  | 0.2<br>± 0.1              | 2.2<br>± 1.0     |
| Pomatoschistus species | 10.86<br>± 5.51        | 8.14<br>± 4.13  | 16.28<br>± 8.26 | 2.1<br>± 1.1              | 4.2<br>± 2.2     |
| Trigla species         | 0.41<br>± 0.23         | 0.31<br>± 0.17  | 0.61<br>± 0.34  | 6.5<br>± 1.1              | 64.9<br>± 11.0   |
| Agonus cataphractus    | 0.25<br>± 0.19         | 0.19<br>± 0.14  | 0.38<br>± 0.28  | 0.5<br>± 0.3              | 4.8<br>± 2.6     |
| Liparis liparis        | 0.14<br>± 0.08         | 0.11<br>± 0.06  | 0.22<br>± 0.12  | 1.0<br>± 0.8              | 9.9<br>± 7.7     |
| Total                  | 14.12<br>± 5.66        | 10.59<br>± 4.24 | 21.18<br>± 8.49 | 126.5<br>± 39.5           | 789.3<br>± 235.9 |

all figures refer to the period 07.1973-06.1976

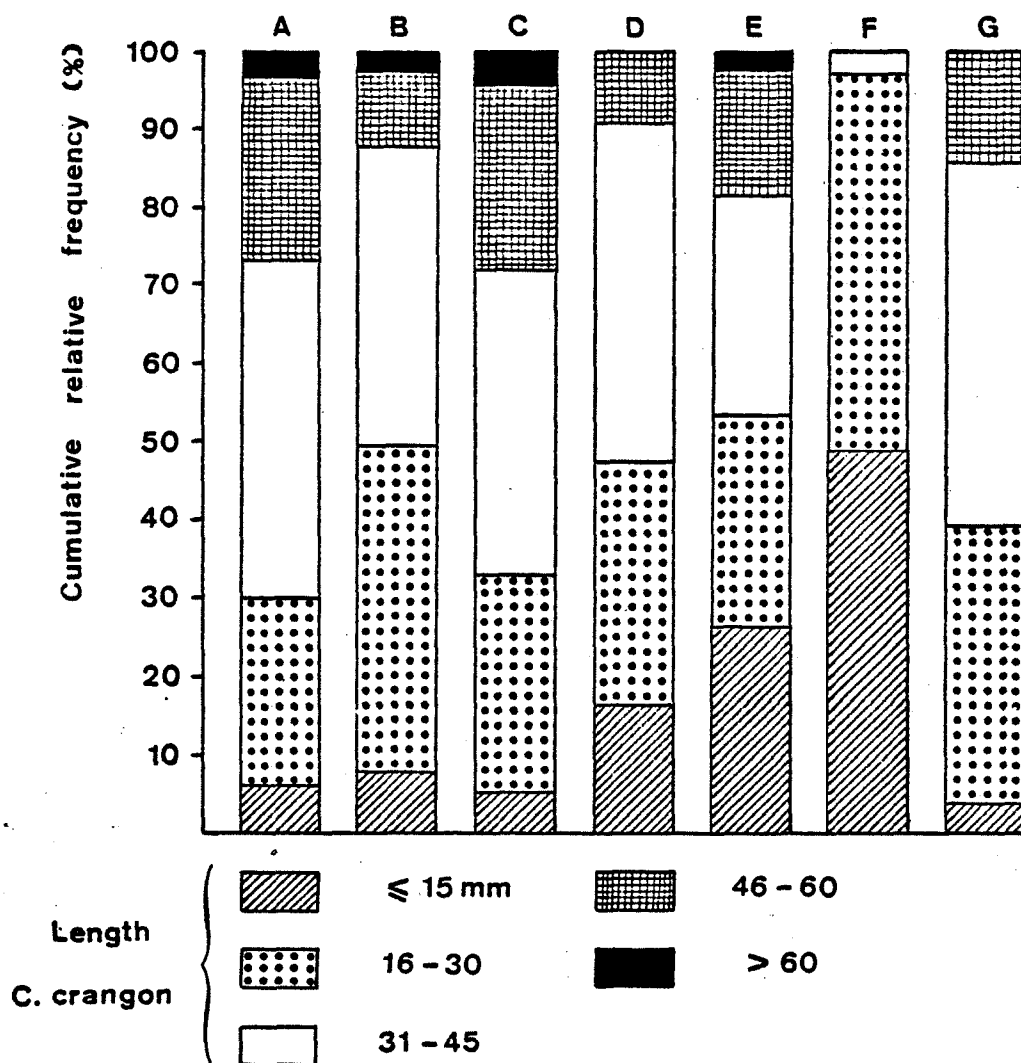


Figure 1 - Cumulative relative frequency distribution of length classes of shrimp in the stomachs of

A : *Odontogadus merlangus*,  
 B : *Trisopterus luscus*,  
 C : *Gadus morhua*,  
 D : *Ciliata mustela*,  
 E : *Trigla species*,  
 F : *Agonus cataphractus*,  
 G : *Liparis liparis*.

Data on *Agonus* after GABRIELS (1977).

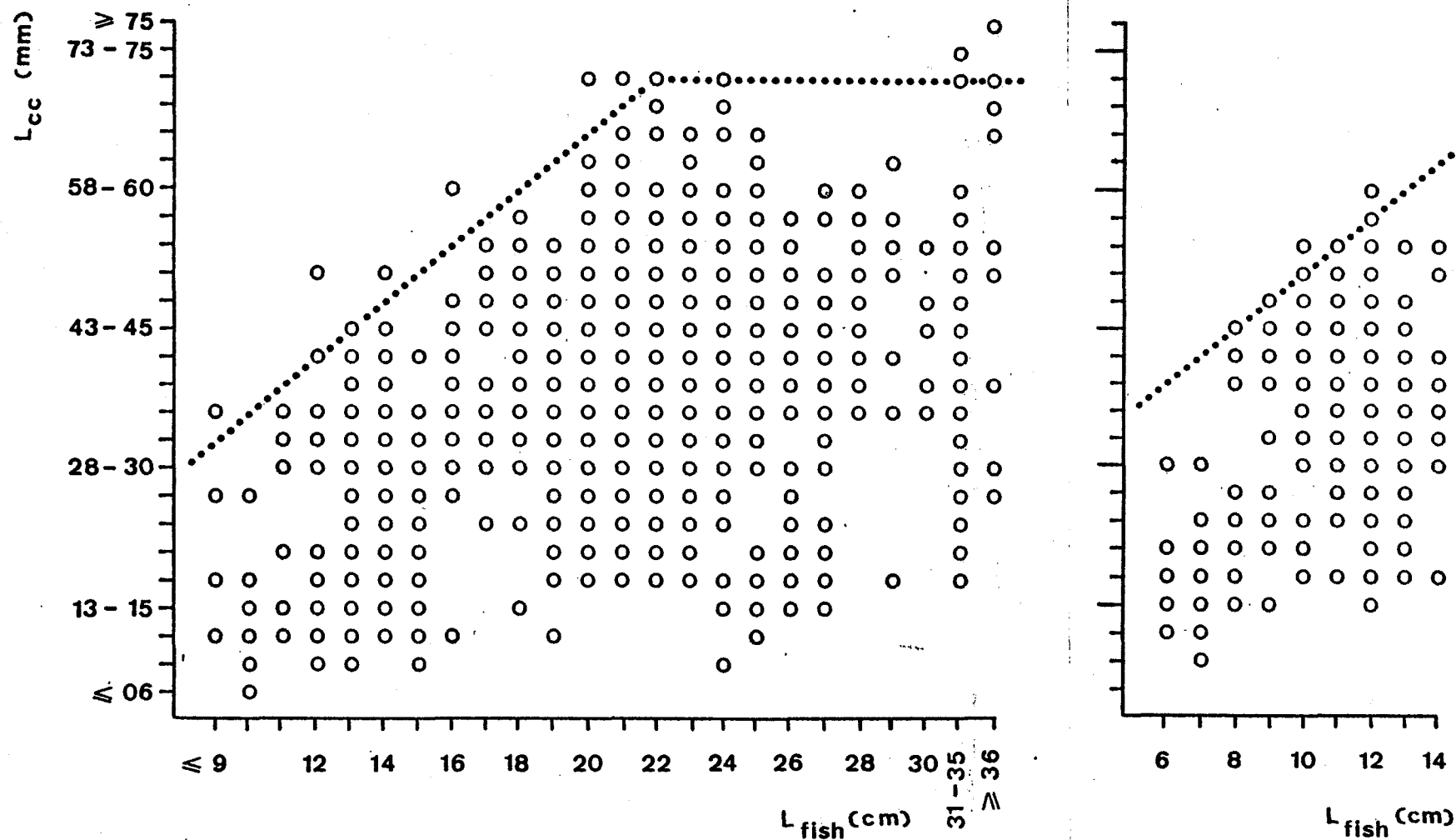


Figure 2 - Length distribution of shrimps in the stomachs of a large predator (*Odontogadus merlangus*, left) and in the stomachs of a small predator (*Liparis liparis*, right) in relation to the size of the predators.