

1976

AP

MOVES WITH RAKE

The boat is pulled along with the rake by tying a floatline on to it and holding it as soon as the rake starts moving. By the time the second one nears the bank, the first rake is kept ready for loading on the boat after removing all the weeds.

It is thus possible to clear a semicircular area, the radius of which is equal to the effective length of the wire rope in each drum of the winch.

It is claimed to be possible to obtain up to 95 per cent clearance with this equipments. It can be used at any depth. The equipment is also easy to move from one place to another. It is suitable particularly for initially cleaning small and medium stretches of water below 15 hectares and 1.5 to 5 m deep.

Where the area to be cleared is small (five hectares or less), a single drum winch coupled to a 5 hp diesel engine and installed on a trolley would be enough. Only one rake is needed.

*Norwegians try out new trawl

The Norwegian research vessel *Haydron* left Bergen on March 21 for the blue whiting area west of the British Isles to test a new trawl and an electronic device for indicating the amount of fish in the cod-end. The trawl mouth has a gape of 1750m² and the aperture circumference is 530 metres.

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The forepart of the trawl has meshes two metres wide to reduce sea resistance.

Trials by the *Haydron* last year were carried out with a trawl with a mouth circumference of 320 metres and a mesh size in the forepart of the trawl of one metre.

Blue whiting is caught at depths down to 500 metres, and during earlier trials the trawl has burst because the fish have blown out as they were raised to the surface. It is hoped to avoid this by using the "filling indicator" developed by Simrad A/S. By means of this device, a warning will be given when the quantity of fish in the trawl has reached the safe limit.

The research vessel *G. O. Sars* has also been participating in the blue whiting project. She is equipped with the tilling indicator, but has been using a smaller trawl with special devices for protection against bottom damage.

The trials are sponsored by the Fish Technology Research Institute, Bergen.

* Source: Fishing News International, May 1976.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Leatherback Turtle

Sir,

Shantharam (Seafood Export Journal, Vol. VII, No. 10, p. 33), has given some out-dated and erroneous information about marine turtles. He refers to the luth or leatherback turtle as *Thalassochelys* sp. and states that it is an edible form. The omnivorous leatherback turtle, characterised by

seven ridges along the carapace and clawless paddle-shaped limbs, is *Dermochelys coriacea*, the sole representative of family Dermochelyidae (1-3). It is the largest species among turtles and tortoises and one of the largest living reptiles, but it is also one of the fastest swimmers afloat (2). Generally found away from the coasts in tropical waters, the adult females struggle on to sandy beaches during the period March to June, to lay 90-150 spherical eggs. The largest specimens attain a weight of over 544 kg. (2), not 75 kg!

This uncommon turtle is believed to be, or to have been, common along the coast of Sri Lanka. Unlike that of the green turtle, its flesh is not edible, although its eggs are relished by some people. When sighted on any beach, it should not be restrained or trapped, at least until it has deposited its eggs.

An adult female of this species was sighted on Visakhapatnam beach on May 18, 1976, but unfortunately it was injured and it died before it could lay eggs, for which purpose it had come to the beach.

1. Bellairs, A. & 1969 The world of reptiles. R. Carrington. Chatto & Windus, London. 1-154.
2. Bellairs, A. 1969 The life of reptiles. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, I, 1-292; II, 283-390
3. Murty, T. S. N. 1976 The turtle resources of India & A. G. K. Menon Seafood Exp. Jour., 8(1), 49-60.

(Sd)

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