

State of California - The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Marine Resources Region
Long Beach, California

CRUISE REPORT 73-KB-2

INSHORE FISHERIES HABITAT EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Prepared by Mel Odemar

Vessel: R/V KELP BASS

Dates: January 15 - January 18, 1973

Locality: Farnsworth Bank, Santa Catalina Island.

Purpose:

1. To map the extent of Farnsworth Bank.
2. Assess the extent and condition of purple coral (*Allopora californica*) and associated communities.
3. Tag California scorpion fish (*Scorpaena guttata*) and explore methods of capturing and tagging California sheephead (*Pimelometopon pulchrum*).

Procedure: The shallowest pinnacle of Farnsworth Bank, 50 feet deep, was located and buoyed by divers working from the MARLIN, DOLPHIN, and ANCHOVY on January 11 and 12, 1973, facilitating the bathymetric work done from the KELP BASS the next week. Fathometer tracings were made of the general area and buoyed anchors were set to mark the 30 fathom contour and the outermost pinnacle. Timed runs were then made to measure distances between buoys.

Diver propulsion vehicles were used to locate the shallowest pinnacle and to survey the extent of *Allopora*.

A series of fathometer tracings were made along tracks radiating from the innermost (50 ft) pinnacle to depths in excess of 30 fathoms. The tracings were made at a calculated speed of 3.1 kts.

Hook and line fishing was conducted at Farnsworth Bank and Isthmus Cove for California sheephead (*Pimelometopon pulchrum*) and California scorpion fish (*Scorpaena guttata*). Both day and night dives were conducted at Isthmus Cove to take California sheephead, halfmoon (*Medialuna californiensis*) and opaleye (*Girella nigricans*).

Results: The outermost pinnacle, shown to have a minimum depth of 16 fathoms on the navigation chart, was found to have a shallow point of 11 fathoms.

A total of 10 fathometer tracings was made radiating in 20° increments from the innermost pinnacle, leaving 8 yet to be made. Due to inclement weather, the outermost pinnacle

was not surveyed and the cruise was shortened by 1½ days.

Four separate areas to a maximum depth of 110 ft were surveyed by divers. The greatest damage to *Allopora* was noted at the shallowest pinnacle which receives the heaviest pressure from collectors. Pinnacles away from the shallowest point had good growths of *Allopora* and looked relatively undisturbed except for nets caught on the rocks. Every area surveyed had purse seines caught on the rocks, and in some instances broken colonies of *Allopora* were hanging from the mesh.

In all instances reef associated fish were abundant, the most abundant being blue rockfish (*Sebastes mystinus*). Pelagic red crabs, *Pleuroncodes planipes*, were abundant at the surface.

Personnel: Marco Mazarovich, Vessel Captain
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