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Salmon in Haffjardara 1996

Introduction

The salmon parr population in Haffjardara was investigated July the 23 rd 1996.
The river was fished with electricity at four sites, from Sheep Pool up to Long Pool. The fish were aged and density of the various year classes estimated. In this report, the results from 1996 are compared with results from previous years obtained by similar methods. Note that the 1996 electrofishing was performed in July, contrary to September in previous years. Flooding in September made the planned electrofishing impossible. The unusually high water level also affected the fishing in the latest part of the season.

Results

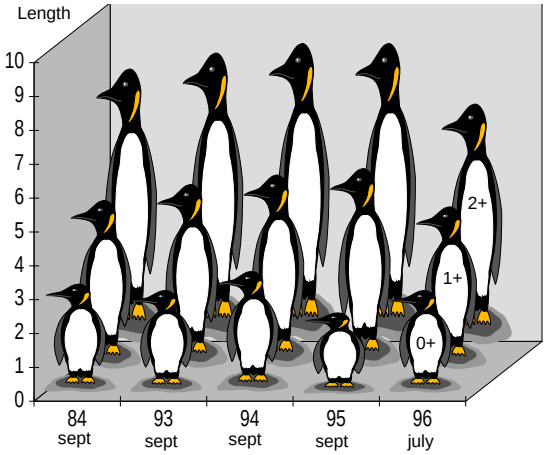
Table 1 shows the catch of salmon parr in July. The length distribution of the parr caught below Long Pool is shown in fig. 4, and length distribution of parr caught in the lower part of Haffjardara, i.e. from Home Pool to Sheep is shown in fig. 5. It can be seen that 3 year old parr are found in the upper section of the river but not in the lower section. The growth is slower in the upper section than further down the river where all parr smoltify in their fourth year and migrate to the sea as 3+ in the spring. This has been the normal situation in the river system for the last years. The parr were in a very good condition, indicating a healthy population.

Table 1. Mean lengths at age, and (number) of salmon parr caught at various sites in Haffjarðara July 23 rd 1996. Number of fish in brackets.

Site No	Location	Areal (m^2)	0+	1+	2+	3+	Density Fish/100 m^2
1	Below Long Pool	50	3.3 (12)	5.9 (6)	7.4 (5)	9.6 (3)	52
2	100 m below Falls Pool	60		4.9 (6)	7.9 (10)		27
3	Above Sheep Pool	50		5.6 (13)	7.6 (4)		34
4	Below Sheep Pool	50	3.4 (1)	6.0 (2)	8.5 (5)		16
Total:			(13)	(27)	(24)	(3)	32

It is difficult to compare the growth of the parr to what it has been in previous years as they are caught at a different time. Figure 1 shows the mean lengths of the year classes back in time, compared to the mean lengths in July 1996.

Fig. 1. Penguins represent mean lengths of salmon parr in Haffjardara 1984-96.



The salmon catch in 1996

The total catch in 1996 was 600 fish, 516 grilse and 84 salmon. The weight distribution of the total catch is shown in fig. 2. Grilse weigh 2.0 -7.5 pounds, salmon 7.5-17 pounds. The catch since 1987, grilse and salmon separately, is shown in

Fig.2. Weight distribution of the catch in Haffjardara 1996

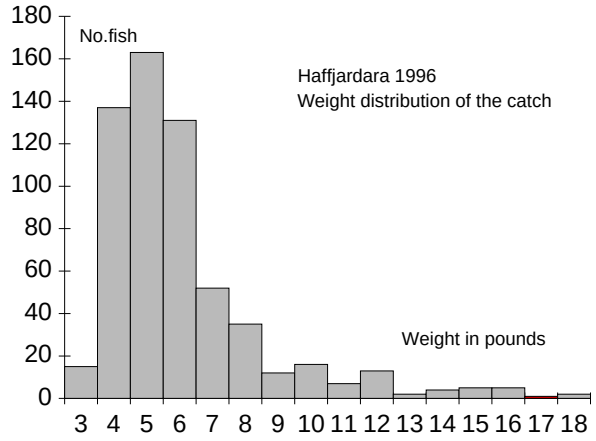


Fig. 3. Catch of grilse and salmon originating from the 1985-1995 smolt year classes.

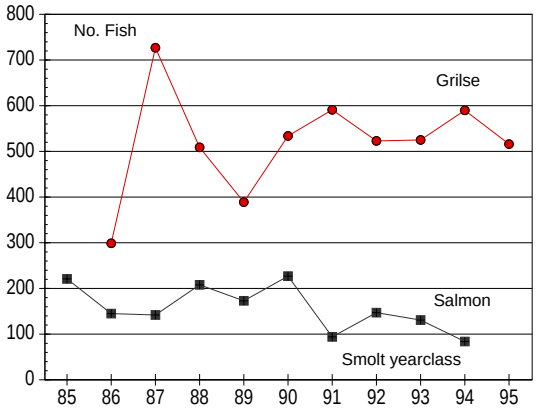


table 2. The catch of salmon and grilse originating from the 1985-1995 smolt year classes is shown in fig. 2. The grilse catch is at the level of what it has been in previous years but catch of salmon has went further down and was the lowest in recent history. Salmon catches were bad in all Icelandic rivers in 1996 and there has been a downward trend in salmon catches in most rivers since 1990. This reflects worsening ocean conditions for salmon generally. The parr population in Haffjardara is in a very good state and it is expected that the grilse catch will remain stable in 1997. The salmon catch in 1997 is not possible to predict.

Table 2. Catch of grilse (ISW) and salmon (IISW) in Haffjardara 1987-1996

Year	ISW	IISW	Total
1987	300	221	521
1988	730	145	875
1989	519	142	661
1990	391	208	599
1991	538	173	711
1992	591	227	818
1993	523	94	617
1994	525	147	672
1995	596	132	728
1996	**516**	**84**	**600**
Mean:	521	157	680

Fig.4. Length distribution of parr caught below Long Pool in Haffjardara July 23 rd 1996

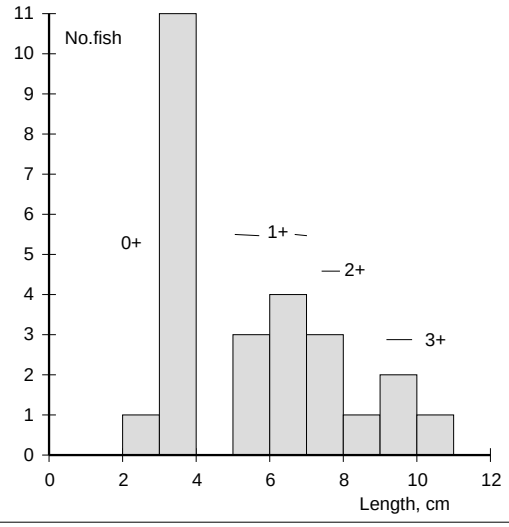


Fig. 5. Length distribution of salmon parr in the lower part of Haffjardara (Home Pool, Sheep) July 23 rd 1996.

