Jón Kristjánsson
Fisheries Consultant
Skipasund 90,
Reykjavik

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Salmon in Haffjardara 1997

Introduction

The salmon parr population in Haffjardara was investigated July 20 th and August 16 th 1997. 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.

Results

Table 1 shows the catch of salmon parr at various sites. Size and density of parr is similar to what it has been in previous years. Growth of the small salmon in the river is good and they are in good condition. The parr production in the river is very good. Therefore, below average runs have to be explained by poor ocean conditions.

Table 1. Mean lengths at age, and number of salmon parr caught at various sites in Haffjarðara 1997. Dates and number of fish in brackets.

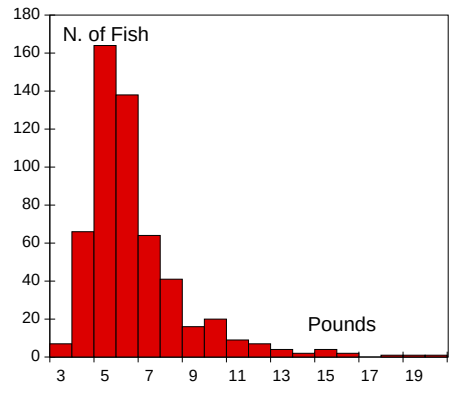
Site No	Location	Areal (m^2)	0+	1+	2+	3+	Density Fish/100 m^2
1	Below Long Pool (16/8)	50	3.4 (15)	5.5 (11)	7.9 (6)	9.4 (1)	66
2	100 m below Falls Pool (20/7)	80	3.4(1)	5.8 (21)	8.1 (11)	10.2 (2)	44
3	Above Home Pool (20/7)	50	3.3(3)	4.9 (10)	8.0 (4)		34
4	Below Sheep Pool(20/7)	100		5.9 (9)	8.6 (5)		14
Total:			(19)	(51)	(26)	(3)	

Table 2. Mean lengths at age, and number of salmon parr caught below Long Pool in Haffjarðara 1994-1997. Number of fish in brackets.

Location	Areal (m^2)	0+	1+	2+	3+	Density Fish/100 m^2	Year	Date
Below Long Pool	70	3.7 (7)	6.1 (5)	7.8 (4)	9.7 (4)	29	1994	12/9
Below Long Pool	50	3.4 (6)	6.3 (7)	8.5 (2)	10.2 (2)	38	1995	10/9
Below Long Pool	50	3.3 (12)	5.9 (6)	7.4 (5)	9.6 (3)	52	1996	23/7
Below Long Pool	**50**	**3.4 (15)**	**5.5 (11)**	**7.9 (6)**	**9.4 (1)**	**66**	**1997**	**16/8**

Table 2 shows the size distribution and density of parr below Long Pool since 1994. The figures are very similar all the years indicating a stabel parr production these years.

Fig.1. Weight distribution of the catch in Haffjardara 1997.



The salmon catch in 1997

The total catch in 1997 was 560 fish, 490 grilse and 70 salmon. This salmon catch is the lowest in recent years. The weight distribution of the total catch is shown in fig. 1. Figure 3 shows the catch by sex. Grilse weigh 3 -8 pounds, salmon 9-17 pounds. Low catch can partly be explained by reduced number of fishing days in 1997 but the year was also below average generally speaking in Iceland.

The fishing season was from June19th to September 8th, 21 days shorter than in 1996.
The catch since 1983, grilse and salmon separately, is shown in table 3.
The grilse catch is comparable to previous years but catch of salmon has gone further down and was the lowest in the last 15 years. There has been a downward trend for salmon (two sea winter fish) catches in most rivers since 1990. This reflects worsening ocean conditions for salmon in general. On average, the grilse in 1997 was larger and in better condition than for many years. This indicates improving oceanic conditions and better smolt returns next year. Therefore, improved salmon runs can be expected next year.

Table 3. Catch of grilse (ISW) and salmon (IISW) in Haffjardara 1983-1997

Year	ISW	IISW	Total
83	414	211	625
84	202	351	553
85	364	215	579
86	978	161	1139
87	309	226	535
88	744	130	874
89	533	130	663
90	475	148	623
91	594	126	720
92	703	122	825
93	550	83	633
94	567	103	670
95	577	155	732
96	533	69	602
97	**490**	**70**	**560**
Mean:	536	153	689

The catch of salmon and grilse originating from the 1982-1996 smolt year classes is shown in fig. 2. It can be seen that there has been a slow downwards trend in number of salmons caught during this period. This same trend is common for many rivers, indicating increased mortality in the sea.

Fig. 2. Catch of grilse and salmon originating from the 1982-1996 smolt year classes.

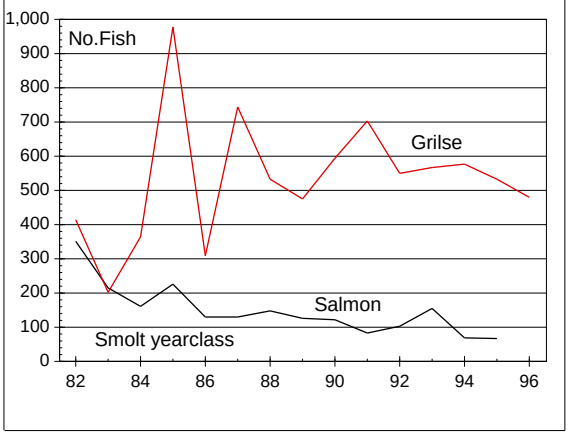


Fig 3. Weigth distribution of the catch in 1997 by sex. Males are represented by line and females by bars.

