

Scientists Honored For Papers on Fisheries

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A study of the ocean depths at which fish eggs and newly-hatched fishes are found off California and Baja California has won for its author a \$500 cash award offered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

E. H. Ahlstrom, Director of the Service's Biological Laboratory, was given the prize recently by the Incentive Awards Committee. Ahlstrom's headquarters are on the campus of The University of California's Scripps Institution of Oceanography. He is a Research Associate on the Scripps Staff.

The paper, which was published by the Service, is a detailed study of where the eggs and larvae of pelagic fishes are found in the water column. Fishes studied include such important food species as the sardine and anchovy. Forty-six kinds of larvae and eight kinds of eggs are investigated.

The basic data for the paper came from the fisheries-oceanography cruises conducted during the past decade under the California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations, a program whose participants include the Service, Scripps, the California Department of Fish and Game, Stanford University and the California Academy of Sciences.

In addition to being the most exhaustive study of its kind, Ahlstrom's work is important because it affords other fisheries workers a useful tool by which to evaluate less extensive data. It also provides a solid reference point for future studies of the eggs and larvae off California. In addition, it points the way toward far more accurate estimates of the numbers of fishes in the sea.

Ahlstrom reports that in most instances the newly-hatched larvae were found much nearer the surface of the water during the night than during the day. Nightly migration of microscopic marine creatures toward the sea surface has long been known. Still not clearly shown is why the animals move toward the surface. For a fish larva the trip to the sea surface from the lowest levels at which he is found (a hundred feet or more), represents a voyage of perhaps 60,000 times his length, the equivalent of a 75-mile walk for a man. The trip is taken in a very few hours.

Ahlstrom's was one of two papers honored by the Service this year. The other was also the work of a member of the La Jolla Staff, Frederick H. Berry. Berry is a part-time student at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. He won a \$250 award for a paper based on work conducted at the Service's Galveston Laboratory.