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12. Summer Collections of Age-0 Pollock in the Eastern Bering Sea aboard the *Oshoro Maru*

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Abstract

During 1995-1997, the Hokkaido University research vessel *Oshoro maru* surveyed the distribution of age-0 walleye pollock in summer in the southeastern Bering Sea. Sampling was conducted during late July using a 5 m² rigid-frame trawl with a 2×3 mm oval- mesh net. The station grid varied slightly among years (Fig. 1) but a grid of 18 stations was occupied each year. Average sea surface temperature measured at these stations was similar during 1995 and 1996, but warmer during 1997 (9.3, 9.0 and 10.0°C, respectively). Based on rough counts, the average standardized catch of age-0 pollock for these 18 stations was high during 1996 (55 fish per 10 m²) relative to 1995 and 1997 (22 and 15 fish per 10 m² , respectively). Thus, during late-July, the 1996 yearclass appears to have been more abundant than the 1995 and 1997 yearclasses. This agrees with relative differences between the 1995 and 1996 yearclasses as indicated by the catch of one0year old pollock in hydroacoustic surveys of the eastern Bering Sea ; data for the 1997 yearclass are not yet available. The large mean catch during 1996 was due to high concentrations of fish around the Pribilof Islands. In other years, there were also some elevated catches along the 100 m isobath south of these islands. Length measurements of age-0 pollock and catch information for other taxa are not yet available for all three years.

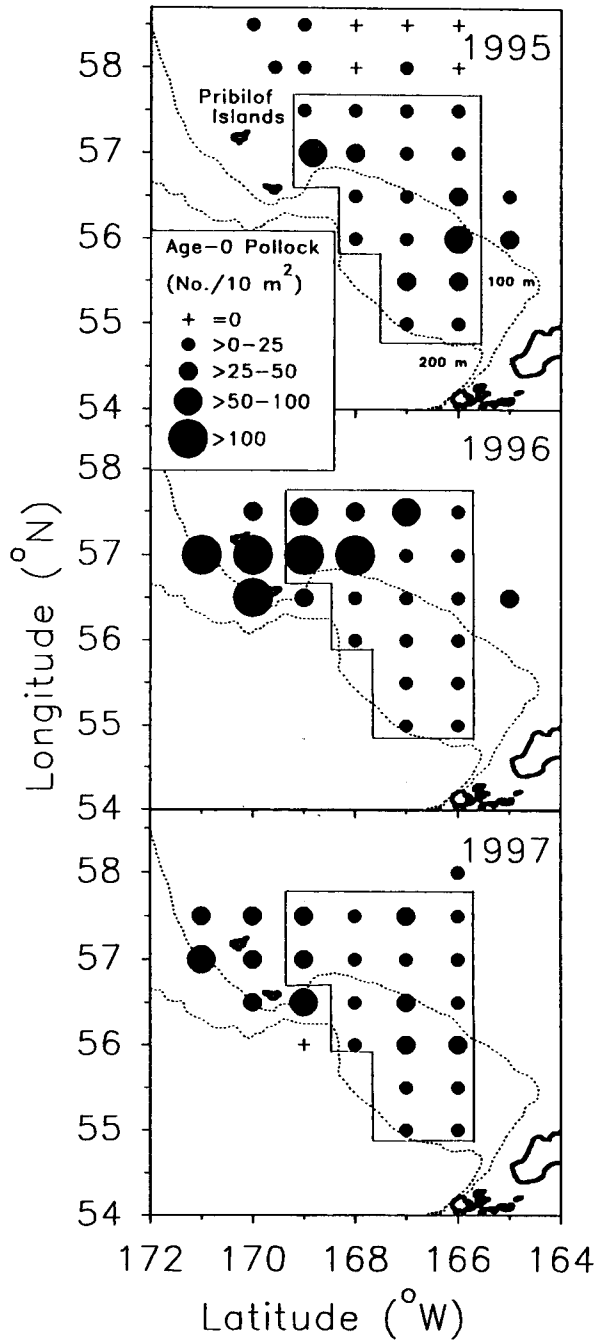


Fig.1. The distribution of age-0 pollock over the southeast Bering Sea during late-July, 1995-1997. The solid line delineates the 18 stations consistently sampled each year.