

## JOB REPORT

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Project No: MO-6-R-1 . Date: July 31, 1959

Project Name: Survey of the Major Oyster Fishery Reefs and Associated Organisms in Area M-6.

Period Covered: June 1, 1958 - July 31, 1959 Job No: B-2b

### Invertebrate Species Associated with the Oyster Reefs in Area M-6

Objective: To determine the invertebrate species present on the Aransas and Copano Bay oyster reefs, the relative abundance, and distribution.

Procedure: Samples of invertebrate species were obtained by an oyster dredge, traps, and by hand from the reefs. Collections were made in conjunction with other jobs in the project. Species collected were identified and their abundance and distribution recorded.

Findings: The following check list includes only those species collected on and around the oyster reefs during the course of the project:

#### Porifera

Cliona sp. Boring sponge. Abundant on Long Reef and Paul's Mott during summer months.

#### Coelenterata

Aurellia aurita. Moon Jelly. A few scattered specimens were seen in the lower portions of Aransas Bay near the Lydia Ann Channel in June and July.

Dactylometra quinquecirrha. Sea Nettle. Prevalent in Aransas Bay from late May through September.

Stomolophus meleagris. Cabbagehead. Extremely abundant from May through August. Most numerous in July.

#### Ctenophora

Beroë ovata and Mnemiopsis mccradyi. Both species of Ctenophores were common throughout Aransas and Copano Bays during the summer months.

#### Bryozoa

Membranipora sp. and Bugula sp. Found on all oyster reefs in the Aransas Bay area. Densely clustered and at times a hinderence to spat setting.

## Mollusca

Brachidontes exustus. These mussels are abundant on all reefs in Aransas and Copano Bays. Spawning has been recorded during July and August.

Martesia smithii. A few scattered specimens of this boring clam were found in Paul's Mott and Long Reef in Aransas Bay.

Crassostrea virginica. The most abundant mollusc in the area and the basis of this survey. Spawning established from April through July.

Chione cancellata. This mollusc is not necessarily a reef inhabitant but is prevalent on most of the reefs in Aransas Bay.

Crepidula plana. Slipper Shell. Commonly found attached to both dead and living oyster shell throughout Aransas and Copano Bays.

Anachis avara simplicata. Several specimens collected throughout Aransas Bay from oyster clusters.

## Annelida

Polydora sp. Mudworms are abundant on all reefs in the bay. Found in shell crevices and burrowed into sponge riddled valves.

Dexiospira sp. Worm Tubes. Abundant in Copano Bay to the extent it has become a major fouling organism in that area.

## Arthropoda

Palaemonetes intermedius. Grass shrimp. Found in clumps of algae attached to oyster shell on several reefs in Aransas Bay. Particularly those near grass flats.

Pagurus floridanus. Hermit Crab. Found throughout Aransas and Copano Bays in all areas.

Crangon armillatus. Pistol Shrimp. Three specimens were found on Long Reef in June, 1959.

Petrolisthes armatus. Very abundant during the summer months. In July this crab is the most prevalent specie of crabs in the reef population.

Callinectes sapidus. Common in all areas of the bay and on all reefs.

Panopeus herbsti. Common on all reefs in Aransas Bay throughout the year. Spawning activities recorded in April through June.

Neopanope texana sayi. Few specimens collected from algae clumps from Paul's Mott Reef and near Mud Island.

Eurypanopeus depressus. A very abundant species rivaling P. armatus as the most abundant form during the summer months. Becomes the most numerous as the weather cools and P. armatus declines. Gravid females collected from April through August.

Menippe mercenaria. Stone Crab. Many juvenile stone crabs were collected throughout Aransas Bay. Adults were scarce and seldom picked up in the dredge.

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Date Approved

25 August 1959