

**On pelagic phase of the life cycle of common angler (*Lophius piscatorius* Linne)
around seamounts Rockall-Hatton**

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The system of seamounts Rockall-Hatton is situated to the west of the British islands (55° - 59° N; 14° - 17° W). The minimal depths above these underwater heights is some 160-500 m. Ichthyofauna is represented approximately by 120 pelagic and bottom fish species belonging to 60 families (Kukuev et al., 2000).

The common angler - *Lophius piscatorius* - is a bottom representative of the thalassosublitral and mesobenthic fauna (Parin, 1982). Its larvae and juveniles are pelagic. It was supposed, that upon attaining the length of 8 cm, juveniles descend to the bottom (Viller, 1983). Our data collected in June - July 2001, showed that juveniles of common angler occur in the superficial layers in area $55^{\circ}20'$ - $59^{\circ}00'$ N outside of the exclusive economic zone of the Great Britain (fig. 1). The sizes of juveniles varied from 6 to 15 cm (fig. 2). Thus, the transition to the bottom life style in this species can occur at the larger sizes, than it was supposed before, that promotes dispersal of this species into new habitats (for example, from the shelf to adjacent underwater heights). Besides this, at early ontogenetic stages *Lophius piscatorius* possesses specific adaptation for the pelagic life style. The body of fish is embedded into a jelly cover, reducing body density and assisting juveniles "to soar" in water column. Thus, juveniles of this typically bottom fish have morphological adaptations for pelagic life, which promote wider dispersal and expansion of its natural habitat.

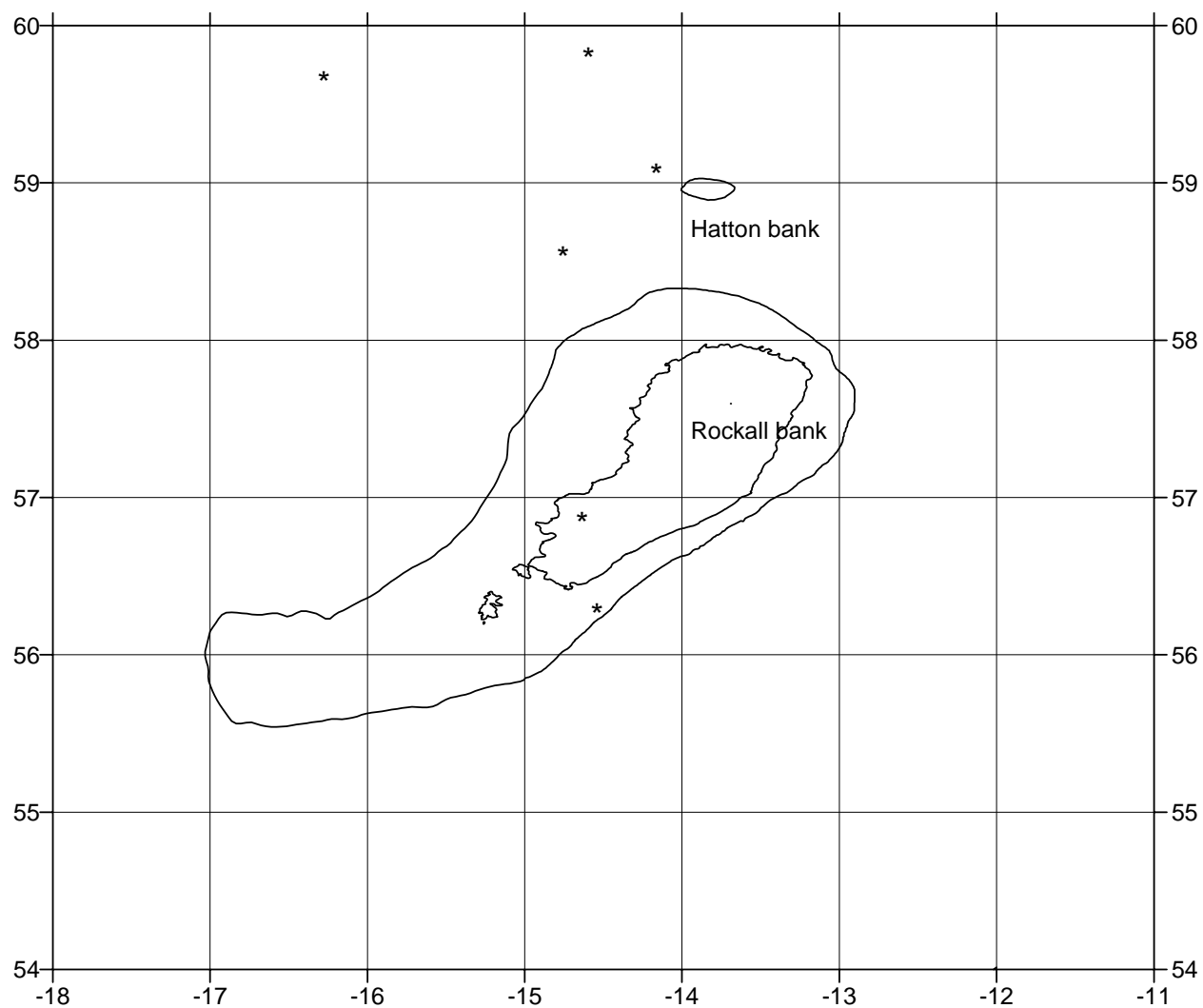


Fig. 1 Places of angler catching (*)



Fig. 2 Angler