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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Est. year** | **Description of habitat** | **Location referred to** | **Ref no.** |
| 1890 | “Oysters are gregarious, in consequence of the vast multitude of locomotive larvae which are set free simultaneously and which, being subjected to the same influences, tend to settle about the same time in the area to which the swarm drifts. Millions of oysters are thus aggregated together over stretches of the bottom of the sea, at depths of from one or two to twenty or more fathoms, and constitute what are known as oyster beds.” | Great Britain | 9 |
| 1891 | “Trawlers have lately found oyster beds in the North Sea. The huge ‘Skelling Bank’ off Heligoland consists of numerous patches of oysters; other great oyster beds have been found off the Dutch coast by trawlers. A trawl has a beam which spreads about 40 feet, and especially in very deep water, where dredges will not work nicely, it picks up a great many oysters…” | Skelling Bank, North Sea | 9 |
| 1700 | “There is another [oyster] bank in front of Fano and far from the beach four miles. It is twelve steps deep and four hundred long and extends towards the north-west as far as Pesaro. It begins again in Rimini, continuing up to Cesenatico in the same direction where it stops, and then starts again opposite Primaro, ending above Magnavacca (today Porto Garibaldi) [...]. The seafloor is filled with oysters, almost placed one on top of the other like stones, forming a wall.” | Fano, Italy | 25 |
| 1754 | "[Arrived] at Brighthelmstone…I hired a fisherman, the next day, to take up some oysters from an old oyster ground, that had been long dissus'd, lying about three or four leagues off to sea, and where, by his description, the shells were cover'd with great varieties of these minute tree-like corralines..." | Brighton, England | 30 |
| 1796 | “Oysters are found on a strong clay bottom, on rocks and stones, and sometimes, though but thinly, in what is called by the fishers sea tathe. These last are of a very inferior quality.” | Scotland | 40 |
| 1885 | “…returned from the trout lochs to the yacht, and with my trout-landing net from the boat, caught up several delicious oysters, which we opened and eat on the spot. This was close to the mouth of the little river, but in slightly deeper water we could see hundreds of others and many empty shells. Our yacht lay 150 yards from shore in 9 fathoms, but all the edges of the circular loch are about 12-feet deep. The rocks go straight down, but the bottom is a thick, muddy or gravelly deposit, possibly diatomite in course of formation. The flavour of these oysters was superior to any I’ve ever tasted, and that in the month of June. A large bed could easily be formed here.” | Scotland | 44 |
| 1837 | “If the sea-bed consists of solid rock, or of loose stones, some oysters are attached to the projections of the rock, or to the individual stones, but many also lie loose on the bottom. Where this consists of clay, sand, or silt, all the oysters must naturally lie loose, except where some are grouped in irregular clusters of three, four, or five individuals. More than five to six I have never seen united; and it is also evident that, if the oysters lay in many layers one above another, and, as a natural consequence, grew together in great masses, the underlings would be hindered not only in their development, but also in opening their shells, and consequently die in a shorter or longer time. The easternmost banks are so far from forming outcrops on the sea-bed that they usually lie in or on the edge of the deeper trenches in the sea-bed.” | Wadden Sea | 45 |
| 1837 | [Whether oysters lie on their flat side] “That this is not the case with the oyster on the sea-bottom is evident from the fact that clusters of oysters are often found, in which the individual oysters are connected with other fields in such a way that they cannot possibly all rest on the domed shell. I have more often seen full-grown oysters connected with each other at right angles: when one of these is thought to rest on the vaulted shell, the other must stand vertically erect on the edge.” | Wadden Sea | 45 |
| 1837 | The oysters, which, as we have seen above, is itself so worthless, and consequently peaceful, animal, is given at the price of a great many enemies. It is this circumstance which makes the oyster-banks so interesting to a zoologist; one can probably always be sure … of drawing from the sea between the oysters a host of other animals, whose amusement is undoubtedly largely derived from the oyster. Such animals are various species of crabs, starfish, snails, worms, &c. Although the oyster by its shell should appear to be amply protected against these enemies, it will be evident from what follows that even the adult oyster does not always find a reassuring shelter in the armour with which nature has equipped it; still less can this be the case with the very infant. So great is the fertility of the oyster, that I alone find on our banks a long greater number of young oysters. When the full-grown oyster is drawn up from the depths, its shell is generally found lined with calcareous or membranous tubes, which serve as a dwelling-place for various worms (serpulare or worm-tubes, &c.); with balans, anomia, chitonians, ascidians, and similar immobile or unwieldy animals. The more of these there are, the more loopholes are formed (and especially if two or three oysters are together) for numerous small crabs (*Porcellana longicornis* and *Galachea strigosa*) of size from that of a grain of manure to that of a large pea, for polynids, ophids, &c. ; oyster young, however, are comparatively rarely seen; I suppose because they are for the most part devoured by these many small but very large predators.” | Wadden Sea | 45 |
| 1870 | “In the year 1870 a small oyster bed was discovered at the mouth of the Thames, north east from Whitstable. It was about 18 metres long by 6 metres broad. Forty-eight hours later 75 boats were there, close alongside of one another, fishing up the oysters.... Upon every old oyster which was taken were found only from nine to ten young ones of different ages. This bed had never been previously disturbed, and the oysters were accordingly found in their natural condition.” | Margate Sands, England | 46 |
| 1877 | “Generally the [oyster] net is allowed to drag from five to ten minutes… and the entire contents of the bag emptied upon the deck. This mass consists of old oyster shells, mussels of various kinds, living oysters, snails, crabs, worms, starfish, sea-urchins, polyps, sponges, and sea-weeds, which are generally mixed up with sand and mud... Despite these manifold cleansings [by fishermen for market] many oysters when they are exposed for sale are covered with dead and living animals, and the peculiar odour which oysters have when carried into the interior arises from the death and decay of the organic materials upon the outside of the shells...” | Schleswig-Holstein, Germany | 46 |
| 1877 | “In no place upon the seaflats do oysters grow upon rocky bottom. They grow best where there is a substratum of old oyster and other shells. The most of them lie singly, and they are seldom found growing together in clumps of masses. The wide-spread notion that they are found growing firmly attached to the sea-bottom, and piled upon one another, layer upon layer, is accordingly false. Upon the best of the Schleswig-Holstein beds the dredge must drag over a surface of from 1 to 3 square metres, and often over a greater distance, in order to secure a single full grown oyster.” | Schleswig-Holstein, Germany | 46 |
| 1877 | “Over the Schleswig-Holstein seaflats there exist 50 oyster beds of very different sizes. The largest is not far from 2 km long, but the greater number are shorter than this. Their breadth is much less than their length, which is in the same direction as the channels along the slopes of which they lie.... “ | Schleswig-Holstein, Germany | 46 |
| 1877 | “Over the Schleswig-Holstein seaflats, and also along the mouths of English rivers, I have observed that the oyster beds are richer in all kinds of animal life than any other portion of the sea-bottom. As soon as the oystermen have emptied out a full dredge upon the deck of their vessel, one can see nimble pocket crabs (*Carcinus maenas*) and slow horn-crabs (*Hyas aranea*) begin to work their way out of the heap of shells and living oysters, and try to get to the water once more. Old abandoned snail shells begin to move about, caused by the hermit crabs [...] Spiral shelled snails (*Buccinum undatum*) […] Red start fish (*Asteracanthion rubens*) [...] Sea urchins [...] Here and there a ring worm (*Nereis pelagica*) [...] Black edible mussels (*Mytilus edulis*) and white cockles (*Cardium edule*)[...] Even the shells of the living oysters are inhabited. Barnacles (*Balanus crenatus*) [...] often cover the entire surface of one of the valves. Frequently the shells are bedecked with yellowish tassels a span or more in length, each of which is a community of thousands of small gelatinous bryozoa (*Alcyonidium gelatinosum*), or they are overgrown by a yellowish sponge (*Halichondria panicea*) [...] Upon many beds the oysters are covered with thick clumps of sand which are composed of the tubes of small worms (*Sabellaria anglica*). These tubes, called 'sand-rolls' resemble organ-pipes, and are formed from grains of sand cemented into shape by means of slime from the skin of the worm [...]. Upon certain beds near the south point of the island of Sylt [...] there lives upon the oyster shells a species of tube-worm (*Pomatoceros triqueter*) [...] The shells of many oysters upon these beds also carry what are called 'sea hands' (*Alcyonium digitatum*) which are which or yellow communities of polyps of the size and shape of a clumsy glove. Often the oyster shells are also covered over with a brownish, clod-like mass, which consists of branched polyps (*Eudendrium rameum* and *Sertularia pumila*) or they may be covered with tassels of yellow stems which are nearly a finger long and have at their distal ends reddish polyp-heads (*Tubularia indivisa*). Among these polyps, and extending out beyond them, are longer stems, which bear light yellow or brown polyp-cups (*Sertularia argentea*) [...]. I once took off and counted, one by one, all the animals living upon two oysters. Upon one I found 104 and upon the other 221 animals of three different species [...]. Soles [...] stone-picks, and stingrays [...] are abundant upon the oyster banks. | Schleswig-Holstein, Germany | 46 |
| 1877 | “At such places colonies of oysters, so-called oyster beds, are found, along with many other sea-animals.” | Schleswig-Holstein, Germany | 46 |
| 1877 | “Many oysters are taken north of Germany and Holland, east of England, and in the Channel between England and France […]. The oyster grounds of the North Sea lie mostly from 33 to 34 metres beneath the surface of the water. They begin with a small stretch to the southeast of the island of Heligoland, extend from this island in a west-northwest direction, and form a territory 15 to 22 kilometres broad, which spreads out far to the west. Fishermen from Holland and Germany dredge for oysters here, especially during the months of August, September, and October, and often catch, at a single drag of the dredge, as many as 1,000 oysters. Sometimes great bunches of oysters growing attached to one another are gathered into the net. The deep sea oysters grow much larger than those found along the coasts. Specimens are taken with shells 13 centimetres broad... (S. Metzger’s Bei truge zu dem Jahresbericht d. Commiss. Zur Unt. D. deutschen Meere, 1873, page 171, u. 1875, page 252.)” | Southern North Sea / English Channel | 46 |
| 1877 | “The living oysters do not lie in thick masses, stuck to and on one another on the banks, rather mostly more than one meter from one another apart, so that on a meter square of bank area mostly less than one adult oyster will be caught. And yet smaller is the count of half grown oysters. On the largest and most fruitful Bank Huntje, were in ten surveys undertaken between 1730-1852 on average for every 1000 grown oyster only 484 half grown caught, and on most other banks relatively fewer half grown.” | Wadden Sea | 46 |
| 1866 | "An oystery bottom, a kind of stony bottom… The depth averages from 3 to 7 fathoms […]. Almost 50 sail boats work there in the summer season, cannot dredge the beds in winter because of the gales and because “the ground is so heavy… the oysters stick close to the ground in the winter season.” | Great Grimsby, England | 50 |
| 1866 | "Oyster beds are at a distance of about three miles or three and a half from the shore...The bay being a semi-circle, some of them may be more than three miles and a half from Weymouth...[oysters are] taken off the breakwater and under Whitenose… They lie in irregular patches off the breakwater… We are constantly finding new beds". | Wyke Regis, England | 50 |
| 1836 | “The oyster banks of Wicklow have become hard like a rock, as is generally believed for want of dredging. The more the banks are dredged, the more oysters breed. It would do the banks great good to be broken up by a heavy dredge worked from a large smack.” | Wicklow, Ireland | 62 |
| 1836 | “In Ballycroy Bay, and the Sound of Bullsmouth, three thousand oysters may be taken in a day, with a dredge. They are often sold for 3d per hundred…. There are several natural oyster beds in Broadhaven and Blacksod bays, and in Achil Sound; they are open to the public and dredged.” | Achill Sound, Ireland | 62 |
| 1871 | “I remember when the boats could go out and dredge at Milford Haven, round by the Stack Rock, and each boat would get from 1000 to 1200 oysters in three or four hours. The last catch I took, I took 16 boats catch for a week; they had moderately fine weather during the week, and the largest catch was 600 oysters each, there were three men to a boat, and all of them did not bring in 5,000 in the gross, and that was starvation to the men.” | Milford Haven, Wales | 65 |
| 1875 | “I will read a very short extract from my report to the Board of Trade [on an inquiry at Poole]… It is dated the 19 of June 1875: ‘Some years ago the fishery was very productive. I had witnesses before me who agreed in stating that they had taken 2000 or 3000, or even 5000 oysters a day. The witnesses before me were also agreed that 500 or 600 oysters a day constituted now a good catch; that this number could only be taken at the very commencement of the season, and that the take rapidly fell off…. There is no reason to suppose that the small stock of oysters is attributable to any failure of spat. On the contrary, it is clear, from the age of the few oysters found, that a certain amount of spat must have fallen in each of the two last years. The fishermen themselves admit that the oysters are over-dredged; and I have no doubt whatever that the gradual failure of the oyster fishery in Poole Harbour is due to over-dredging.” | Poole Harbour, England | 65 |
| 1848 | “Clew Bay abounds with oysters, where they are taken in large quantities, (considering the wretched small dredges with which they are fished for,) out of an open boat, rowed by two men, and a third holding the dredge rope. They seldom catch more than a thousand a day, as they find it difficult to dispose of them, even at a moderate price... the expense of sending them up [to Dublin] by carriers runs away with any profit that the fishermen would derive from a good market, and they now seldom fish for them unless they are bespoke." | Clew Bay, Ireland | 75 |
| 1849 | "The oysters, when he was a boy, were as deep as the Town Hall is high. The bank was two miles long by half a mile wide" … "Attributes the failure to the French working eight or ten miles to the southward of Brighton. This is the ground where there was a great oyster bed which has been dredged out. The oysters fell off first and the French tore away the oysters and made a trawl ground of it. It is 30 years since the oysters were torn away." | Brighton / English Channel | 76 |
| 1879 | “There are oysters, in patches, in the bay. They are in lumps, 8 or 10 together. They would be 4 to 6 inches long. Nobody fishes for them here. There has been trawling for many years here by strange boats. The local trawling has increased of late years. The inshore ground has only recently been worked…” | Aberystwyth Bay, Wales | 76 |
| 1879 | “There are no oyster grounds worth speaking of on this side [interviewee at Scarborough]. There are oyster grounds on the Dutch side. The trawlers keep away from them, as they tear the nets. The oyster dredgers do not go there […]. These great oyster banks are situated on patches in the North Sea, especially off the Dutch coast. The trawlers carefully avoid these beds as the heavy clumps tear the nets." | Southern North Sea | 76 |
| 1879 | “It took 20 boats seven years to dredge away these oysters. There is a fathom more water on the bed now than when they began to dredge. The oysters were thick on that bed and they used to spat. There is no dredging on it now as there are no more oysters to dredge. One boat has got 30,000 oysters a week…” | Ramsey, Isle of Man | 76 |
| 1875 | "The trawlers avoid this “rough ground” as they call it, as much as possible; but when they do by accident get on to it, the oysters are so numerous that they fill up the trawl next and nearly bring up the vessel" … “The dredgermen who go out fishing in the North Sea (as I found out in my inquiries at Yarmouth) come across every now and then an enormous tract of oyster ground, which tears their nets all away to pieces, and for that reason they get away from it.” | Southern North Sea | 87 |
| 1902 | “It is by far the best stocked bed on the coast, and may, I think, be considered in a satisfactory condition, since the catch comprised oysters of all ages […]. I was given to understand that the Ballyvaldon oysters were smaller, with more fish to shell than those of the northern beds, but I could not see that this was the case. “Clods” are certainly conspicuous by their absence, and comparatively few of the shells have any serious weight of white worm tubes on them; but in addition to the “fern” (*Sertularia abietina*), which is not disfiguring, there are a good many soft worm tubes (*Terehella*, or the like), sea-squirts (*Ciona intestinalis*), and small shell-fish (*Crenella diseors*) to be cleaned off. Dredging might improve the condition, giving a smaller, deeper shell, but on the other hand it is at least not improbable that the bed owes its present stock to its remoteness from fishing centres, and consequent freedom from human molestation […]. A Wexford boat, dredging this bed last year, is reported to have taken 700 oysters in four hours, which is the only indication which I possess of the relative efficiency of a professional dredger and the “Helga.” The best haul made by the latter took 166 oysters in forty minutes, but most hauls gave about 100, or less, per hour […]. Inside the ground which we worked I am informed that there once existed a bed in very shoal water, where the oysters were of a smaller class, more like what are known as “natives” than their fellows from the deeper grounds. Whether this bed still exists I had no means of determining, as the “Helga” draws too much water to permit of our making search [...]. We know the effect that a large dredging fleet had in the past on a supply which I believe to have been incalculably greater than that which now exists; and though the Inspectors, in a report to which attention is drawn above, considered that the decline was in part due to failure of spatting for many years, it appears that such failure is a necessary consequence of over-dredging.” | Ireland | 106 |
| 1871 | “Helligsø - 'one of the oldest banks in the whole Limfjord. It was initially extremely rich, so that even in one day, about 14,000 oysters were fished of a single boat despite the fishermen's inferior exercise scraping… The bank decreased year by year in fullness, but was still in the spring of 1868 so rich that a single boat in one day scraped about 5000 stkr. Now it gives so little that the scraping can't pay off... has been abandoned." | Limfjord, Denmark | 118 |
| 1860 | "In the same period, the locality of Miramare, the inlets of Sistiana, Panzana and the lagoon of Grado are remembered to flourish as regards the natural production of oysters. In Grado, the marine slums, threatened by the waves, were defended by shoals, and the waters were enriched by springs. Towards the outside of the lagoon, there was a natural school of adult oysters that fishermen did not exploit with trawling nets to avoid damaging their gears." | Grado, Italy | 126 |
| 1992 | Interview with a local fisher who used to fish oysters [date unknown] and stated that the oysters made clumps and some were isolated and individualized | Murcia, Spain | 157 |
| 1792 | “Edible oysters arrive in our side dishes from two different homes, and from these, they receive different prerogatives. Others, as we have mentioned, inhabit the calcareous bottoms; these remain attached to the concretions, grow a lot, and contract a somewhat disgusting taste and smell, similar to that of the Alcyons, and of the Sponges, which is usually called a marine odour. Others stay in the muddy bottoms of the lagoons and grow less; they do not make that stench, and they are tastier and more appreciated. Those stick to the calcareous concretions; these are forced to remain free, but being all equally in need of support, if they cannot find a better one, they attach themselves to a pebble, a shell, a wall, a piece of wood, or among themselves. If you want those of the sea to lose their nauseating qualities, just carry them, and leave them immersed for some time in the waters of the lagoons, and then they become as tasty as the indigenous ones of these places. Among us, the Traders industry uses this expedient to improve them.” | Lido, Italy | 158 |
| 1880 | "Historical German fishing maps show large areas of oysters near Helgoland (oyster ground) and "oyster grounds" in the southern North Sea northwest of Helgoland to the Doggerbank. According to estimates by Berghahn and Ruth (2005), the oyster stock was at least 100 to 1,000 times as large as the North Frisian Wadden Sea stock, which had been documented for over 200 years. Its area is said to have amounted to approximately 21,000 km² […]. That a worthwhile oyster industry on the "oyster ground" in the North Sea midway through the first half of the 20th century apparently was no longer possible can be concluded from Hagmeier and Kändler (1927), who suggest in their notes: "During the March trip of the Reich research steamer "Poseidon", observations were made of the oyster ground of the North Sea. While a 0.5 nautical mile long trawl with an oyster iron was entirely unsuccessful, a total of 42 oysters were caught in several short trawls…” | Southern North Sea | 165 |
| 1841 | P162. "...yet all this time there have been extensive tracts of oyster grounds existing in the North Sea, but known only to a few fishermen comparatively. This bed or ground is of enormous dimensions compared with other oyster grounds; its length Easterly and Westerly is nearly 200 miles, and varying in breadth from 30 to 70 miles. The Western bed commences 25 miles Easterly of Botney Gut, off the N part of the Black Bank, in 21 fathoms of water, and extends NNE for about 20 miles in 27 fathoms. It then stretches to Teschelling, 25 miles distance from the land. 1000 oysters have been caught in four hours in the trawl net. The bed extends Easterly, passing outside Borkum Reef, down to Heligoland Deep, with the island bearing NNE. From the locality the bed extends not less than 60 miles in the North-West direction, where they lie very thick; 1200 have been caught here in the space of four hours by the trawl net. Towing by steam power, the whole space of ground appears almost inexhaustible, at all events it will take a great number of years to exhaust it. The water being deep, improved dredges are required, and steam winches to heave them up with. If enterprising gentlemen were to form a company, and have a few steamers of about 70 tons built, with wells in them, and fitted with steam winches, it is highly probably it would pay well… The vessels, I should estimate, would bring from 35 to 50 thousand [oysters] per week, and that ought to pay well. Already small sailing vessels have been getting 20 thousand per week, without the aid of steam power. … Grimsby has now twenty oyster vessels.” | North Sea | 170 |
| 1907 | “The period of the Cancale Fishery is known as "la Caravane" [...]. The 1909 "Caravane" involved 6 trips of 360 boats each, manned by 2500 men. From 10 April to 24 April, fishing took place for 38 hours and 45 minutes. The number of oysters caught was 16 million.” | Cancale, France | 171 |
| 1907 | “In Auray River (near the bay of Quiberon), in 1885, 150 boats, manned by 1648 men, have dredged 4.2 million oysters within 4 days…” | Auray River, France | 171 |
| 1906 | “It is certain that in the past, in each river of the Bay of Quiberon, the oyster bed was continuous and that in the past it was linked to the large natural bed of the open sea […]. The oysters, in the most favourable conditions, rest on a hard soil, formed of old shells which, when packed and mixed with mud, form a solid ground. The oysters are sometimes isolated, sometimes attached to each other to form more or less large clumps.” |  | 171 |
| 2008 | “The reefs occur along exposed to moderately exposed coasts in clear marine waters, on rocky and mixed bottoms between 7–23 m depth. Plenty of oyster reefs were found in the area between Cape Korakya and Urdoviza Bay. Other locations include the area in front of Rezovo, as well as a more northerly site with oyster aggregations attached to rocky reef vertical faces in front of Cape Cherni Nos (Fig. 1) [...]. The oyster reefs found by us are constructed mainly of *Ostrea edulis* shells, with calcareous tubes of serpulid polychaetes also present as cementing material. They represent erect biogenic structures with a distinguishing irregular, branching or netted shape with serrated margins attaining 7 m height, 30–50 m length and 10 m width (Fig. 2). Smaller oyster reefs may also occur as a sponge-like structure adhering to rocky vertical faces.... Despite the numerous oyster reefs discovered, no live oysters were observed at any of the locations. During the 1970s live oysters were still abundant on the reefs as documented by underwater photographs (Klisurov, unpublished). Therefore the decline of oyster populations took place between the 1980s and 2000s. A few occurrences of live oysters in 2007 and 2008 around Cape Maslen Nos, as most “from fishermen” information, could not be verified.” | Black Sea | 178 |
| 1874 | "OUT TO THE OYSTER BEDS. We were, on Thursday last, one of a party of about a dozen persons who went out to the Oyster beds recently discovered off Douglas Bay. The swift sailing yacht Lizzie was at our disposal, and, with the fair wind which prevailed, she, in considerably under an hour, took us out to the scene of the destructive operations of the thirty boats which we found playing havoc with the bivalves. Anyone looking at these vessels from the shore would almost fancy that they were anchored in line, head on to the land, but we found that this was a delusion to which the distance lent a semblance of reality. The vessels were crossing and re-crossing the paths of each other in every possible way, and the men appeared to work with a degree of vigour which lent strength to the assertion made by one of them to us, that in a fortnight hence there would not be an oyster left on the bank. That they are already getting scarce is apparent from the fact that in the dredges large quantities of stones are now brought up, indicating that already the bed has been broken up to the bottom. Each boat has out, so far as we could see, four dredges, so that in all there were about 120 of these destructive engines at work on the bank. The dredges are lifted and emptied about every fifteen or twenty minutes. Say that this operation is performed three times an hour, it follows that there are 300 hauls per hour, or 3,000 in a working day of ten hours, made from the bank. Of course we have no means of knowing the exact extent of the oyster bed, but it is very evident that, no matter how extensive it may be, if these boats are permitted to " rag at it"' (as the local phrase is) without intermission, in season and out of season, the total destruction of the bank is only a question of a very limited time. The operations of the boats extended over a space of about a mile and a-half to two miles in length, and about half a mile or so in width; so that we may presume that the bank is about that in dimensions. The vessels engaged are cutter-rigged, and appeared to be handy, smart boats, for, notwithstanding the deterring influence of the dredges out on the weather side, they went through the water at a good speed. The depth of water at the bank is from 30 to 35 fathoms. Out of the thirty boats engaged in the fishery, there was only one Manx boat (a Ramsey smack) that we saw...." | Douglas, Isle of Man | 182 |
| 1873 | “GOOD NEWS FOR OYSTER EATERS.—There are (says the Liverpool Mercury) good times in store for oyster eaters. A new bed has been discovered between Fleetwood and Whitehaven of almost inexhaustible dimensions, being calculated to cover 800 square miles, the oysters lying two or three feet deep. The fish is said to be remarkably fine and well fed, and of a delicate flavour, though the outside shell appears to be somewhat large and rough. Near Fleetwood the oysters sell at 2s. per score.” | Fleetwood, England | 186 |
| 1829 | “About sixty years ago there was a fine bed of oysters near the end of St. Patrick's Causeway at Mochras. Nine hundred have been got in one day by a rowing boat starting from Barmouth, but many more were got by sailing craft. There he dredged till he discovered the bed between Pen-y-chain and St. Tudwall's Road about fifty years ago. There were then very few boats in the Bay, from six to seven thousand oysters were often got in one day with only one dredge, but when larger boats from Jersey with superior tackle came this became a small haul. The oysters were sent away by smacks and from a few local craft. The fleet working from Pwllheli rose to over a hundred in number from Jersey, Carnarvon, Bangor, &c., and other strange ports. They by constant dredging ruined the bed and now it is not worth the while of the fishermen to go dredging. Thousands of pounds went into the pockets of the local fishermen yearly. There are no doubt many now living at Pwllheli who can corroborate my statements.” | Mochras, Wales | 188 |
| 1897 | “It was reported that large oyster beds had been discovered off New Quay, but strong dredges would be required to open them.” | New Quay, Wales | 191 |
| 1872 | “The so-called Flensburg oysters all come from the west coast, the stretch from Husum to Tondern opposite between the islands of Sylt, Föhr etc., where deep water channels run through the shallow seabed. If the oysters have once formed posto on the walls and bottom of these channels and also cemented themselves to each other, these "banks" have a not insignificant durability, although the impact of the waves is broken by the islands lying in front of them. The eternal regular outflow and inflow of water also continuously feeds the coasts.” | Wadden Sea | 199 |
| 1872 | “We now have to take a closer look at the occurrence of the oyster and its geographical distribution on the European coasts. Let us start from the Adriatic Sea, in which the oyster lives everywhere, at least sporadically, and in various places in masses, i.e. in beds. There is no doubt that the latter relationship is the more natural, although the opposite cannot be said of the isolated oysters. In the shallowest corner of the bay of Muggia in Trieste, the oysters settle on poles stuck into the mud, whereas they cannot survive on the very soft muddy ground of this bay. For centuries they have also been kept in the canals and basins of the Venice Arsenal.” | Adriatic Sea | 199 |
| 1872 | “Further down on the Italian side, famous oyster beds have been found since ancient times near Brindisi (Brundufium) and in the Gulf of Taranto. From there, the oyster spreads through the entire eastern part of the Mediterranean without, as it seems, accumulating en masse; it has also penetrated the Black Sea and settled here and there individually on the southern coast of the Crimea.” | Adriatic Sea | 199 |
| 1800 | “These shells are very often covered with productions of the coral kind: they are frequently loaded also with small muscles and multitudes of worms, but only on the convex side, which appears to be the upper one, so that the animal rests on the flat side. It frequently happens that both shells are quite pierced through, and gnawed by worms in the same manner as old wood.” | Unknown | 200 |
| 1800 | “An old oyster often has twenty small ones attached to it” | Unknown | 200 |
| 1769 | “They are then 10 to 12 fathoms of water in the open sea, with the scrapers provided for the purpose, under full sail, cut up, taken out of the shoals, or put into the bath, whereupon the shoals are again lowered into the sea, or are then carried away until they have had as much as they desire. In such a boat, 3 or 4 scrapers can be towed, or if a dozen boat are set out, they can, in a hurry, scrape up 20 or 40,000 oysters. But as this oyster bed never rests, or is always abused in summer and winter, and also in the unused months, in a bad or disorderly manner, even by farmers far away and other strangers, it is already very ruined, and will soon be destroyed, unless it is put under proper inspection, that nothing is harvested for 2 or 3 years, and then only at certain times. which protection could best be put into effect, if the inhabitants of Skagen alone became entitled to this oyster catch.”  “On the Slesvig banks in 12 hrs in good conditions, 3-4000 oysters, or Aalbaekkerne which use bigger boats 5-5600 oysters in one day. (from a footnote on the same page)."  In contrast Kroyer 1837: "It is generally believed that the banks have improved since the Peace. In the first years after the war a boat could at most scrape a few hundred oysters a day; now, however, more than double that.” | Skagen, Denmark | 203 |
| 1832 | "In the Wash, about fifty years ago, were enormous oyster beds; one extending nearly the whole length of the Wash and continuing outside about 50 miles. One bed in particular, which was discovered about forty years ago, being (as the fishermen state) a fathom and a half deep, with nothing but oysters. Now everything is changed; the oysters on these beds are nearly exhausted, there not having been a fall of spat for a great number of years..." | The Wash, England | 123 |
| 1849 | “Until the last fishing season which lasted 6 months & 10 days, this industry (Bay of Brest fishery) came to the aid of 576 fishermen on 144 boats & that 14 million oysters were sold.” | Bay of Brest, France | 224 |
| 1784 | [In Bay of Saint Brieuc, North Brittany] “The Parliament of Brittany issued a decree on 16 October 1784, because the Saint Brieuc bed was almost completely exhausted: "In many places where it was formerly composed of several layers, only mud is currently being removed"”. | Bay of St Brieuc, France | 225 |
| 1800 | In the third year, the oyster becomes capable of reproducing; nevertheless, the reproduction is so immense that millions can be found in certain places in the sea. Such places where oysters gather are called oyster beds. Very often one finds corellanic plants on the oyster shells; often they are also covered with mussels and other plants. | Unknown | 226 |
| 1800 | “The oyster-catcher also swims, but is more likely to be seen walking along the beach. At low tide, it seems to be particularly cheerful; then it runs around with a hooting sound, looking for its food, which consists mainly of oysters. The bird knows how to break open the shells very skillfully, without hurting its beak on the sharp edges. If they are closed too tightly, it hits them against a rock so that they crack. If it can't find oysters, it will eat mussels, snails and other worms, even dead theirs that have been thrown away.” | Unknown | 226 |
| 1743 | “The seed is like a viscus or glue, which immediately attaches itself to trees and stones and, in the absence of these, often to the oysters themselves, so that three or four can still be attached to an oyster.” | Sweden | 227 |
| 1831 | “In June, when oysters are most scarce, they reproduce on the bottom of the sea, by leaving out their eggs or spawn, which looks like a drop of glue, and attaches itself to everything in the sea, often to oysters themselves.” | Germany | 228 |