

Summary

Although classed as freshwater fishes by Dr Maitland, lampreys were excluded from the paper on the Freshwater Fishes of the Island of Bute by myself and the late Mr Alex Stephen (Gibson and Stephen, 1976). As we said at the time, although we had heard of specimens having been taken at sea not far from Bute, we excluded all sea-taken records because of the difficulty in drawing a line.

Since I know of no previously published record of the Sea Lamprey actually on Bute, I feel that these records are worth recording in the Society's *Transactions*. Needless to say, I shall be very grateful to hear of any additional evidence.

References

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- MAITLAND, P.S. (1972). *A Key to the Freshwater Fishes of the British Isles*. Freshwater Biological Association: Scientific Publication No. 27. Ambleside.

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE LONG-FINNED TUNNY ON THE ISLAND OF BUTE, WITH NOTES ON EARLIER CLYDE RECORDS J.A. Gibson and Ian Hopkins

Introduction

The Long-finned Tunny *Thunnus alalunga* is a distinctly uncommon fish in British waters, although several have been recorded within recent years. Two of these specimens have been found on the Island of Bute, the details of which are as follows:

Ettrick Bay, 1984

On 9th December 1984 an adult specimen was found dead on the shore at Ettrick Bay (NS035665) by Mr James Robertson, of Croc-an-Raer. Mr Robertson contacted Mr Ian Hopkins, who confirmed the identification and then weighed, measured and photographed the fish, which was fairly recently dead and still in very good condition. It weighed 50.75 lbs and measured 40.50 inches from snout to fork of tail, which, according to Wheeler's scale (9), would make it a well-grown specimen at least seven years old.

An excellent photograph, taken by Mr Hopkins and showing the long pectoral fin reaching well beyond the origin of the second dorsal fin, has been deposited in the Scottish Natural History Library as a permanent record. A very brief account of this occurrence was published in 1986 (4).

Garroch Head, 1987

On 27th September 1987 Dr Gibson was attracted to a number of gulls feeding noisily on an object just offshore from Garroch Head (NS097518), and on close approach this was seen to be an apparently unusual fish floating amongst seaweed some ten feet offshore. The fish was retrieved and found to be a specimen of the Long-finned Tunny.

As already noted, this is a relatively rare fish in British waters, but Dr Gibson had been fortunate enough to examine a previous specimen in 1979 (3), and so was immediately sure of the identification. Although fairly fresh, the fish had been considerably damaged by the attentions of the gulls but the identification points were still clear, in particular the pectoral fins, which measured nine inches long and reached well beyond the origin of the second dorsal fin.

This fish was markedly smaller than the 1984 specimen, and measured 23.00 inches from snout to fork of tail, which, according to

Wheeler's scale (9), would make it between four and five years old. Dr Gibson had no readily available means of weighing the fish, which in any case had by then been extensively damaged, but he estimated that the original fish would have weighed about 12.00 lbs.

Earlier Clyde Records

D. W. Tucker, in his 1955 survey of the Long-finned Tunny in the British seas (8), could only record twelve specimens, two of which were from the Clyde area. Since then, however, several additional specimens have been reported, including four more from the Clyde sea area or the immediate neighbourhood. The details of all Clyde records known to us are as follows:

Loch Gilp: One taken in Loch Gilp, off Loch Fyne, about 4th November 1932. There appears to have been some slight confusion about the locality of this record. It was referred to originally as Lochgoilhead (5), but on two subsequent occasions (6, 7) as Loch Gilp, which is now accepted as the correct locality. Weight 55.50 lbs, length 42.50 inches, pectoral fin 15.75 inches.

Holy Loch: One taken at Kilmun, in the Holy Loch, on 20th June 1934 (7). Weight 56.00 lbs, length 44.00 inches, pectoral fin 18.00 inches.

Loch Fyne: One taken near Furnace, Loch Fyne, on 28th February 1968 (1). Weight 30.00 lbs, length 43.30 inches, pectoral fin 10.25 inches.

Clachan: One found dead at Clachan, Kintyre, on 24th August 1979 (3). Weight 13.00 lbs, length 25.00 inches, pectoral fin 9.75 inches.

Summary of Bute Records

Ettrick Bay: One found dead at Ettrick Bay, Island of Bute, on 9th December 1984 (4). Weight 50.75 lbs, length 40.50 inches, pectoral fin 10.00 inches.

Garroch Head: One found dead at Garroch Head, Island of Bute, on 27th September 1987. Weight not recorded, length 23.00 inches, pectoral fin 9.00 inches.

Full details of these two important Bute natural history records have not previously been published, so we feel that the relevant information should now be properly documented in the Buteshire Society's *Transactions*.

References

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3. GIBSON, J.A. (1980). The occurrence of the Long-finned Tunny in Kintyre. *Western Naturalist*, 9: 65-66.
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