

6 GEORGE V, A. 1916

different kinds of herring fishing carried on in the Norwegian waters, and many different "sorts" of herring are recognized, according to the size most common in the different shoals. These sorts have been known, both among the fishermen and in the trade, from time immemorial, and a great amount of care and study has been devoted to the question of dividing them according to some rational method of assortment.

The fishery statistics distinguish four principal groups: small herring, fat herring, large herring, and spring herring. It is also possible to distinguish, practically speaking, four different kinds of herring fishing, corresponding to these four classes, and differing, not only as regards the method of capture employed but also in point of place and time; these being carried on, for the most part, in different regions of the coastal waters, and at different periods of the year. In the year 1908, the catches of the different classes were as follows (given in hectolitres) see chart, fig. 13:—

	Spring Herring.	Large Herring.	Fat Herring.	Small Herring.
West Coast...	613,356	...	605	47,840
Romsdal	11,500	161,320	4,990	18,151
Trondelagen	...	9,628	73,852	39,320
Nordland	...	800	406,654	77,100
Troms-District	...	9	127,500	48,100
Finmarken	...	...	...	92,580
Whole country.....	624,856	111,757	615,601	323,131

Whole country total of all sorts 1,675,345 hl.

The small herring are taken, as will be seen from the above, all along the coast, but in increasing numbers farther to the north. The fat herring are taken, by far the greater part, within the range from Trondhjemsjord to the Tromsø district, the large herrings of the coasts of the Romsdal and southern Trondhjem district, while by far the greater part of the spring herring are taken in the west coast waters.

The small herring do not exceed 19 centimetres in length; they vary from 8 to 19 cm. The ovary or milt is, at the utmost, only visible as a thin thread below the spine; in point of fatness they are far inferior to the fat herring. Age determinations have shown that they belong to the three, mostly to the two first year-classes. The fat herring vary as a rule from 19 to 26 centimetres ($7\frac{1}{2}$ to $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches), the genital organs of the lesser fish are very small, incipient development being noticeable in the case of the larger. The adipose deposit, however, in the flesh and round the intestines ("ister,") is much more developed than in any other class of herring. Age determinations have shown that the fat herring consists of fish from 3 to 6 years old. The large herring are superior in size, running as a rule from 27 to 32 centimetres; their genital organs are, from the autumn, in advancing development towards maturity. In the course of this development the adipose deposit gradually decreases in quantity, and the fish finally pass, by imperceptible degrees, into the class of spring herring, which are the spawning fish. Among these latter, the ovaries are in January firm, in February and March slack, and in April entirely spent, the fish at this time being also thin and in poor condition. According to the age determinations the large and spring herrings consist of the oldest from 3- to 20-year-old fish (*vide* below).

Small herring and fat herring are thus immature fish, the large and spring herring being mature. The maturity has been shown to develop at a different age in different parts of the long coast. In the southern part at an age of 3 to 5, mostly 4 years, in the northern part of the coast at 5 or even 6 years of age. The spawning shoals off the southwestern coast contain, therefore, individuals from the third year on.

The scientific investigations of the stock of herrings off the coast of Norway has, after the work of many years, yielded the following general idea of the life history of the herring in these Norwegian waters.