



3 THE FISHES OF THE TWEED AND THE EYE

E.1

Allis Shad *Alosa alosa*



Photo E.1.1: An Allis Shad from the nets at Berwick. The scales are large and loose and come off easily

A member of the Herring family, generally 30 to 50cms in length as adults (exceptionally up to 70cms) that lives in the sea but spawns in freshwater. They are found all along the coasts of Western Europe, from southern Norway to Spain, mainly in shallow coastal waters and estuaries, and at spawning times in the lower reaches of rivers, where they have suffered considerably from pollution and the construction of barriers - in some rivers, they run several hundred kilometres upstream. Spawning is in late Spring, the eggs falling to the bottom where they hatch in about a week. New fry are only 10mm in length, but reach 8 to 14cms in their first year, by which time most of them have reached the sea. Adults mature in 3 to 4 years and most die after dropping back into the sea after spawning. In rivers, the food of young Shad is invertebrates, mostly midge larvae and freshwater shrimps. In the sea, the adults feed mainly on shrimps, but take small fish as well (Maitland & Campbell, 1992). The Allis Shad is now a rare species and protected under Appendix II of the European Habitats and Species Directive and Schedule V of the Wildlife and Countryside Act.



THE *Tweed* FOUNDATION

A Tweed Foundation Paper



Photo E.1.2: The head of an Allis Shad showing the bony plates like those of a Herring. The golden colour is distinct and noticeable

Allis Shad show two characteristic features of the Herring family, serrated or “toothed” scales along the edge of the belly (Photo E.1.3) and scales that are iridescent (Photo E.1.4)



Photo E.1.3: Toothed scales along the belly of an Allis Shad

THE TWEED FISH CONSERVANCY CENTRE, DRYGRANGE STEADING, MELROSE, ROXBURGHSHIRE TD6 9DJ
Tel: EARLSTON (01896) 848271 Fax: EARLSTON (01896) 848277
email: info@tweedfoundation.org.uk
Charity No. SC011055

A charitable trust established by the River Tweed Commission to promote the development of fish stocks in the Tweed River System

© All information contained within this paper is Copyright and must not be reproduced without the prior permission of The Tweed Foundation. E&OE



THE *Tweed* FOUNDATION

A Tweed Foundation Paper

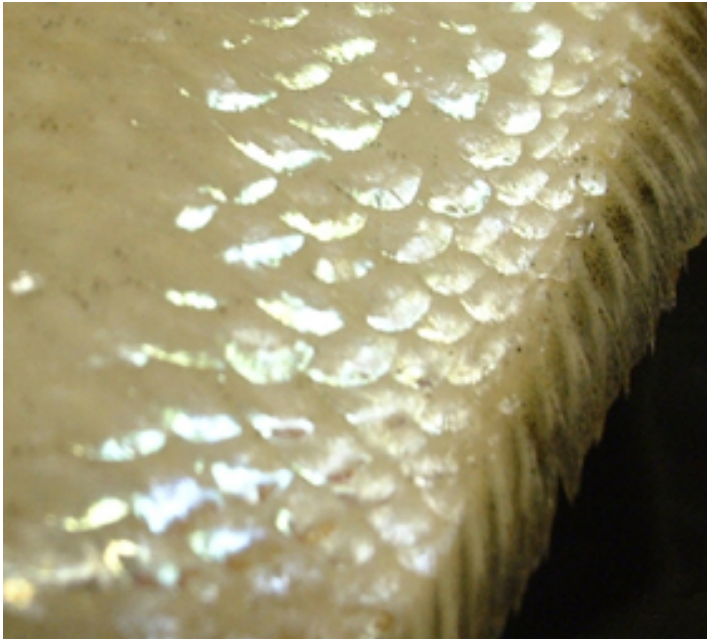


Photo E.1.4: The iridescent scales of an Allis Shad

Allis Shad on Tweed: According to Johnston (1838) these were "*Frequently taken at the mouth of the Tweed in autumn, and sold in the market, but held in no estimation*". Bolam (1919) refers to it as "*Frequently taken at the mouth of the Tweed and along the coast on both sides of the Border. I have had specimens from Shields, Amble, Boulmer, Holy Island and Eyemouth, all caught during September, which is the usual month of its appearance with us.*" At present, a few are caught in the Tweed estuary nets each year, mainly in Summer, and one was caught by an angler at St. Boswells, in 1982, a distance of 63 km upriver. Specimens that have died after netting have all been females with developing eggs, but no spawning is known of in the Tweed nor are there any known sites elsewhere on the East coast of the UK.

THE TWEED FISH CONSERVANCY CENTRE, DRYGRANGE STEADING, MELROSE, ROXBURGHSHIRE TD6 9DJ
Tel: EARLSTON (01896) 848271 Fax: EARLSTON (01896) 848277
email: info@tweedfoundation.org.uk
Charity No. SC011055

A charitable trust established by the River Tweed Commission to promote the development of fish stocks in the Tweed River System

© All information contained within this paper is Copyright and must not be reproduced without the prior permission of The Tweed Foundation. E&OE