

# Age estimation of the lemon sole from the southern North Sea

Centre Manche-Mer du Nord - Département Halieutique  
Laboratoire Ressources Halieutiques de Boulogne sur mer



Lemon sole  
*Microstomus kitt*

Its Geographical distribution is North-east Atlantic, from northern Norway and Iceland to the Bay of Biscay.

This benthic fish lives on hard substrata (rock shelf), gravels or shelly sand between 40 and 200 m in depth. The species is mainly found in temperate marine waters.

Lemon sole acquires its sexual maturity between 2 and 6 years old and its longevity is estimated at 23 years.



Concave et convex sides of the otolith

**Preparation and observation :**  
Otolith is directly read (*in toto*) without any preliminary preparation. Its observation is realized under a binocular after immersing the whole on its convex side in an water solution.



**Growth increments :**

Age estimation is obtained by counting translucent increments ( = winter rings)

**Age estimation :**

If the otolith displays a translucent increment at the ventral margin during the first half-year, this one is counted. During the second half-year, the translucent increment at the margin is not counted.