



ARVID R. MOLANDER

1886-1965

ARVID MOLANDER was born at Tranemo in the province of Västergötland some 80 km from the Swedish west coast. Thus he spent his youth without contact with the sea which, from his age of manhood, was to be his sphere of activity. He went to Grammar School at Göteborg and matriculated at Uppsala University where he in 1910 took his first academic degree, Fil. mag. After three years of teaching in secondary schools and temporary engagements at the Natural History State Museum while completing his zoological studies towards a

Master of Arts degree, Fil. lic., he was appointed assistant to the Swedish Hydrographic-Biological Commission in 1913. He graduated as Dr. of Science, Fil. Dr., in 1916 with a thesis dealing with the alcyonaceans, to which group of coral animals he returned from time to time in his hours of leisure.

When MOLANDER took over the only appointment as marine fishery biologist that Sweden then had, this branch of research had no residence of its own. The biologist, when not on board a research ship, had to alternate between a hired workroom at Kristineberg Zoological Station and Bornö Hydrographical Station some 16 km apart. This was a somewhat trying arrangement, all the more as the Bornö Station at that time did not have any modern conveniences and as communication between the islet and the mainland had to be kept by rowing boat.

Not until the end of the twenties was the badly felt need for a permanent institute of marine fisheries research satisfied. MOLANDER was the prime mover; his was also the responsible task of planning, building and equipping, and in 1929 he moved into the completed laboratory at Lysekil together with a fellow-scientist, whose appointment dated some years back, and a technical personnel of two. In practice he acted as manager, in consultation and close collaboration with his senior colleague and friend Dr. K. A. ANDERSSON who was responsible for the biological researches of the Commission. In 1948 the Hydrographic-Biological Commission was replaced by the new-established Royal Fisheries Board. The shift of employer meant no other change than a firmer employment for MOLANDER and his staff.

In his scientific work Arvid MOLANDER displayed great versatility. The list of his publications comprises nearly eighty papers dealing with most of the commercial marine fish in Sweden. Among the gadoids, he dealt with haddock and ling and, to a lesser degree, cod. Of the flatfishes all were dealt with, though some of them only in popular articles. The plaice attracted his particular interest and he contributed valuable papers on the plaice fishery, on the biology of the plaice, and on the occurrence of the younger stages. He also carried out tagging and transplantation experiments. In collaboration with his daughter he carried out experimental work on morphological variations in artificially reared plaice under varying temperature conditions. Witch, dab, flounder and turbot were included in his research programme. At the beginning of his career MOLANDER studied the growth of herring by the aid of the scales, but with the exception of some smaller notes and a popular article on the history of the Bohuslän herring fishery he soon abandoned the herring. From the early thirties onwards he devoted himself with enthusiasm to investigations on sprat and sprat fisheries on the Swedish west coast. Among other things he tried to establish a correlation between the sprat fishery and meteorological and hydrographical conditions.

MOLANDER also carried out successful investigations on animal

communities on soft bottoms. In 1928 the results dealing with the Gullmar fjord were published while his other work on adjacent fjords was published after his retirement.

Although a landman by birth and upbringing, Arvid MOLANDER got on remarkably well with the Bohuslän fishermen, who are known as being reserved. He was in fact so highly esteemed that for 35 years, up to his death, he acted as chairman and adviser for two old groups of Swedish deep-sea fishermen who were among the first to form economical unions; the one group carrying on long-line fishing in the northern North Sea and west of Shetland and the Hebrides, the other group catching herring by drift-nets north and east of Iceland in late summer.

From 1928 to his retirement in 1954 Dr. MOLANDER attended the ICES meetings as an expert in the Transition Area and the Baltic Committees. Most of his many international friends only knew him as the enthusiastic and skilful biologist and as the light-hearted good fellow in a company. But at home in Sweden he had many more strings to his bow. However, this is not the place to exhibit MOLANDER's many public achievements: in municipal and provincial politics, in antiquity preservation, in volunteer home defence and in a multitude of other spheres, all for the benefit of the town of Lysekil and the province of Bohuslän. It was because of his enormous capacity for work, unusually good health, and by giving up any thought of ever taking a holiday, that he was able to tackle so many other activities in addition to his research and service duties.

Arvid MOLANDER always appeared to be in the best of spirits even when he had good reason not to be so. He could shake off adversities and proceed with fresh efforts. He liked to bicker in a friendly way but did not care so much for those who were unable to take a joke. To his many and varied friends he always showed a loyal and never failing attachment.

MOLANDER married Rut LUNDBERG in 1915. His wife died in 1963, and he was survived by four daughters and a son.

Hans Höglund