

# Biology and Management of Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish

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Front cover photographs by Ian D. Cox (left), Hazel A. Oxenford (right)

# Preface

This book compiles under one cover the many outputs of the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Project (ECFFP) and related work. Many of the chapters are published here for the first time, while others are reprints of papers already published in journals. Chapters 1-7 describing the country fisheries are published as prepared for the final workshop in 1992. Thus they provide snapshots of the fisheries at that time. Other chapters too, provide information that was generated during the ECFFP, whilst others provide subsequent key research outputs emanating from suggestions made at the final workshop. Progress since the end of the ECFFP is summarized in the final chapter.

The ECFFP was conceived at a workshop at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, in 1985. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, funded that workshop and went on to provide the funds for the ECFFP which was implemented between 1987 and 1993. The project was a collaborative effort between the Bellairs Research Institute of McGill University (located in Barbados), the Biology Department of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados and the Fisheries Departments of all countries that fish flyingfish in the eastern Caribbean (see Chapters 1-7).

The ECFFP undertook a wide range of technical activities as reflected in the chapters of this book. In the process, four Masters degrees were completed:

- Rachael Dean (UWI), on age and growth of flyingfish
- Stephen Boyce (UWI), on catch and effort variability in the flyingfish fishery
- Somkiat Khokiattiwong (McGill), on reproductive biology of flyingfish
- Rommel Lao (McGill), on larval and juvenile flyingfish abundance

A high-light of the ECFFP was the four-week research cruise aboard the *RV Provider* to survey flyingfish abundance throughout the eastern Caribbean. The cruise was a unique effort in regional collaboration in applied research towards management of a transboundary resource. It was entirely planned and carried out by Caribbean nationals aboard a Caribbean research vessel. The vessel was provided by the

Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI), Chaguaramus, Trinidad and Tobago, where it was fitted out specifically for the survey. Captained by Captain Curtis Roach of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, the cruise provided a rare opportunity for students and Fisheries Department Staff from all participating countries to work together at sea. It was enjoyed and hailed as an exceptional experience by all who took part. The results were published in three journal articles and are reprinted here in Chapters 13-15.

Flyingfish management continues to be a topical issue in the eastern Caribbean. Although this book is appearing just over 15 years after the end of the project, we believe that it has an important role to play. Discussions on flyingfish biology and management among eastern Caribbean countries at times appear to be less informed than they should be. We hope that by bringing together, under one cover, the wide range of information and advice that was generated by the ECFFP, and making it readily available to fishery managers and decision-makers in the region, we can contribute to rational management of this resource and an increased spirit of cooperation among eastern Caribbean countries towards stewardship for the marine resources that visit all our waters.

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