

SURTSEY RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

VI



THE SURTSEY RESEARCH SOCIETY · REYKJAVÍK, APRIL 1972

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VI
PRIMARILY
1969 AND 1970 FIELD SEASONS



THE SURTSEY RESEARCH SOCIETY
REYKJAVIK, APRIL 1972

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Index

	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	
by Steingrímur Hermannsson	5
2. BIOLOGY	7
2.1 Moss on Surtsey, Summer 1969	
by Ágúst H. Bjarnason and Sturla Fridriksson	9
2.2 Microbiological Observations on Surtsey, 1970	
by Thomas D. Brock	11
2.3 The Occurrence of the Thermophilic Blue-green Alga, <i>Mastigocladus laminosus</i> , on Surtsey in 1970	
by Richard W. Castenholz	14
2.4 Marine Fungi of Iceland: Calcareophilous Forms	
by A. R. Cavaliere and A. H. Markhart III	20
2.5 Diaspores which Drifted to Surtsey 1969	
by Sturla Fridriksson	23
2.6 Mermaids Purses as Dispersers of Seed	
by Sturla Fridriksson	24
2.7 Elymus Sand Dunes in Iceland	
by Sturla Fridriksson, Ágúst H. Bjarnason and Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson	27
2.8 Vascular Plants in Surtsey 1969	
by Sturla Fridriksson, Ágúst H. Bjarnason and Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson	30
2.9 On the Vegetation of Heimacy. Preliminary Report	
by Sturla Fridriksson, Ágúst H. Bjarnason and Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson	34
2.10 On the Vegetation of Heimacy II	
by Sturla Fridriksson, Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson and Skúli Magnússon	36
2.11 Vegetation on Surtsey — Summer 1970	
by Sturla Fridriksson, Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson and Skúli Magnússon	54
2.12 Substrate Map of Surtsey 1970	
by Sturla Fridriksson, Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson and Skúli Magnússon	60
2.13 Ornithological Work on Surtsey in 1969 and 1970	
by Finnur Gudmundsson	64
2.14 Nitrogen fixation by blue-green algae on the Island of Surtsey, Iceland	
by Elisabet Henriksson, Lars Eric Henriksson and Birger Pejler	66

2.15	On the Terrestrial Microfauna of Surtsey During the Summer 1970 by Olof Holmberg and Birger Pejler	69
2.16	Mycological Investigations — VI by T. W. Johnson, Jr.	73
2.17	Marine Benthic Algae Recorded in Surtsey During the Field Seasons of 1969 and 1970 by Sigurdur Jónsson	75
2.18	Studies on Lichen Colonization in Surtsey 1970 by Hördur Kristinsson	77
2.19	Preliminary Report on the Surtsey Investigation in 1969 and 1970. Terrestrial Invertebrates by Carl H. Lindroth, Hugo Andersson, Högni Böldvarsson, Birger Pejler and by Sigurdur H. Richter	78
2.20	Substrate Temperature Measurements and Location of Thermal Areas on Surtse- ey, Summer 1970 by Skúli Magnússon, Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson and Sturla Fridriksson	82
2.21	Algae on Surtsey in 1969—1970 by G. H. Schwabe and K. Behre	85
2.22	Microbial Activity on Surtsey by W. Schwartz and Adelheid Schwartz	90
2.23	The Benthic Coastal Fauna of Surtsey in 1969 by Adalsteinn Sigurdsson	91
2.24	Nematodes from Surtsey by Björn Sohlenius	97
3.	GEOLOGY	99
3.1	The Sedimentary Xenoliths from Surtsey: Turbidites indicating Shelf Growth by Torbjörn Alexandersson	101
3.2	Use of Volcanoes for Determination of Direction of Littoral Drift by Per Bruun and Gísli Viggósson	117
3.3	The Consolidation and Palagonitization of the Tephra of the Surtsey Volcanic Island, Iceland. A Preliminary Report by Sveinn P. Jakobsson	121
3.4	Report on Geothermal Observations on the Island of Surtsey by Aevar Jóhannesson	129
3.5	Coastal Development of Surtsey Island, 1968—69 by John O. Norrman	137
3.6	Coastal Changes in Surtsey Island, 1969—1970 by John O. Norrman	145
3.7	Textural Analysis of Surtsey Tephra. A Preliminary Report by Michael F. Sheridan	150
3.8	The Opaque Mineralogy of Surtsey by Sigurdur Steinhórsson	152
3.9	Precision Levelling in Surtsey by Eysteinn Tryggvason	158
4.	GEOCHEMISTRY	163
4.1	Hydrocarbons and Acids of Hekla Volcanic Ash by Pat Haug and Julia Sever	165

Introduction

An historic account of the volcanic island Surtsey, which was formed by a submarine eruption on the 14th of November, 1963, approximately 20 miles off the south coast of Iceland, should no longer be necessary. It has become a well known fact. Also, the extensive scientific work that started as soon as the island was created, should be familiar, at least to those who have received the Surtsey Research Progress Reports.

This report is the sixth in the series published by the Surtsey Research Society. Previous reports have covered one field season each. The following report has been changed to cover the field seasons 1969 and 1970, and even with a touch of 1971.

The overall development of Surtsey has slowed down. Although the island changes from year to year with the sea taking off a good slice and geological processes continuing, this has reached a stage of a more stable and gradual change than originally. The same holds true in the field of biology. Life has established itself on the island and on its socle, its future seems certain and its development is stable. In several fields of science it has therefore not been found necessary any longer to undertake yearly investigations. Every second summer is in most cases sufficient and even longer periods.

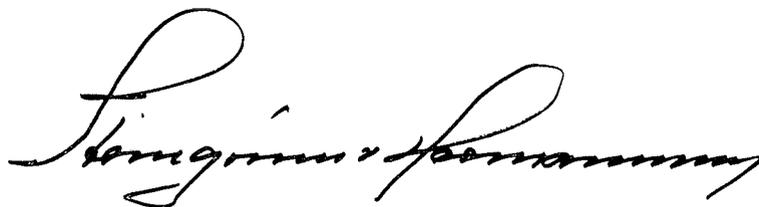
Thus, the plan is to publish the progress reports every second year and include all reports

available at the time of publication, regardless of the field season. Continuity will, on the other hand, be stressed as previously.

As before, the scientific work on Surtsey has been supported from several sources. The Icelandic Government, research institutions, the Icelandic Coast Guard, and others in this country, have given support, either with financial appropriations, time for scientific personnel, facilities or transportation. Financial support has also been received, as previously, from various foreign agencies, especially the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, and the Bauer Scientific Trust. All of this is highly appreciated. Also, one must have in mind that the scientific work on Surtsey would not have been possible without the unselfish work of several scientists from Iceland and from abroad and the excellent cooperation that exists.

Surtsey has become a reality and although the sea cuts a slice from the island every year, it will most likely stand for centuries. Fortunately, scientific studies were started on the island as soon as possible. This work has already led to valuable scientific understanding. Hopefully it will be possible to continue this work for years to come. The opportunity is unique. With mankind increasingly needing a better understanding of its environmental development, it should be explored to the utmost.

For The Surtsey Research Society,



Steingrímur Hermannsson
Chairman