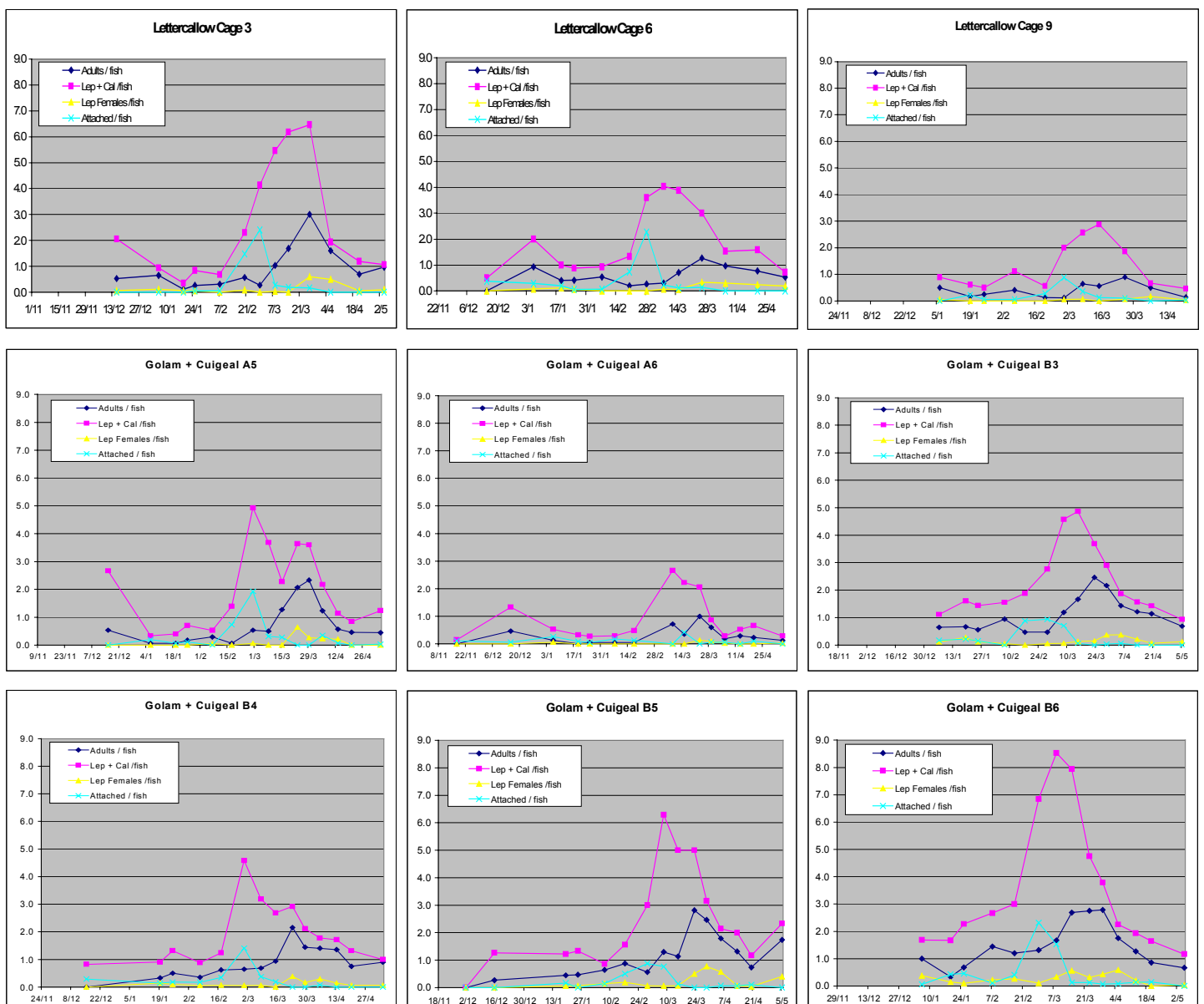


Sea lice monitoring of salmon cages with Aquatic emitters in Kilkieran Bay

Experimental Aquatic Emitter Systems designed to assist in the control of sea lice are being tested at salmon farm sites in Kilkieran Bay on the 2006 S1/2 smolts. The two experimental sites are Golam (Muirachmhainni Teo) and Lettercallow (Muir Gheal Teo). Both sites were stocked in the Autumn 2005 with 2006 S1/2 fish and emitters were placed around the site in the vicinity of the cages.

The Marine Institute monitored sea lice levels on a number of cages at each site over the period. The rate of settlement and the development of the lice population was observed. Sea lice sampling was carried out according to the Department of the Marine sea lice monitoring protocol.

Graphs of lice levels in each cage at Lettercallow and Golam/Cuigeal



The general trend in all the cages showed steady lice numbers until the end of February and early March where all cages were challenged by an infestation of lice. This population develops throughout March and begins to decrease in early April then drops back to near the base line levels seen previous to the challenge.

It must be noted that Cage 9 in Lettercallow (which had no emitters fitted) follows the same general trend. Results to date are encouraging and further work is needed to fully evaluate the potential of the emitters for sea lice control.