

The silver of the sea

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- Mönchguter Museen: from the archive of the Mönchguter Museen e.V.; received from Ellen Melzer (management)
- Peesch, 1961: Reinhard Peesch; *Die Fischerkommünen auf Rügen und Hiddensee*; Akademie Verlag Berlin
- Reinicke 1999: Rolf Reinicke; *Küstenfischerei in der Reihe „Am Ostseestrand“*; Deutsches Meeresmuseum Stralsund

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The silver of the sea

The "silver of the sea" fish has co-determined the life rhythm of the people of Rugen and Hiddensee for centuries. The topical path is dedicated to various aspects of fishing between the 17th and 20th centuries and includes the old "*Heringsstraße*" trade route on the western part of the island.

Various protagonists tell their stories: fisherman, fisherman's wife, an eel, a merchant ... they were all involved in their time in fishing, fish processing or fish-related commerce.

1. The *Alte Heringsstraße*¹ (at the harbour of Altefähr)

It is the year 1800 and a merchant from Stralsund reports:

The old Heringsstraße is an important trade route for us travelling merchants. We travel to Rugen from the mainland via Stralsund and travel with our wagons along the west side of the island to Altenkirchen. I always look forward to the herring season when I undertake this journey several times throughout the autumn. The journey first leads through **Rambin**. **There is an old monastery** there and the St. John's church made of brick.



Chapel of the former monastery in Rambin (<http://www.ruegen.de/rambin.html>)

One continues the journey through flat and slightly hilly meadows and fields, passes the small farm village of **Rothenkirchen** and must then take passage to Dußvitz at the **Priebowschen Wedde**, as here a river with the name of Sehrowbach has overflowed the meadows.



Church of Landow (<http://www.kirche-landow.de/>)

¹ old herring road

Finally one soon reaches **Landow**, where the Late Gothic church stands with wonderful ceiling painting. The next larger settlement is **Gingst**. Here one sees the beautiful Jacobikirche (church) and many capable craftsmen working in decorated, reed-covered huts with half-hipped roofs who offer their goods for sale at the market.



Jacobikirche in Gingst (<http://www.ruegeninsel.de/gingst.html>)



Reed-covered house in Gingst (<http://www.historische-handwerkerstuben-gingst.de>)

2. Historical fish processing (at the harbour of Waase)

A fisherman's wife reports in 1795: we fishermen's wives were always responsible for processing the fish. On Rugen and Hiddensee we know of three different ways to make the fish non-perishable: salting, smoking and drying.

In order to prevent the fish from spoiling during the journey, until the 18th century our grandmothers processed the freshly landed herring ("green herring") into salted herring in the salting houses. The salted herring was purchased by merchants coming from afar directly from the salter of the salting house. The families also paid their tribute to the landlords in salted herring.

Now, in the 18th century, the people from the mainland are interested in our smoked fish. The smoked goods sometimes even find their way to southern Germany. For our families, smoking represents an important source of income in addition to the sale of salted herring and agriculture, as the smoked fish bring in much more than the salted herring of earlier days.

In the beginning we didn't yet have iron barrels for smoking. We therefore simply hung the fish, like the hams and the nets, in the chimney, which was fuelled with juniper or sawdust. That was then like "*a paradise fragrant with peat and dried fish*" (about a Hiddensee smokehouse)

The smoked fish have their own names: *Spicker* or *Bückling* (herring), *Spickflunner* (flounder) and *Spickål* (eel).



Smoked eels (www.lietzow-online.de)



Smokehouse on Hiddensee by Eduard Nieny, 1860 (www.clauscomputer.de)

344 characters without spaces

The dried herring are also known on both islands (*Flickhering*, *Prellhering* or *Pröhlhering*). To do this we salt the herring and hang it on wooden sticks under the eaves, where they can dry for up to two weeks in the sun and wind. This makes it possible for the fish to keep for several months. When eaten it is either fried (Hiddensee) or placed on top in the potato pot and cooked (Mönchgut).



Herring as an eating fish (fewo-ruegen-sassnitz.de)



Women removing the fish from the nets (*Utpuken*)

3. The *Alte Heringsstraße* (at Trent, parking lot junction Liebitz)

Coming from Altefähr, the old trade route led through Landow and Gingst toward the north. We pass Trent, a contemplative farming village with one of the oldest brick churches on the island.



Rasse River (commons.wikimedia.org)

And once again we have to cross a body of water, this time by boat over the Rasse River in order to reach the peninsula of Wittow.



St. George church in Wiek (www.ruegenurlaub.de)

The harbour village of Wiek awaits us there. Here I like to spend some time in the church in front of the statue of St. George, the patron saint of mariners and travellers. Our next to last station is Altenkirchen, which is known for its parish church.



Parish church of Altenkirchen (www.ruegenurlaub.de)

We then reach the fishing village of Vitt. Above the reed-roofed fishermen's homes, one could once see the herring schools in the Baltic from the chapel. During the fishing season, the pastor would earlier pause during his sermon when the "silver of the sea" showed itself and the fishermen went to their boats.



Fishing village of Vitt (www.timediver.de/inse_l_ruegen_prora_koenigsstuhl)

4. Historical fish trade (at the harbour of Schaprode)

It is 1898 and the fisherman Barschen reports:

Instead of going out with the trawl net like my grandfather, we now make our big catches with the pound net. The work in our fishing communities, the communes, is of course shared. This means that everyone is responsible one time for the transport and the sale of the fish caught. We call that *Reihendienst* (service in turn). For trading inland, two fishermen are nominated to sell the fish in the villages. To this purpose they pack crates of flatfish and herring in a one-wheeled cart. One pushes from behind while the other pulls from the front. The farmers are pleased at the fresh *Nettenhering* (net herring), which they prefer to salt themselves. And we fisherman are happy to be able to "*uthökern*" (get rid of) them. We now organise trade on the mainland ourselves, once again according to the service in turn principle. One really gets around this way. Following the catch, several fishermen of the commune are delegated to load a boat with fish and to go on a trading tour (*Törn, Tuur*) to the large markets in Stralsund, Greifswald or Cröslin. Mutual trust is of course the highest law. We don't need to fear that the fishermen will come back from their *Törn* with false earnings.



Harbour of Neuendorf (www.atelier.kluepfelmuehle.de)



Harbour in Vitt (www.ruegencenter.de)

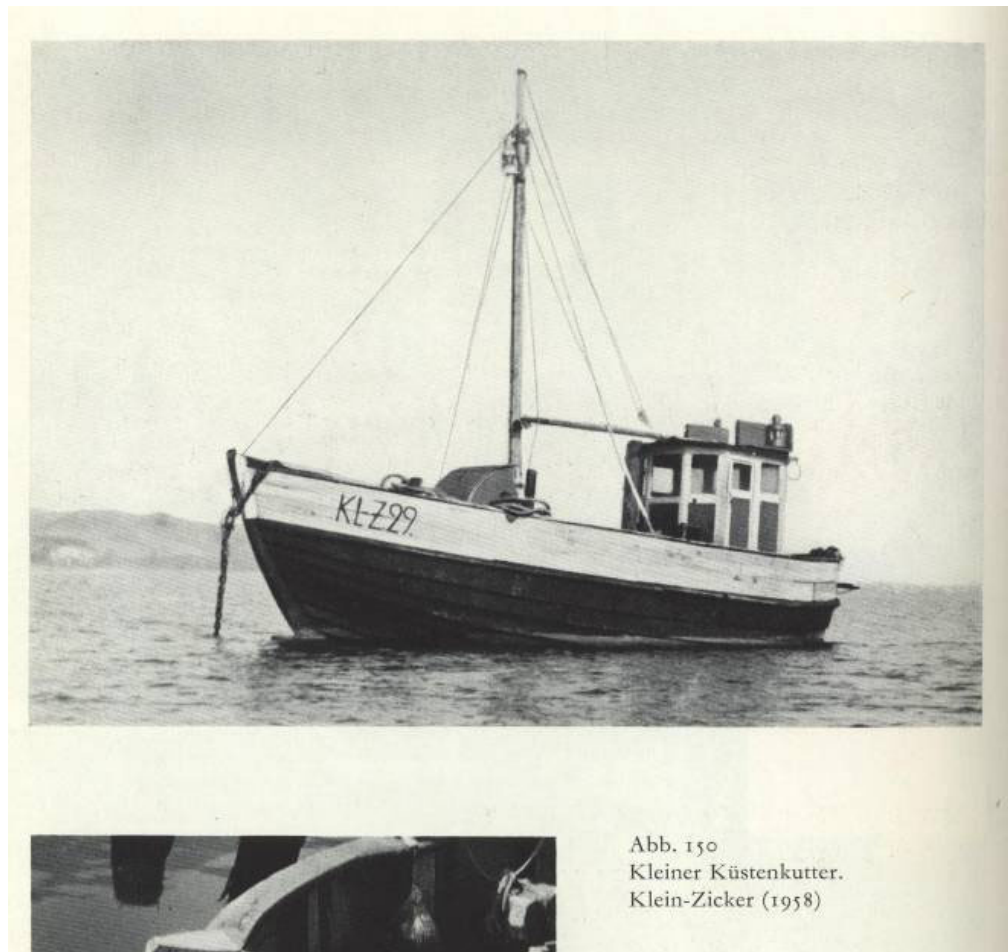


Abb. 150
Kleiner Küstenkutter.
Klein-Zicker (1958)

Small coastal cutter in Klein-Zicker, 1958 (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 130)



Good herring catch at the northern shore of Göhren, 1934 (Mönchguter Museen)



Loading fish at the northern shore of Göhren, 1934 (Mönchguter Museen)



Abb. 152
Großer Küstenkutter.
Saßnitz (1958)

Large coastal cutter in Saßnitz, 1958 (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 152)

5. Communes (at the harbour of Neuendorf, Hiddensee)

A still active fisherman reports:

Until the end of the GDR period, a certain kind of grouping was common in the fishing villages: the fishing communes. This old fishing community served the purpose of dividing up tasks that could not be mastered alone.

The casting and especially the lifting of the full nets is not possible for a single fisherman in the herring season. Open sea fishermen thus joined in groups of four and shared a boat (**boat communes**). The lease for the boat was also shared. This lease could, for instance, amount to $\frac{1}{4}$ t of herring and a smoked salmon. After the herring season, the fishermen returned to the larger communities, the *Garn* (net), or later fish trap communes.

The large *Garn* (bow net), which was especially used for the herring catch, made a community absolutely necessary due to its size. This meant that, since the 18th century, usually 8 people joined to form **Garn communes**. The *Garn* communes decreased in number after 1900. Since 1900, as cutter and large fish trap fishing became more productive than fishing with the "*Garn*".

Around 1880, the first **fish trap communes** for large bow net fishing or the pound nets arose from the *Garn* communes. This type of fish trap has a complex fish trap apparatus comprised of rope, poles, netting and other parts, the care and setting up of which could not be carried out by one person alone. Thus, for example, the fish trap communes "*Lütt Partie*" and "*Groot Partie*" were founded on Hiddensee. As of the mid 20th century, only small schools of herring still appeared in the *Bodden* (coastal waters separated from the open sea by tongues of land) or off the outer shores. Fish trap fishing no longer paid and was totally discontinued in 1958.



Mönchgut fishermen around 1930 (Mönchguter Museen)



Fishermen of the Neuendorf "Groot Partie" in front of their communal shed (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 43)



Eel catchers of Göhren around 1930 (Mönchguter Museen)



Reusen-Compagnie (Fish trap company) Thiessow, 1913 (Mönchguter Museen)



Abb. 45—46
Reusen beschen
einer Außenreue
am Enddorn.
Neuendorf/Hidd.
(Mai 1956).
Während das Boot q
in der Reusenammer
wird der Reusenbod
gehoben.
Sind die Fische
an der Reusenspitze
zusammengedrängt,
werden sie mit Kesc
in das Boot genom

Fish trap commune (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 45)



Fish trap commune (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 46)

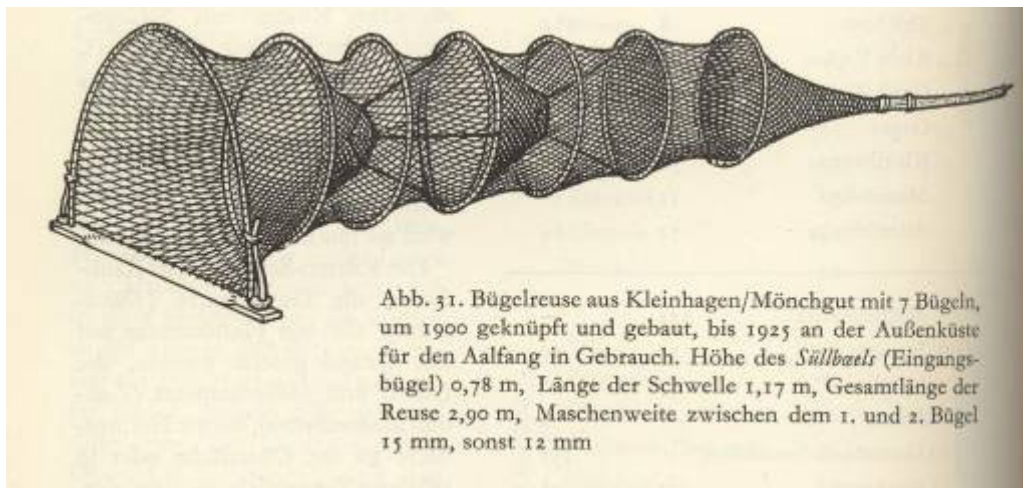
6. Fish trap fishing (at the harbour of Wiek)

An eel reports in 1913:

because especially we eels like to spend our time at the bottom of bodies of water and are not really very impressed by fishing rods, the fishermen invented the **hoop net**. This is a comparatively small fish trap and consists of a network of net sacks mounted on stiff rings. They are set up like a labyrinth. This is how it normally goes: first my kind comes into contact with net walls set up like wings and then inevitably swims along these until they find their way into the trap part of the fish trap. Once they are in this catch chamber, due to the funnel-shaped openings, they no longer find their way back out of this network of mesh or wooden rods. Only the fisherman can get us out again. The fishermen cast the hoop nets out at depths of 2 - 6 m along the shore and the deeper sections of the *Bodden*.



Repairing the netting of a fish trap around 1935 (made available by the Mönchguter Museen)

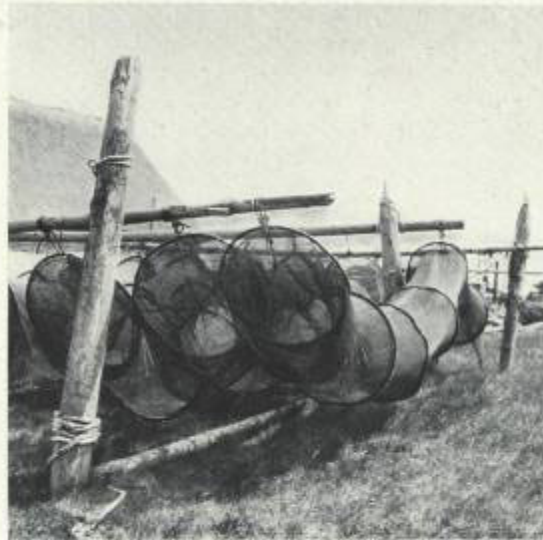


Hoop net (Peesch, 1961: p. 180)

Figure 31: Hoopnet from Kleinbogen/Mönchgut with 7 hoops, knotted and built around 1900, used on the outer coast until 1925 for catching eel. Height of the *Süllbael* (entrance hoop) 0.78 m, length of the threshold 1.17 m, total length of the trap 2.90 m, mesh width between the 1st and 2nd hoop of 15 mm, otherwise 12 mm.

Abb. 43
Fischer der Neuendorfer
Reusengemeinschaft (Hidd.)
vor dem Partieschuppen

Abb. 44
Neue Anhänger für Kammerreuse,
nach dem Teeren
zum Trocknen auf dem
Arbeitsplatz neben
dem Schuppen aufgehängt.
Neuendorf/Hidd. (1956)



Drying hoop nets (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 44)

Figure 43: Fishermen from the Neuendorf fish trap association (Hiddensee) in front of their communal shed

Figure 44: New hanging apparatus for pound nets. Hung at the workplace next to the shed to dry after tarring. Neuendorf/Hiddensee (1956)

7. Zees fishing (at the harbour of Dranske)

It is the year 1999 and the fisherman Hechtens reports:

Zees fishing

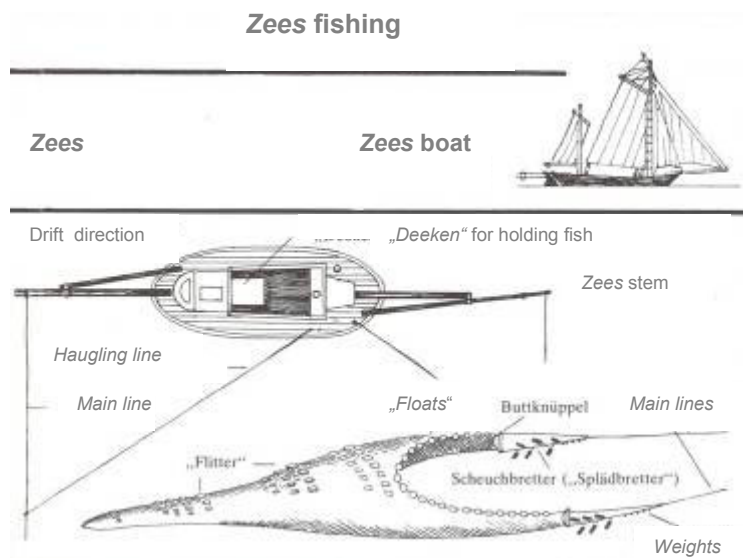
Zees fishing primarily took place in the *Bodden* and less often on the outer coasts. The principle is simple: the fish are collected by trawl nets, which are usually pulled by approx. 12 m long sailboats close to the bottom or in medium-depth water. Outsiders can recognise a *Zeesboot* (a sailing boat with a wide rump) in that *Zeesbäume* (a kind of post) project from the stem and stern frame. They hold the draglines of the *Zeese*, the sack-shaped, 25 m -long trawl net with wings. The *Zeese* is slowly "dragged" through the water while the sailboat drifts at right angles to the wind. At the same time, the stems widened the opening of the catch sack. As a fisherman, one has to know the nature of the bottom well. Almost no one today is qualified for Zeese fishing, and it brings in hardly any fish. I, for example, have renovated my *Zeesboot* and only sail with my grandchildren in my free time.



Fishing boat (mostly transom stern boats) on the Sellin shore, around 1960 (Mönchguter Museen)



Fishing cutter at Thiessow around 1960 (made available by the Mönchguter Museen)



Zees fishing (Reinicke, 1999)



Fish cutters "Arkona" (12 m), "Sirius" (8 m) "Schlei" (12,5 m) in the harbour of the former FPG (Fisheries production commune of open sea and coastal fishermen; an economic unit in the GDR) at Bugar Hals

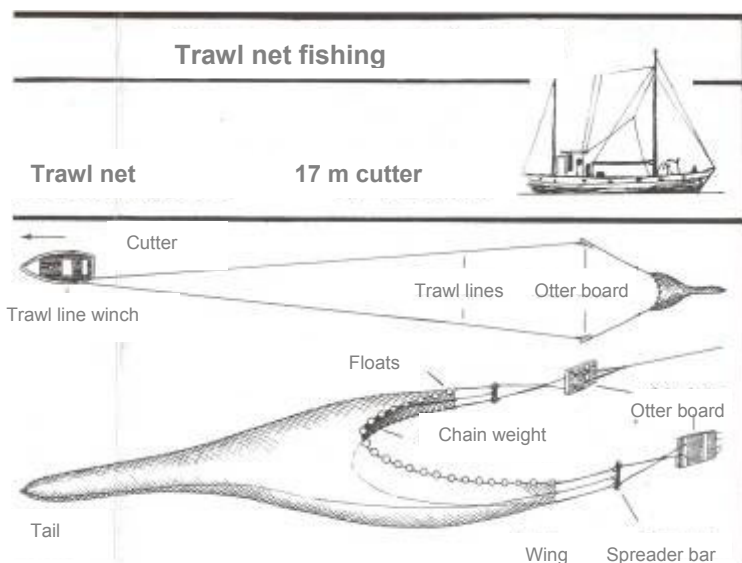


Zees boat (www.putbus-ferienwohnungen.de)

Trawl net fishing

I fish with a trawl net originating from the *Zeesen*. The net has a length of 30 m, while the width and the height of the opening is 12 m x 5 m respectively. The special feature of this kind of fishing is fishing on the bottom. The net is equipped with chains so that it stays on the bottom. Otter boards cause the net to float upwards. Trawl lines are connected to the cutter and pull the net.

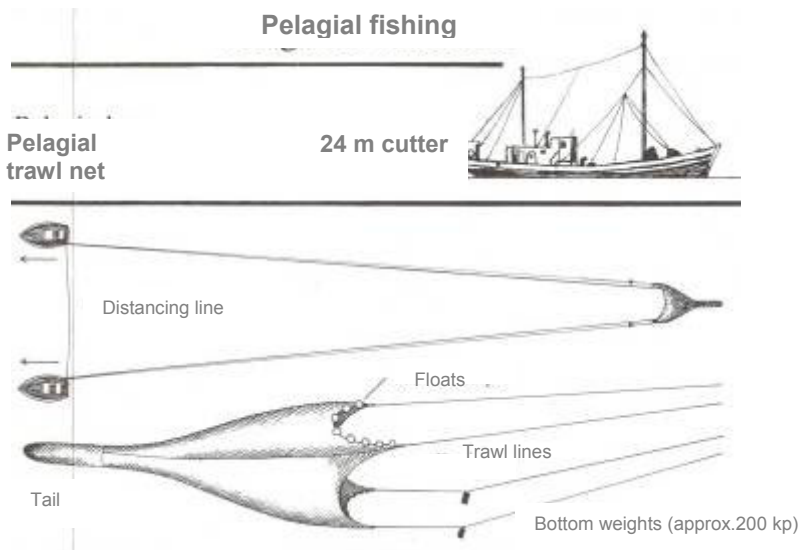
On good days, a "Ho!" (the net heaved on board, probably related to "haul") can catch from 10 to 12 t of fish, but this is unfortunately seldom the case.



Trawl net fishing (Reinicke, 1999)

Pelagial fishing (Pelagial = region of the open sea)

One possibility for catching large schools of herring or sprat at sea is to spread a trawl net between two cutters. That is what is known as a *Tuckpartie*. The net is held open by floats at the upper end and chains at the lower end. In terms of width, the net remains open between two moving cutters that both pull the net from each side.



Pelagial fishing (Reinicke, 1999)



Preparation of the nets, 1930, (Mönchguter Museen)

8. *Fitten* (at Kapelle Vitt)

A forebear reports:

near the end of the 12th century, the time of Hanseatic trade in goods, active trade in fish from Rugen and Hiddensee took place. Vitt, with its proximity to Arkona, is one of the most important trade centres. Not only fish is traded here, but rather goods from the entire Baltic region.

The herring markets take place in November. People come to them from far and wide. Strange merchants "have free access, as long as they pay fitting tribute to Swantevit, the god of the land." (according to Helmold of Bosau)

More than 600 years later, at the beginning of the 19th century, it is common during the herring season in spring or autumn to take up residence with merchants and other helpers in "*Fitten*". These were seasonally operated reloading points near the fishing grounds on the coast. Salting houses and huts were available there as accommodations. The fishermen pulled the fish out of the water with trawl nets and the merchants (in southern Rugen they were called *Spickers*) brought salt and barrels with them to conserve the herring and later transport them. Fishing settlements, like in Sassnitz or Lohme, were established in *Fitten*, whose proximity indicated bountiful fishing grounds.

From the fishing settlement of Vitt, the "*Heringsstraße*", an old trade route, extends to Altefähr. The fish was then transferred from there to the mainland. With the loss in importance of the trade route, the small fishing village also lost its significance as a trading centre.

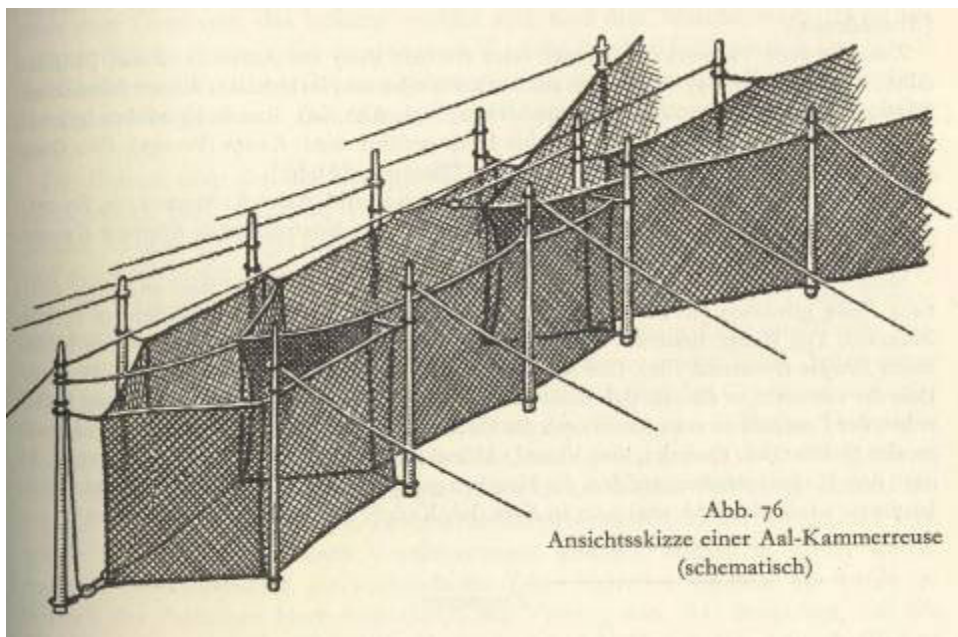
9. Fish trap fishing (at the harbour of Breege)

An eel reports in 1913:

The **pound net** is much larger than the hoop net and thus needs to be worked by a cooperative - the fish trap commune. These fish traps are built by the fishermen in spring. To this purpose, like with the hoop net, they place guiding net walls in front of a large net chamber, which is held by long wooden poles, and whose walls project well above the surface of the water. We eels don't get caught in such fish traps. They are actually conceived of for the salmon or herring catches in spring and autumn. Due to the size, the fishermen need more material and helping hands, but for this reason one can set up the pound net up farther out at sea, and thus increase the catch. This made large fish trap fishing possible, which began in the 16th century. Nonetheless, two years ago, (1911), a large group of my species found their way into a pound net on a stormy night near Breege. This put the idea into the heads of the Breege commune fishermen to catch large numbers of eel with pound nets. To this purpose they made the fish trap and the netting mesh smaller. This invention was the eel pound net, which now also waits in deeper water for us, but I know my way around...



Eel trap in front of a fisherman's house around 1940 (made available by the Mönchguter Museen)



Eel pound net (Peesch, 1961: 203)

10. Fish near Rugen and Hiddensee (at harbour of Sassnitz)

The waters around Rugen and Hiddensee have some of the largest numbers of fish in Germany. Fishermen and sport fishermen will find many kinds of fish in the *Bodden* and the sea. Thus, in the inland waters, with a salt content of approx. 0.3 – 0.4 ‰, one tends to find fresh water fish, while in the *Bodden* and bays, with their low salt content, both fresh water and salt water fish such as perch, zander and pike or herring and needlefish. Not to forget the outer coasts, where, with a salt content of 1 ‰, sea trout and salmon live, in addition to cod.

Herring

In the months from February to May, the herring are found in the *Bodden* and on the coasts. At this time the spring herring move in large schools into their spawning grounds off the coasts of Rugen. In autumn, schools of the autumn spawners, whose spawning grounds are instead found in areas farther away from the coast, can be found on the deeper banks. Herring is the most caught fish in the Baltic.



School of herring (www.ferienwohnung-ostsee-info.de)

Flatfish (flounder, plaice)

The special feature of these fish is their http://www.ummanz.com/ruegen_a-z/angeln/fischarten.htm - Anfang flat body shape and the fact that both eyes are found on one side when they are young. The flounder prefers waters with a salt content lower than that favoured by the plaice, and is therefore often found in the *Bodden*. The best place to catch flounder is in the Large Jasmund *Bodden*, where, especially in autumn, large flounder can also be caught.



Camouflaged flounder (<http://www.taucher.net>)



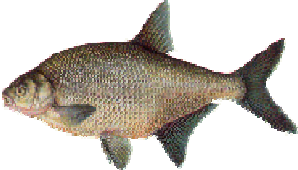








Needlefish

It is also called the "May fish" by natives, because its habitat is actually found in the Mediterranean and Atlantic. The needlefish only enters the Baltic to spawn at the beginning of May for a maximum of three weeks. Its meat has a pleasant flavour, but it is often avoided due to its green bones.



Needlefish (www.ruegen-urlaub-ferienwohnung.de)

Other fish and where they are found

Who?	Where?	
Eel	All waters	
Perch	<i>Bodden</i> and on the coast	
Bream	In the small bays	
Cod	Off the northern outer coasts and far from the coast in summer	
Pike	In the <i>Bodden</i>	
Sea trout	Off the outer coasts and land projections	
Zander	Deep areas in the <i>Bodden</i> and in the inland waters	
Common Roach	In the <i>Bodden</i>	
Herring	The coast of Rugen	
Needlefish	South coast and Strelasund	
Flatfish	<i>Bodden</i> and the outer northern coast	

(Blinker magazine from Schmidt-Luchs, Carl-Werner), Illustrations
http://www.ummanz.com/ruegen_a-z/angeln/fischarten.htm



http://www.hobby-angeln.com/images/meeresangeln_heringsangeln.jpg

11. Maritime signals (at Prora parking lot)

A mermaid reports:

the beacon is operated with Fresnel lenses (since 1820). They radiate light with defined characteristic values that are comprised of number of revolutions and type of blinking and are interpreted in the list of lights. In the Baltic region and in **Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania**, the first beacons came into being in the 13th and 14th centuries in connection with the traffic of goods of the Hanseatic cities, for example, in 1306 on Hiddensee.

Cape Arkona

The brick tower at Cape Arkona is a red, 20 m high tower designed by Schinkel. It was in operation from 1828-1902. It was briefly relieved by the "New Tower" from 1902 to 1905. This tower is of granite, is 36 m high and has mercury-based optics.



Schinkel tower and the New Tower leuchtturmwelt.de

Lighthouse at Kolliker Ort:

The lighthouse was built in 1897/98. It is located near Sassnitz on a rock projection. The difficult hike to it is rewarded with a unique view of the chalk cliffs.



Kolliker Ort leuchtturmpfad.de

Unterfeuer Maltzien

This lighthouse stands at the foot of the steep coast of the Zudar peninsula and was built in 1936. It is a 12 m high stone tower.



[Unterfeuer Maltzien leuchtturm.welt.de](http://Unterfeuer-Maltzien-leuchtturm.welt.de)

"Altes Ranzow Feuer" (Old Ranzow fire) at Arkona

This lighthouse is characteristic of the simple and easy maintenance architecture of Julius Pitsch, who built this lighthouse. It first stood in a forest at Ranzow, but was extinguished in 1999 due to poor accessibility and dismantled in 2002. It has had a new home in Arkona since 2003



Altes Ranzow Feuer (leuchtturmwelt.de)

Lighthouse at Neu Mukran

This green-white pier light was built in 1996 and stands at the new, large ferry port of Neu Mukran. It sends its light signal into the darkness of the night every four seconds.



Pier light at Neu Mukran leuchtturmpfad.de

Pier light at Sassnitz – Island of Rugen

This small, iron tower is only 10 m high, but, due to its solid construction, can easily withstand massive storms on the pier. It stands on the long pier in the harbour of Sassnitz and was built in 1904.



Pier light at Sassnitz www.leuchtturmwelt.de

Dornbusch lighthouse on Hiddensee

One of the most highly elevated lighthouses in Germany stands on the 72m high moraine tract of the Dornenbusch and has been in operation since 1888. It has a height of 23m.



Lighthouse at Bakenberg leuchtturmpfad.de

Süder lighthouse on the *Gellen* - Hiddensee

This lighthouse was built somewhat later in 1905 and is smaller (12.3m). It stands on the other side of the island on the *Gellen*.



Süder tower, Gellen www.leuchtturmpfad.de

12. Salting houses (at Sellin salting house)

It is the year 1890 and a fisherman's child reports:

In salting houses we prepare the fish for sale on the mainland and even farther away, in Poland and elsewhere. It is made non-perishable by salting.

The salting houses are mostly small, reed-covered houses not far from the landing places of the fishing boats. When the fishermen return from the sea with their herring catch, almost the entire village, including us children, is waiting on the shore. The fishermen unload the fish barrels and we start with the "*utküten*", meaning that we gut the fish crouching in front of the houses.

The herring are "*eingebeuckelt*" (salted) in the salting house. This is why the Prussians have decreed the salt tax. With "*Schellhering*", according to the authorities, one barrel of salt is used for four barrels of salted herring. *Schellhering* is identified differently as *Drüschhering*.

We lay the *Drüschhering* for several days in "*Drüschküben*"; those are large tubs. We then hang them for another two days on the "*Drüschbank*". *Drüschhering* doesn't keep as long as *Schellhering*, but one needs less salt. It is also more attractive with its white meat.

However, lately the salter has been having difficulty selling our salted herring. North Sea herring and herring from Scandinavia are being offered in the cities. These are larger than ours, and thus of better quality.

Although the salting house has only been in operation for a few decades (many salting houses were built under the Prussian government, e.g. 1815 in Neu Reddevitz, Binz and Groß Zicker or on Hiddensee in Vitte and Neuendorf), the salter wants to convert it into an equipment shed. Our parents earn only a little bit on the side from salting.



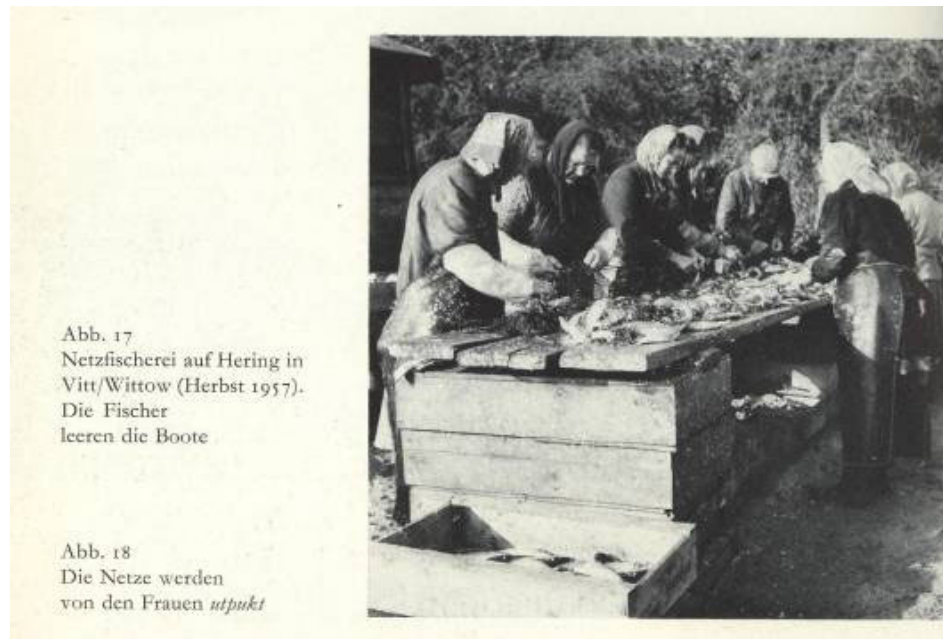
Fishing huts for storing equipment, Baabe, 1946 (Mönchguter Museen)



Solthuus (salting house) in Kleinhagen; built as a salting house and later used as a shed for storing small equipment. , 1960 (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 79)



Good herring catch at the northern shore of Göhren, 1934 (Mönchguter Museen)



The nets are "*utpukt*" by the women (fish are removed from the net); Peesch, 1961; fig. 18

13. **Schwedenbrücke (Swedish bridge) at Göhren (at *Altes Salzhaus* (old salting house), south shore of Göhren)**

A fisherman from Wolgast reports in the 1880's:

The salmon and herring catches have been very good in past years. In order to punctually arrive at the nearby fishing grounds in the morning, we come from the opposite Pomeranian coast and anchor at the *Schwedenbrücke*.

The bridge is called the *Schwedenbrücke* because it was erected by the Swedish government in 1813. Economic supplies and military reinforcements landed here. However, the Swedish period ended in 1815 and the Prussians took over government.

The pilot boats of the Göhren pilot station, which existed until 1859, were stored here. From here the pilots could quickly get out to the sailing ships, just like we can today to the fishing grounds.

In the early years of the fish bounty we also spent nights in the open fishing boats. The crowding and the cold could only be endured with a goodly dose of alcohol. This time we spent the night in the sailor's home on the hill. Countess Schimmelmann had a larger wooden house erected here for the fishermen from elsewhere. Here we have a pallet, a dining room, a kitchen and even a small library and games to amuse ourselves. She herself lives in a smaller wooden house. The benefactrix is a court lady of the Empress. She came as a bathing guest to Göhren and also provides us with meals, probably so that we refrain from the use of alcohol and its consequences.

A former salting house still stands not far from the bridge. It is used by the local fishermen as an equipment shed. The fishermen from elsewhere don't have a shed, but instead keep everything in the boat.



Fishing under very frosty conditions around 1930 (Mönchguter Museen)

14. Ice fishing (at the harbour of Gager)

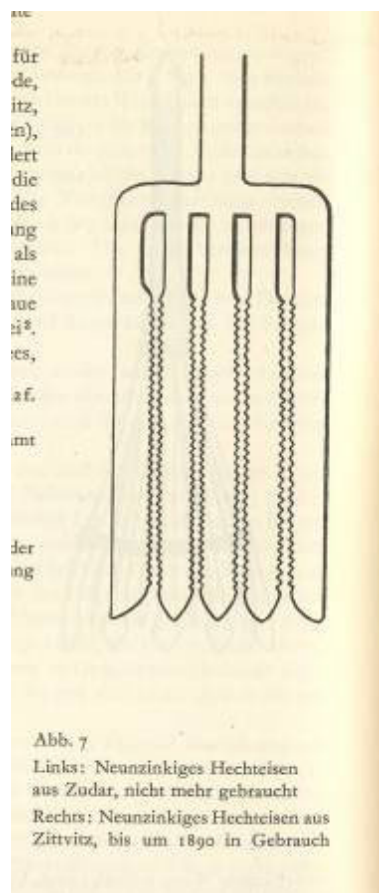
A Common Roach reports in 1900:

The quiet fishing for own needs is undertaken either with an *lesangel* (ice fishing rod) or with the *Äliesen* (the eel iron).

Eel are caught with the latter in autumn and winter in a very peculiar way. The eel iron is equipped with teeth and thorns. The fishermen spear the bottom systematically with the hooked devices. If the fisherman catches an eel, the eel becomes caught in the eel iron and can be pulled out by the fisherman. This kind of fishing is carried out by mariners or agricultural workers in order to earn a little bit of extra income. However, in the meantime I see ever fewer eel irons wandering over the sea bottom.

When the waters are frozen, the fisherman comes with his *Paikschläden* (sled), knocks a hole in the ice and starts to blindly probe and search for the eel.

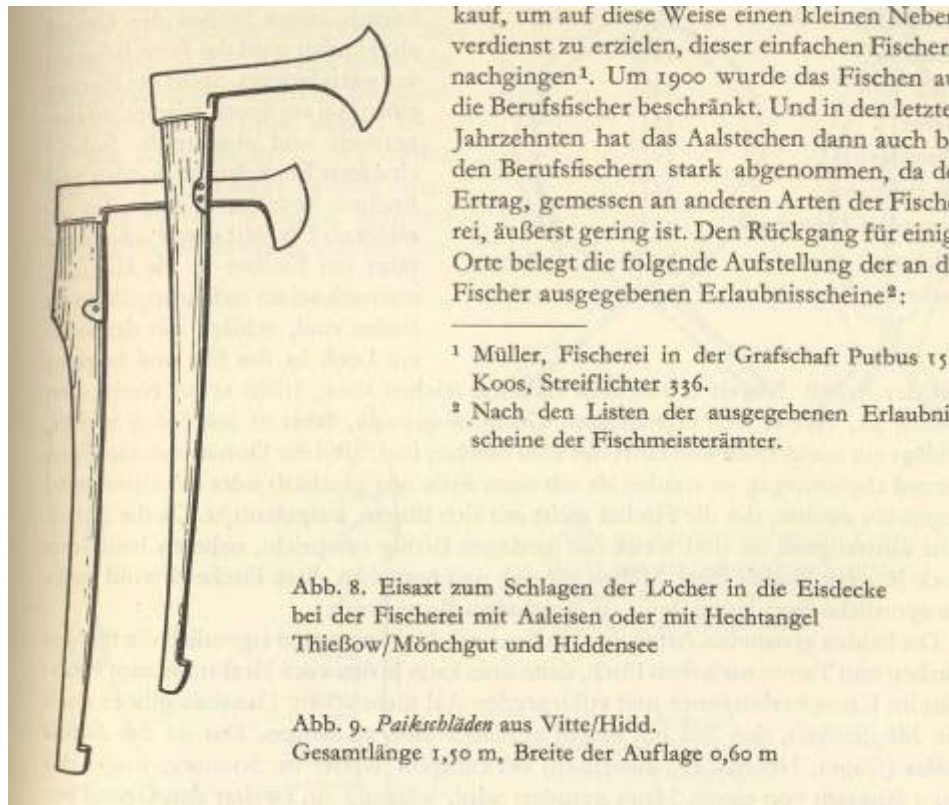
With the *lesangel* (ice fishing rod), they primarily try to catch pike. That's dangerous for us Common Roaches. A bent juniper branch is equipped with hook and line, and my kind is usually used as bait. After the fisherman has knocked a small hole in the ice with his ice axe, he threads a long rod into the *lesangel* and places it above the hole. When a pike bites, the line loosens a little bit, so that the pike can still move around. A fisherman makes several holes of this kind and checks the catch several times a day.



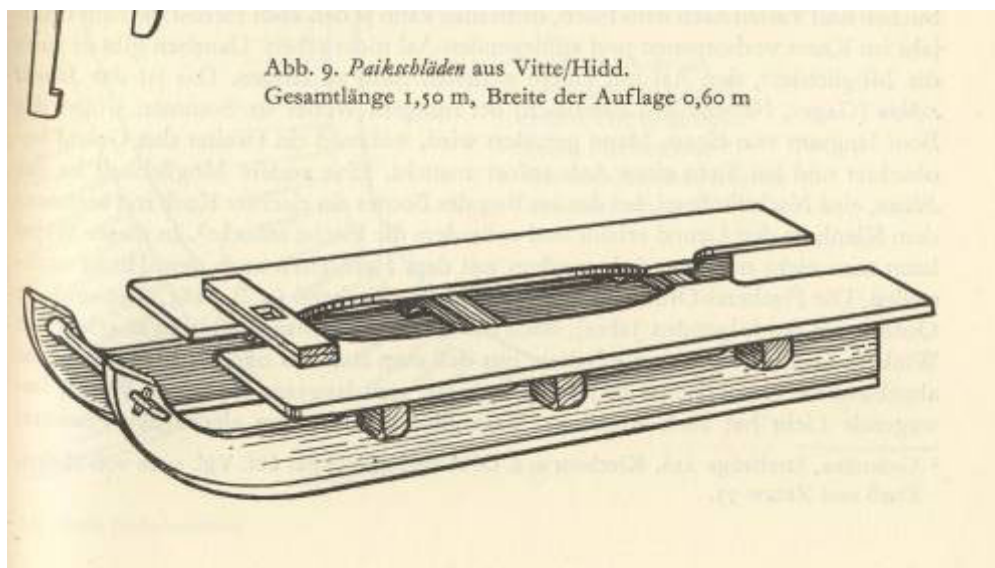
Eel iron, 1890 (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 7)

Left: nine-pronged pike iron from Zudar, no longer used

Right: nine-pronged pike iron from Zittvitz, used until around 1890



Ice axe for knocking holes in the ice surface for fishing with the eel iron or with the pike fishing rod Thießow/Mönchgut and Hiddensee (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 8)



Paikscläden (sled) from Vitte/Hiddensee
Total length 1.50 m, width of surface 0.60 m (Peesch, 1961: Fig. 9)

Ice trawl net

Fishing with the "large bow net" (trawl net) is also possible under the ice. As early as January, the first herring schools swim into the bay and awaken the desire of the fishermen to catch them with large nets. They have to wait for an ice covering of eight to ten cm to form and can then use the ice axe to knock approx. 50 x 50 cm holes in the ice in a row at intervals of approx. 10 metres. Using various aids, the gillnets are spread out beneath the ice, pulled beneath it and then pulled out step by step from one hole. The prisoners can wriggle and flop, jump and hop as they will, they are and remain torn out of their element.



Herring fishing on the south shore of Göhren under very frosty conditions around 1935 (Mönchguter Museen)