

SURTSEY RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

VI



THE SURTSEY RESEARCH SOCIETY · REYKJAVÍK, APRIL 1972

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VI
PRIMARILY
1969 AND 1970 FIELD SEASONS



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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.

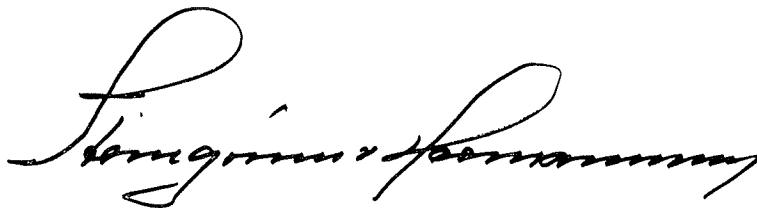
Thus, the plan is to publish the progress reports every second year and include all reports

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