
FEEDING ECOLOGY

F01 DIET OF THE BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*TURSIOPS TRUNCATUS*) IN THE CENTRAL CANTABRIAN SEA

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The stomach contents of nine bottlenose dolphins *Tursiops truncatus* (Montagu, 1821) stranded on the Asturian coast (Northern Spain) were studied. One stomach was empty due to obstruction by plastics and fishing net debris. All the specimens examined were male. A total of 496 prey remains belonging to 13 species were found. Nine species of fish from six different families and five species of squid from four families were identified. The total mass of examined food was 34,000 g, which represented an average stomach content of 4,250 g. In terms of prevalence, fish were the most important prey consumed (96.6%), whereas cephalopods represented the other 3.4%. Diet is based mainly on two fish species: blue whiting *Micromesistius poutassou* and hake *Merluccius merluccius*, both of great commercial importance in Asturian waters. Blue whiting was the most common prey, representing 84.9% by number and 50% by mass of the fresh fraction. Hake constituted 9% by number and 39.3% by mass of the fresh fraction. On the other hand, the oceanic cephalopod *Todarodes sagittatus* is the most important cephalopod prey (4.8% by mass of the fresh fraction). Our results indicate that bottlenose dolphin is an ichthyophagous species because fish seem to constitute the bulk of its diet. As most of the fish preys were demersal species inhabiting the area between the outer continental shelf and the continental slope, this suggests that this area is the most frequently used by this species.

F02 CEPHALOPOD PREY OF CUVIER'S BEAKED WHALE *ZIPHIUS CAVIROSTRIS* FROM THE ADRIATIC SEA

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Sightings of beaked whales in the Adriatic Sea have been reported from its southern part, which is between 200 and 1000 meters deep. Information on diet composition of deep-diving whales is scarce and not available for the Adriatic Sea.

Between 1990 and 2007 three specimens of *Ziphius cavirostris* were found dead, stranded along the Eastern Adriatic coast. We examined the specimens stomachs in order to determine the diet and compare it to the data from the Mediterranean Sea. Secondly, examining the diet could suggest the length of stay in the Adriatic Sea as the species are not considered resident in the area, and stomach contents include food remains of several feedings. Food remains were found in only one animal and consisted solely of cephalopod beaks. The total number of cephalopods found was 94, and they were ascribed to 7 mesopelagic and bathypelagic species of the order Teuthida, with estimated biomass of 11 kg. *Octopoteuthis sicula* and *Chiroteuthis veranyi* dominated both in terms of number (68.5%) and weight (64.5%), and the prey size implies the foraging depth was between 400 and 1000 meters. Two of the prey species have not been listed in the Adriatic cephalopod fauna, but as are widely distributed in the Mediterranean Sea. We suggest that the whale was recently feeding in the Mediterranean Sea, but was also foraging in the Adriatic Sea as the dominant prey species are the most abundant deep-sea Teuthida in the Adriatic Sea.

F03 PREFERABLE DIET OF HARBOUR PORPOISES (*PHOCOENA PHOCOENA RELICTA*) IN THE NORTHERN AND WESTERN BLACK SEA

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According to the published data, a total of 19 fish species were confirmed to be prey items for the Black Sea harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena relicta*) but only few of them can pretend at present to the role of its basic diet. Stomach contents of 112 porpoise carcasses, collected stranded and by-caught in the northern and western Black Sea, have been studied through the instrumentality of a reference collection of Black Sea fish otoliths and bones. Food remains represented by fish residues were found in 97 porpoises. Three fish species turned out the most common prey, including the Mediterranean/Black Sea sprat (*Sprattus sprattus phalericus*, 61.9% of "fish-positive" samples), Black Sea whiting (*Merlangius merlangus euxinus*, 54.6%) and Black Sea anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus ponticus*, 29.9%). Sometimes these favourites were detected three together (8.2%) but more often they were found in pairs: sprat and whiting (32.0%), sprat and anchovy (15.5%), whiting and anchovy (14.4%). Sprat and whiting residues occurred in the stomach contents during all seasons year-round. Less frequent findings were represented by the Far-east mullet (*Liza haematocheila* = *Mugil so-iuy*, 5.2%) intentionally introduced into the Black Sea in 1970s-1980s, gobies (Gobiidae gen. sp., 4.1%), Black Sea shad (*Alosa kessleri pontica*, 1.0%) and pickarel (*Spicara flexuosa*, 1.0%). In nine cases from eleven, when these rare prey items were recorded, they collocated with 1-3 species of the dominating prey. Above results

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