



Investigaciones Marinas

ISSN: 0716-1069

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Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso
Chile

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Abundancia estacional y distribución vertical del zooplancton gelatinoso carnívoro en una
área de surgencia en el norte del Sistema de la Corriente de Humboldt

Investigaciones Marinas, vol. 32, núm. 1, 2004, pp. 49-70

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso

Valparaíso, Chile

Available in: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=45632105>

Abstract

The seasonal abundance and vertical distribution of gelatinous zooplankton collected during four cruises off Mejillones bay were analyzed. In this area we identified 44 species of macroplankton distributed in 23 siphonophores, 17 hydromedusae, and 4 ctenophores. Eight species, *Sphaeronectes irregularis*, *Rhizophysa eysenhardti*, *Amphogona apicata*, *Proboscoidactyla stellata*, *Sarsia cocometra*, *Pleurobrachia bachei*, *Thalassocalyce inconstans* and *Velamen parallelum*, are the first records in the Humboldt Current System. The seasonal distribution showed an increase in abundance in spring and summer, with the highest aggregations (> 2600 ind·100 m⁻³) of *Aglaura hemistoma*, *Solmundella bitentaculata*, *Muggiaea atlantica* and *Pleurobrachia bachei* in October and *Obelia* spp. in February. The highest densities were observed in the coastal station and in the oceanic front, while the oceanic station was characterized by a strong decrease in abundance. The vertical distribution showed that the most dominant species were founded in the first 100 m of the water column, with a higher concentration of organisms in the first 25 or 50 m of depth. This vertical distribution could be limited by presence of a minimum dissolved oxygen layer (< 1 ml·L⁻¹) in shallow waters (30-50 m) during de upwelling events

Keywords

gelatinous zooplankton, seasonal abundance, vertical distribution, Mejillones Bay, Chile.

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