

An evaluation of benthic invertebrate sampling devices for investigating feeding habits of fish

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ABSTRACT

Benthic invertebrate samplers and the information gained from their use can be extremely valuable to research conducted on feeding habits of fish. These samplers provide complete and undamaged specimens which can be accurately identified, and the data produced can be used to formulate detailed pictures of the community of organisms present in and on the surface of the sediment. This evidence of existing community structure coupled with inventories of the stomach contents of particular fish species can be used to determine selectivity in patterns of feeding for the fish species in question. However, many of the benthic samplers in use today do not function in the same manner, and as a result, unequally represent both the types of species and the number of individuals captured. Therefore, data are somewhat biased by the type of sampling device employed and caution must be used in attempting direct comparisons between organisms found in the stomach contents of fish and those depicted by community members in benthic grab samples. The purpose of this paper is to review the results of a field comparison of benthic grab samples. The purpose of this paper is to review the results of a field comparison of benthic samplers and to discuss the inherent attributes and problems associated with several types of commonly used sampling devices as they relate to research on fish feeding.

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