FEEDING PROPERTIES OF COMMON CARP (Cyprinus carpio L.,1758) LIVING IN HIRFANLI DAM LAKE

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Abstract

This study deals with the investigation of the digestive track content and the feeding habits of Cyprinus carpio living in Hirfanlı Dam Lake. The study was carried out between August 1996 and July 1997 on 206 Cyprinus carpio samples. There were zooplanktonic (Cladocera, Copepoda, Ostracoda, Rotifera), benthic (Diptera, Gastropoda) and phythoplanktonic (Euglenophyta, Cyanophyta, Pyrrophyta, Chlorophyta) organisms, plant residues and detritus in the digestive tract of the fish.

Key words: Cyprinus carpio, Common carp, Feeding, Hirfanlı Dam Lake

HIRFANLI BARAJ GÖLÜ'NDE YAŞAYAN SAZAN BALIĞI (Cyprinus carpio L.,1758)'NIN BESLENME ÖZELLIKLERI

Özet

Bu araştırmada Hirfanlı Baraj Gölü'nde yaşayan Cyprinus carpio'nın sindirim kanalı muhteviyatı ve beslenme özellikleri incelenmiştir. Ağustos 1996-Temmuz 1997 arasında yapılan bu çalışmada 206 adet Sazan avlanmıştır. Sindirim kanalı içeriklerinde zooplanktonik (Cladocera, Copepoda, Ostracoda, Rotifera), bentik (Diptera, Gastropoda) ve fitoplanktonik (Euglenophyta, Cyanophyta, Pyrrophyta, Chlorophyta) organizmalar, bitki parçaları ve detritus-çamur bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Cyprinus carpio, Sazan, Beslenme, Hirfanlı Baraj Gölü

1. Introduction

The intensive use of natural sources caused incredible pressure on the food supplies. The importance of plant and animal based protein in balanced nutrition is an undeniable fact. However the shortage of animal based protein causes problems to meet this ever increasing demand and there is an urgent need for the development of alternative production methods. Since fish is rich in protein the proper utilization of water sources is of paramount importance.

Common carp (*Cyprinus carpio* L., 1758) has a very important place among the fish species living in inland waters of the country as regards to its economic value and bre-

eding features. The common carp prefers natural lakes, ponds and deep and slow flowing rivers with detritus bottom and abundant vegetation. The young fish generally live in shallow parts while the elder ones prefer deep waters. They prefer warm waters and they are not very common in high altitude lakes and they have a considerable tolerance against the lack of oxygen. It has an important place among cultured species due to its omnivore nature, rapid growth, ease of keeping in closed regions and it relatively tasty meat. They reach to sexually maturity at 3-4 years of age and spawn their eggs between April and June. They can react to a length of 1 m and the weight of 40 kg (1).

Although there been numerous studies related to *Cyprinus carpio* in Turkey the studies related to its feeding biology and environmental adaption are highly limited. Some of the studies related to the feeding habits of *Cyprinus carpio* are the following:

Tanyolaç and Karabatak (2) investigated the digestive content of *Cyprinus carpio* in Mogan Lake while Atasagun (3) concentrated on the food types and their seasonal variations. Karaca (4), investigated the growth and feeding behavior of the common carp in Hirfanlı Dam Lake, Çetinkaya (5) examined its breeding and feeding behaviors in Akşehir Lake, Pala et al. (6) investigated the digestive content of *Cyprinus carpio* in Keban Dam Lake, Çetinkaya et al. (7) and Kırankaya and Ekmekçi (8) examined the growth properties of *Cyprinus carpio* in Beyşehir Lake and Gelingüllü Dam Lake.

Mc. Crimmon (9) investigated the feeding habits of *Cyprinus carpio* in Canada, Summerfelt et al. (10) in Oklahoma and Cherry and Guthrie (11) in Canada and Hana and Manal (12) Iraq. Saikia and Das (13) examined its feeding ecology in India.

The determination of the feeding biology of *Cyprinus carpio*, which has an important economic value and consumption potential for Turkey, is very important for the proper utilization of Hirfanlı Dam Lake which has a considerable water capacity.

2. Material and Method

Hirfanlı Dam Lake was constructed on Kızılırmak River 70 km south of Kırıkkale province, with an altitude of 856 m, volume 7.63x10⁹ m³ and a maximum reservoir of 320 km² (Figure 1). The Dam Lake was started to operate in 1959 (14). The zooplankton and phytoplankton in the lake which are amongst the basic food of fish are listed in Table 1 (14). Annelida and Diptera larvae (*Chironomus*) constitute the majority of the benthic fauna of the dam lake (14).



Figure 1. Hirfanlı Dam Lake

ZOOPLAN	NKTON	PHYTOPLANKTON								
Copepoda	Diaptomus sp.	Cyanophyceae	Gleocapsa sp.							
	Nauplius (larva)		Oscilatoria sp.							
	Cyclops sp.		Aphanizomenon sp							
Cladocera	Daphnia sp.		Microcysctis sp.							
	Diaphanosoma sp.		Merismopedia sp.							
	Chydorus sp.	Chlorophyceae	Ankistrodesmus sp.							
	Macrothrix sp.		Phormidium sp.							
	Alona sp.		Pediastrum sp.							
	Moina sp.		Closterium sp.							
	Bosmina sp.		Oocystis sp.							
Rotifera	Keratella sp.	Bacillariophyceae	Diatom sp.							
	Trichocerca sp.		Surirella sp.							
	Polyarthra sp.		Gyrosigma sp.							
	Synchaeta sp.		Cymatopleura sp.							
	Hexarthra sp.		Synedra sp.							
	Asplanchna sp.		Nitzchia sp.							
	Lepadella sp.		Cymbella sp.							
	Filinia sp.		Cyclotella sp.							
			Navicula sp							
		Dinophyceae	Ceratium sp.							

There were 206 *Cyprinus carpio* caught monthly between August 1996 and July 1997. The fish caught with nets with different mesh sizes were kept in 4% formaldehyde. The fork lengths of the samples were measured and the weights were determined by the use of scales with accuracy 0.1g. The ages of the samples were determined by the use of scales (15). The genders were determined from the gonads. The digestive tracks of the fish were taken out. The residual tissues around the digestive tracks were cleaned out and their length was measured in mm. They were latter kept in 4% formaldehyde. The digestive tracks were opened and the ones which contain organisms, detritus and plant pieces were regarded as "full" and the ones which do not contain any of these were regarded as "empty". The track contents were put in glass measuring cylinders, kept there for 24 hours and their volumes were determined in cm³. Using these volumes the monthly averages of the track contents were determined. The volume of each track content were summed up and divided to the samples caught at each month to determine the food content for each sample in cm³. The types of food taken according to the seasons and the percentages were qualitatively and quantitatively determined under microscope. The animal and plant base organisms were accurately counted (15).

Based on these monthly analyses the average monthly % composition of each organism and the average number of monthly organisms consumed by each *Cyprinus carpio* species were determined. The seasonal variations in the types, compositions and relative abundance of the food prefered by *Cyprinus carpio* were also calculated.

3. Results

Digestive track contents and the food types

The type and % composition of the zooplanktonic and benthic organisms determined after the analyses of the digestive track contents of the *Cyprinus carpio* species caught monthly in Hirfanlı Dam Lake are tabulated in Table 1 the relative abundance of phytoplankton and other residues are listed in Table 3. The digestive track contents of 127 common carp out of 206 were determined and there were phytoplantonic, zooplanktonic and benthic organisms, mud, detritus and plant residues in their digestive track. The analyses revealed the presence of 38 492 animal based organisms. 63.94% of these organisms were classified as zooplanktonic and 36.06% as benthic.

Among the zooplanktonic organisms consumed 40.28% was Cladocera, 12.04% was Copepoda, 7.67% was Rotifera and 3.95% was Ostracoda. Cladocera group was constituted by *Daphnia* (19.26%), *Ceriodaphnia* (9.11%), *Diaphanosoma* (5.88%), *Chydorus* (4.29%) and *Alona* (1.74%); Copepoda group included *Diaptomus* (9.51%) and *Cyclops* (2.53%); Rotifera was formed by *Filinia* (4.16%), *Hexartha* (2.01%) and *Keratella* (1.5%) and Ostracoda contained *Cypris* (3.95%) (Table 3).

There were *Chironomus* (23.83%), *Corethra* (9.69%) and *Oligochaeta* (2.54%) species in Diptera group which contains all of the benthic organisms encountered. Apart from that there were Gastropoda species occasionally observed in March, April and May (Table 2).

Among the phytoplanktonic organisms observed in digestive tract content were

Cyanophyta, Euglenophyta, Chrysophyta and Chlorophyta (Table 3). The monthly analyses of digestive content are listed in Table 2 and Table 3. Phytoplanktonic organisms were mostly observed in August, September, October and April. The number of species and their abundance are tabulated in Table 3. The species belonging to Cladocera from zooplankton were observed almost in every month. Among them *Daphnia* was mostly observed in October and February, *Ceriodaphnia* in September and May, *Diaphanosoma* in June, *Chydorus* in November and *Alona* in April. Among the Copepoda group *Diaptomus* was most frequently observed in December and April and *Cyclops* in June. *Cypris* from Ostracoda was most frequent in August. When we come to Rotifera group *Keratella* was most abundant in August , *Hexarthra* in March and *Filinia* in April. Among the benthic organisms *Chironomus* from Diptera was observed almost every month but mostly in October and November, *Corethra* in November and *Oligochaeta* in July (Table 2). The organisms which could not be defined, detritus and mud were most frequently observed in June, August, September and October (Table 3).

		% N	6	27.68	7.74	22.74	2.92	1.53	1.60	4.00	4.23	8.45	8.17	1.76	100	
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BENTHIC ORGANISMS		ADO909TSAƏ N % JATOT	+ 29.89	_ 11.96 10656 27.68	- 39.54	- 82.17	- 31.53	- 35.09	- 21.43	+ 5.01	11.31 1628	29.37	27.21	- 61.45	- 13881 38492	- 36.06
RGA		oligochaeta	3.93	1.8	2.41	2.01	1	I		1		2.67	5.8	19.21	777	2.54
HIC C	DIPTERA	бинга	5.52	1.6	6.54	30.46	9.68	6.61	I	I	1.6	5.8	5.91	12.11	3731	9.69
BENT	D	sumonovid)	20.44	8.56	30.59	49.7	21.85	28.48	21.43	5.01	9.71	20.9	19.5	20.13	9173	23.83
		total %n General	70.11	88 04	60.46	17.83	68.47	64.91	78.57	94.99	88.69	70.63	72.79	38.55	24611	63.941
		LATOT	10.81	5.52	10.25	2.7		5.93	I	21.54	30.22	10.57	3.56	15.95	2950	7.67
	ROTIFERA	binili J	2.97	1.99	3.92	1.58		I	1	11.33	26.66	6.27	3.56	15.95	1602	4.16
	ROTİ	<i>влц</i> лвхэН	3.23	1.37	4.56	I	I			10.21	3.56	4.3			770	2.01
		Keratella	4.61	2.16	1.77	1.12	I	5.95		I					578	1.5
ZOOPLANKTONIC ORGANISMS	OSTRACODA	sinqyƏ	10.71	2.53	3.66	0.97	7.02		7.47	8.2	6.2	3.82	5.95	2.51	152	3.95
NIC OR		JATOT	18.37	7.02	6.34	4.16	30.19	19.15	18.18	25.37	32.18	13.46	22.27	10.49	4634	12.04
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ZO		JATOT	30.22	72.97	40.21	10.00	31.26	39.83	52.92	39.98	20.09	42.73	41.01	9.60	15506	40.28
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	ADC	nmozonnAqniU	8.46	7.11	8.62	1	1	I		7.55	I	8.7	16.93	3.4	2265	5.58
	D	ainhqaboir9)	6.96	41.91 19.86	9.09	1.52	I	I		4.81	4.73	10.14	7.32	4.58	3506	9.11
		pinhqpU	4.72	11.91	17.17	1	31.26	39.83	50.32	27.52		19.51	9.73	1.62	7414	19.26
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		Number of fish		14	13	13	16	17	20	33	23	14	=	10	206	-
		MONTHS	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	TOTAL	N%

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Table 2. The zooplanktonic and benthic organisms observed in the tract contents of Cyprinus carpio living in Hirfanlı Dam Lake.

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Monthly variations in feeding ratio and feeding rate

It was observed that the feeding ratio and the feeding rate of the common carp were varied according to months (Table 4). The highest and the lowest ratios of the fish with full tracks were observed in September (100%) and July (30%). It was observed that the fish with empty tracks were dominant in December, January and February and the number of the fish with full tracks were dominant August , September, October, March and April. The largest tract volume was observed in September with 7.74 cm³. The lowest volumes were found in January with 1.35 cm³, in February with 1.92cm³, in April with 1.48 cm³ and in July with 1.7 cm³. The monthly mean fork length of the *Cyprinus carpio* individuals hunted varied between 183.95 mm and 366.27 mm. This value were found to be between 188.50 mm and 357.71 mm for the individuals with full tracts. The tract lengths of the fish were between 285.04 mm and 578.18 mm according to months. These values changed between 273.75 mm and 586.42 mm for the fish with full tracts (Table 4).

Table 4. The mean fork legths, mean digestive tract lengths and volume of foodper individual for Cyprinus carpio with full tracts living in HirfanlıDam Lake.

MONTHS	N	Fish with filled tracts % N	Fish with empty tracts % N	Average fork lengths of the fish caught (mm) (Min-Max)	Average fork lengths of the fish with filled tracts (mm) (Min-Max)	Average length of the digestive tracts of the fish (mm) (Min-Max)	Average length of the digestive tracts of the fish with filled tracts (mm) (Min-Max)	The volume of the food content Per fish (cm3) (Min-Max)
AUGUST	22	81.82	18.18	183.95 (127-226)	188.5 (138-226)	285.04 (240-360)	290.05 (240-360)	5.01 (0-12)
SEPTEMBER	14	100	-	233.14 (169-362)	233.14 (169-362)	341.92 (230-595)	341.92 (230-595)	7.74 (0-15)
OCTOBER	13	69.23	30.77	247.15 (207.380)	252.88 (225-340)	355.23 (270-500)	361.55 (270-500)	5.23 (0-12)
NOVEMBER	13	61.54	38.46	191.3 (139.225)	190.75 (139-223)	285.53 (236-370)	273.55 (236.350)	4.05 (0-10)
DECEMBER	16	43.75	56.25	245.68 (185-280)	253.85 (220-280)	299.75 (250-380)	309.85 (250-380)	2.5 (0-11.7)
JANUARY	17	41.18	58.82	219.88 (186-252)	219.57 (186-260)	300.76 (237-396)	295.57 (237-396)	1.35 (0-6.3)
FEBRUARY	20	45	55	216.9 (154-270)	211.11 (154-254)	286.7 (196-489)	284.11 (196-430)	1.92 (0-6.5)
MARCH	33	72.73	27.27	224.33 (152-272)	227.79 (152-272)	327.6 (205-482)	335.45 (209-482)	3.07 (0-10)
APRIL	23	47.83	32.17	263.86 (170-312)	261.27 (170-312)	477.97 (236.609)	476.96 (236-600)	1.48 (0-6)
MAY	14	71.43	28.57	279.85 (231-387)	278.9 (231-387)	460.85 (303-760)	444.1 (303-760)	4.12 (0-9)
HAZİRAN	11	63.64	38.36	366.27 (260-400)	357.71 (260-389)	578.18 (400-850)	586.42 (400-799)	6.09 (0-15)
JULY	10	30	70	248.8 (132-369)	236.6 (168-380)	404.7 (221-705)	485.3 (255-705)	1.7 (0-7)

4. Discussion

Cyprinus carpio living in Hirfanlı Dam lake was found to be between I-V years of age. The monthly investigation of the digestive tracts of the fish showed animal and plantation based organisms, mud and detritus. Although the type organisms consumed showed difference zooplanktonic and benthic organisms, detritus and mud were present throughout the year.

The fact that feeding condition of common carp showed difference according to months and the type of organisms it consumed exhibited seasonal variations may be attributed to the fact that it changes its location in certain periods. However the presence of benthic organisms, detritus and mud in its digestive tract throughout the year indicates that the fish feed at the bottom of the lake. The digestive tract content of *Cyprinus carpio* living in Hirfanlı Dam Lake found in this study show certain similarities with some other studies in literature.

Numann (16) reported that *Cyprinus carpio* mainly feed on plankton (*Cyclops*, Bosmina and Alona) insects (Chironomid larvae). Summerfelt et.al (10), Cherry and Guthrie (11) stated that detritus and zooplanktonic organisms such as Cladocera, Copepoda and Diptera constituted the large part of the monthly and annual food of Cyprinus carpio in waters they investigated. Tanyolaç and Karabatak (2) the digestive tract content of the common carp in Mogan Lake largely contained algae, zooplankton (Cladocera, Copepoda, Rotifera, Ostracoda), benthic organisms (Diptera mainly Chironomus), plant residues and mud. Atasagun (3), found zooplanktonic and phytoplanktonic organisms, detritus and mud in the digestive tract of common carp in Mogan Lake. They observed that among the animal based organisms 67.58% was zooplanktonic and 32.42% benthic organisms. The most common zooplanktonic organisms observed in the digestive tract of the fish were Cladocera (35.65%), Copepoda (23.80%), Rotifera (4.34%) and Ostracoda (3.78%). The most frequenly observed benthic organisms in the digestive tracts were Diptera with 29.02% and and Oligochaeta with 2.82%. There were also phytoplanktonic organisms such as Cyanophyta, Chlorophyta, Chrysophyta and Euglenophyta and water plants. Karaca (4) reported zooplanktonic and benthic organisms and algae in the digestive tracts of *Cyprinus* carpio in his study he carried out in Hirfanlı Dam Lake. They reported that the majority of the food found in the digestive tracts was constituted by Chrysophyta from algae with 55.46% followed by benthic organisms with 16.17% and Copepoda from zooplankton with 8.49 %. Among the animal based organisms which constitutes 33.77 % of the total food consumed 56.72 % was zooplanktonic and 43.28 % was benthic organisms.

There are some differences between the studies related to the digestive tract contents of common carp in literature. Mc. Crimmon (9) reports that common carp consumes Mollusc, Annelida, Crustacea, Insecta and Detritus, water plants and phyotoplanktonic organisms. They also state that when animal based food is limited the carp eats the seeds of water grown plants such as rice and the seeds of wheat, oath and maize. Hana and Manal (12) found eggs of other fish and small fish in the digestive tract of common carp. Çetinkaya (5) reports that although plant based feeding rate is high in Akşehir Lake they observed 1-5 fish in the digestive tract of 17 common carps and the *Chironomid* larvae were seldom seen. Geldiay and Balık (1) states that the natural food of common carp are water fleas, Dipter larvae, small Molluscs, plants and algae.

There were animal and plant based organisms and detritus were present in the digestive tract contents of Cyprinus carpio throughout the year. Cladocera and Copepoda from zooplankton and Diptera from benthic organisms were observed in every month. In addition Rotifera (except December-February) and Ostracoda species (except January) were constantly present (Table 2). Cladocera, Copepoda and Rotifera species were less common in December, January and February when benthic organisms especially Chironomus from Diptera were consumed. Daphnia from Cladocera and Diaptomus from Copepoda were much more common in December, January and February (Table 2). Phytoplanktonic organisms were observed in all the months but mostly in August, September and October (Table 3). Tanyolaç and Karabatak (2) reported that Chironomus dominated the digestive tract contents of common carp at the beginning of fall and spring while zooplanktons were dominant between April and September. Atasagun (3) reported that the food content of common carp contains in small amounts of Cladocera (Ceriodaphnia) Copepoda (Diaptomus), Diptera (Chironomus), other species of Copepoda, and Rotifera and Ostracoda (except April and December). Also the consumption of Rotifera and Copepoda was observed to decrease and the consumption of Cladocera was observed to increase in summer months and at the beginning of fall and spring. They also reported that the consumption of benthic organisms (especially Chironomus) was observed to increase in spring, fall and winter months and in July. Mc.Crimmon (9) found that, Oligochaeta was immediately digested. That was why it was rarely observed in the digestive tract contents. In this study and in Atasagun's (3) study in Mogan Lake there were small amounts of Oligochaeta in the digestive contents of the common carp. According to Karaca (4) the highest and the lowest amounts of organisms were observed in October and July with 22.8% and 0.24%.

The zooplankton, phytoplankton, water plants and detritus constitute the major diet of the *Cyprinus carpio* living in Hirfanlı Dam Lake. These organisms also constitute the main food of *Tinca tinca* living in the lake. These two omnivorous fish are in competition for food. In spite of this the organisms in the lake seem to be abundant enough for both fish. Therefore it can conveniently be claimed the ecological balance of Hirfanlı Dam Lake is adequate enough as regards to planktonic and benthic organisms. Therefore there are no feeding problems for the fish living in the lake.

5. References

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