

PRELIMINARY STUDY OF FEEDING HABIT OF MAHSEER, *Neolissochilus stracheyi* (DAY, 1871) IN ARAWAN NATIONAL PARK, THAILAND

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Objective: (1) To study feeding morphology and stomach content analysis of Mahseer and (2) To study diet breadth and diet overlap of each body size class of Mahseer

Methods: Feeding habits of Mahseer were studied in Arawan National Park, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand in February and May 2011. Forty-nine specimens of Mahseer were collected by beach seine (1x1 mm). Studies of feeding morphology were followed the method of Nakabo (2002). Mahseer specimens were separated into three body size classes to examine stomach content and %IRI values (Cortes, 1997). Diet breadth was calculated using Levin's standardized index (Krebs, 1989) and Moristia's index method (applied from Krebs, 1999) was used to analyze the diet overlap of each body size class.

Results: A study on feeding morphology of Mahseer indicated that this fish is bottom feeder. According to the stomach content data, the fish can be considered as omnivorous and detritivorous. Food items can separated into six groups which were plants, insects, oligochaeta, fish, organic matters and unidentified. Insects and organic matters were dominant food items in small size fish (<10.0 cmSL) but plants were dominant food items in medium (10.1 – 20.0 mmSL) and large size fish (>20.0 mmSL). The highest diet breadth was found in small size fish followed by medium and large size fish. Feeding habits of Mahseer had low overlap in each size group.

Keywords: feeding habits, Mahseer, *Neolissochilus stracheyi*, Arawan National Park

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