

DIET COMPOSITION OF FISH *HYPEROPISUS BEBE* (MORMYRIDAE) IN SHIRORO RESERVOIR, NIGERIA

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Diet composition of *Hyperopisus bebe* (Mormyridae) from Shiroro Reservoir was investigated from April to June in 2013 to know the food preference of the species in the reservoir. A total of 61 samples 27 males and 34 females of *H. bebe* were collected using gillnets and cast nets. The body measurement of the samples showed that different sizes were collected. Stomach of the fish were split open and the content empty into a Petri-dish. The contents were observed under a microscope to identify the food materials with the aid of keys provided by Needham and Needham (1962) and Mellanby (1975). Two of the conventional methods; numerical and frequency of occurrence methods, were used to evaluate the stomach content. Nine major food items were consumed by *H. bebe* namely plant materials (27.99%), sand grain (8.10%), algae (4.21%), detritus (13.85%), Annelid worms (4.21%), crustaceans (6.02%), fish (14.41%) and unidentified items (8.31%). Frequency of occurrence and numerical method used in stomach analysis showed that plant materials were the highest, followed by fish, while the lowest was Cypris larva and whole insect, respectively. The classification of fish based on their feeding habit showed that *H. bebe* in this study is an omnivore because it consumed both plant and animal materials. Similarly ratio of gut length to standard length (0.52 cm – 0.96 cm) was closely related to food consumed, which is clearly indicated by the strong correlation between the lengths. The ratio values of *H. bebe* in Shiroro reservoir indicate a moderate gut length, which also confirm that the species is an omnivore in the reservoir.

Keywords: Gut length, *Hyperopisus bebe*, Standard length, Stomach content