

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE OF PENAEID POSTLARVAE IN MANGROVE AREAS ALONG THE EAST COAST OF PHUKET ISLAND, SOUTHERN THAILAND.

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ABSTRACT

The distribution and abundance of penaeid postlarvae were studied at seaward sites of a mangrove forest and in a mangrove channel during 1979-80. Five species of commercially important shrimps, viz. *Penaeus monodon*, *P. semisulcatus*, *P. merguensis*, *P. indicus* and *P. japonicus* were found in these areas. *P. semisulcatus* was the dominant species followed by *P. merguensis*. The major occurrence of penaeid postlarvae was at seaward sites of the mangrove while lower number were found in the channel. The penaeid postlarvae were collected in maximum numbers in surface samples during the night.

Seasonal variations and abundance of postlarvae were observed. The maximum numbers were recorded during the period May to October, that is during the wet season of south-west monsoon.

Other invertebrate postlarvae encountered in the samples were also recorded and the distribution and abundance of some important groups are described in the present paper.