

DISTRIBUTION OF MOON JELLYFISH AND ITS ZOOPLANKTON FOOD IN THE BLACK SEA.

E. Mutlu. Institute of Marine Sciences, Middle East Technical University, P.O. Box 28, Erdemli, İçel, TUR 33731, Turkey.

The distribution of *Aurelia aurita* Linnaeus 1758 in the Black Sea was determined using plankton samples collected above the anoxic zone (maximum depth 200 m) in the summer, winter, and spring from 1991-1995. Distribution was patchy. Average biomasses of 98 to 380 g m⁻² were measured and abundances varied from 2 to 14 individuals m⁻². Biomass and abundance peaked in late spring and summer. The distribution was correlated with hydrographic features in the Black Sea with higher concentrations at peripheries of anticyclonic eddies. Centers of the two main cyclonic gyres generally had a low biomass of *A. aurita*. From July 1992 to March 1995, the populations were largely offshore. *A. aurita* were confined to the upper part of the mixed layer. Smaller *A. aurita* (\approx 1 cm) were present in early spring (March) and individuals reached maximum size in the summer. Release of the ephyrae occurred in spring on northwestern shelf of the Sea in a temperature range of 11-12°C. Microscopic analysis of stomach contents showed that copepods and molluscs form their main diet.



Program and Abstracts

Sponsored by
Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
and
Dauphin Island Sea Lab



12-14 Jan. 2000

