

ABUNDANCE OF SOME SELECTED DETRITUS IN A THAI MANGAL¹

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ABSTRACT

Zooplankton samples were collected from a mangrove channel over a period of three months. Living and non-living parts of each sample were separated microscopically. The relative abundances of three types of detritus (faecal pellets, plant fragments, sand and mud aggregates) were measured. Filtration, weighing and calcination processes were used successively to estimate the dry weight and organic content of each part of the samples. Results, related to sampling station position, tidal levels and channel structure, illustrate that detritus constitutes at least 40% of the samples. Samples collected deep inside the mangrove area were the richest in detritus (up to 95%). Faecal pellets and mineral particles and aggregates were the most abundant at neap-tide while plant fragments dominated in the channels at spring-tide. The importance of non-living particles is emphasized by a detrital organic matter content of up to 35.7 mg/m³ of channel water.