

Seasonal distribution and diversity of epipellic algae in Köprüçay River (Turkey, Antalya)

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Abstract: Epipellic algae of the Köprüçay River were sampled monthly from four stations between February 2008 and January 2009. Epipellic algae were inspected in four stations on the stony river bed. Totally, 91 taxa belonging to Bacillariophyta (72), Chlorophyta (4), Cyanophyta (9) and Charophyta (6) were identified. Chrophyta was the dominant group in terms of both species diversity and the number of specimens obtained for each taxon. Frequency of occurrence and relative abundance were found in high frequency in such species as *Achnanthydium minutissimum* (Kützing) Czarnecki, *Nitzschia sigmaidea* (Nitzsch) W. Smith, *Gomphonema parvulum* (Kützing) Kützing, *Cocconeis placentula* Ehrenberg, *Cymatopleura solea* (Brébisson) W. Smith, *Cymbella affinis* Kützing, *Diatoma vulgare* Bory, *Ulnaria ulna* (Nitzsch) P. Compère and *Nitzschia sigmaidea* (Nitzsch) W. Smith.

Keywords: Epipellic algae, Diversity, Diatom, Köprüçay River.

Introduction

Benthic algae (epilithic, epipellic, epipsammic, epiphytic etc.) are important primary producers in stream, lake and wetland ecosystems (Moss, 1969; Kingston et al., 1983; Stevenson et al., 1996). Epipellic algal flora are present on all types of sediment (peat, silt, sand etc.) (Stevenson et al., 1996; Round, 1973). Epipellic algae are one of the key groups of organisms recommended by the European Union Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) for assessment of ecological status of surface waters (CEC, 2000). Therefore, they are important to determine the benthic algal communities in freshwater environment. This study represents composition of epipellic algae and determine their seasonal variations and diversity in Köprüçay River (Turkey/Antalya).

Materials and Methods

Köprüçay River is located in the Mediterranean Region of Turkey. Total length of the river is 156 km except for the tributaries and the total catchment area is 2498 km².

Four stations were chosen to study benthic algal flora of the Köprüçay River (Fig. 1). Epipellic algal flora was investigated in four stations because of the stony river bed.

Samplings were done during the snow-free period from February 2008 to January 2009. Due to temperature increase, river bed ebbed low and the epipellic algae sampling area dried in July and August and as a result, samples were not obtained in these months. The population was sampled by means of a glass tube of 0.8 cm diameter x 100 cm height. The glass tube was moved in a circular direction on the surface and the thumb was slightly loosened to take up the sediment. The samples were collected in a collecting bottle and immediately transported to laboratory (Round, 1953). The laboratory process of samples were performed according to Round (1953) and Sladeckova (1962). Species identification were performed followed by Krammer and Lange-Bertaloth (1986; 1988; 1991a, b), Bourrilly and Couté (1991), John et al. (2005), Komárek (2000; 2008). The MVSP 3.1 (Multi Variate Statistical Package) was used for evaluation of the diversity (Simpson and Shannon Weaver Index) and similarity (Sorensen's Similarity Index) (Kovach, 1998).

Results

Epipellic Algal Flora: During the study period, a total of

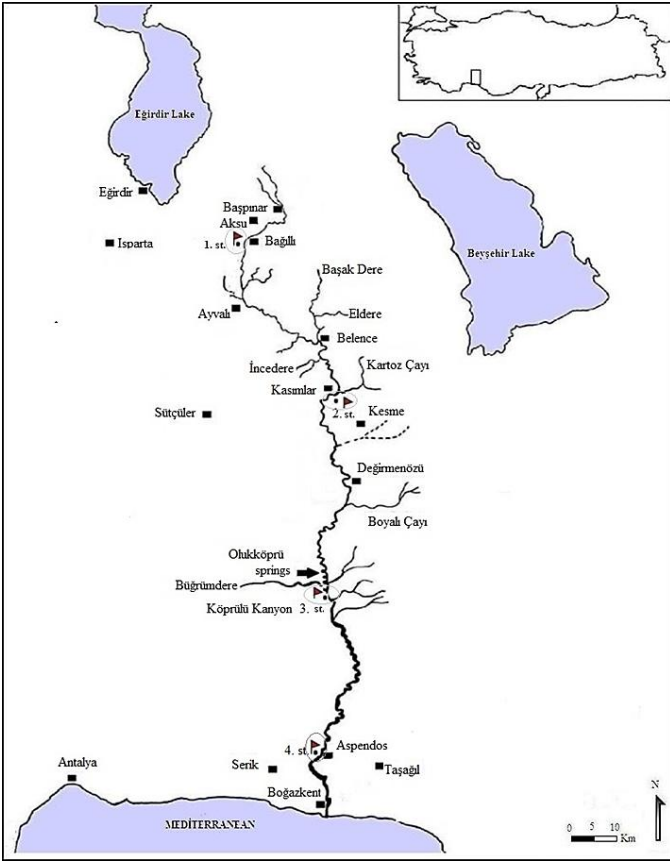


Figure 1. The maps showing the four stations selected along Köprüçay River.

91 taxa were identified; 72 of them belonged to Bacillariophyta, 4 to Chlorophyta, 9 to Cyanophyta, 6 to Charophyta (Table 1). The taxa belonging to Bacillariophyta were predominant and constituted 79.12 % of the epipellic community. However, the members of the Cyanophyta, and *Phormidium formosum*, became dominant only at station 2 in November. *Navicula* taxa (Ochrophyta) have been represented the highest species quantity. *Achnantheidium minutissimum*, *C. placentula*, *C. solea*, *N. palea*, *N. sigmoidea* and *U. ulna* were common taxa in epipellic community. *Achnantheidium minutissimum*, *N. palea*, *G. parvulum* and *U. ulna* at the station 1; *A. minutissimum*, *C. placentula*, *N. sigmoidea*, *C. affinis*, *U. ulna* and *C. solea* at the station 2; *C. placentula*, *N. sigmoidea* and *U. ulna* at the station 3; *C. affinis*, *D. vulgaris* and *U. ulna* at the station 4 were continuously observed. The frequencies and list of epipellic algae are shown in Table 2.

There were in monthly variability in the total density of the epipellic community. While the highest numbers of the total density was observed 14069 org/cm² in March, the lowest density was 5434 org/cm² in November (Fig.

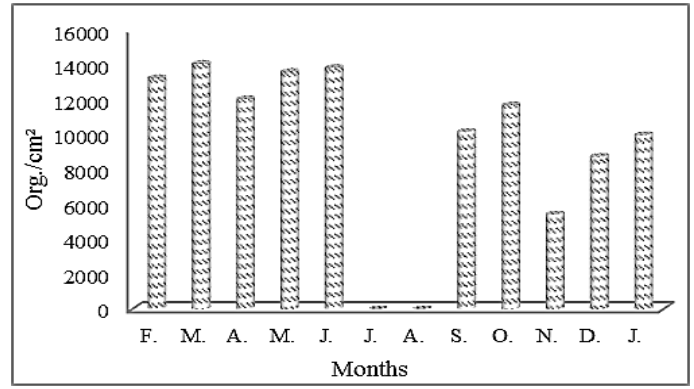


Figure 2. Seasonal changes in the total epipellic community.

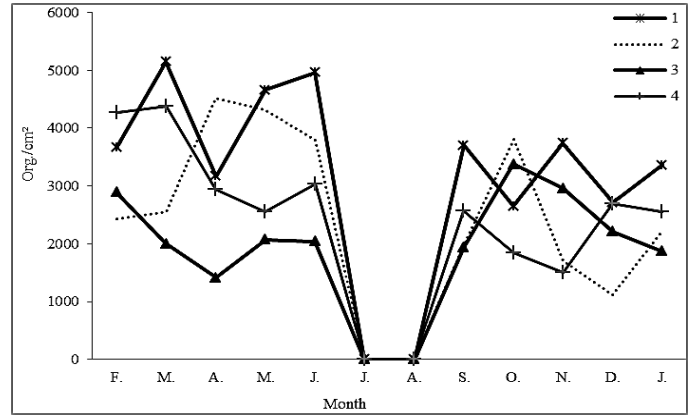


Figure 3. The abundance of epipellic density of the community at stations

2). The highest abundance was recorded at station 1 in March (5114 org/cm²), the lowest one was recorded at station 2 in December (1121 org/cm²) (Fig. 3).

The dominating taxa in the epipellic algal flora differed from each other at all stations. *Cocconeis placentula* and *D. moniliformis* were dominant at all stations. *U. ulna* were dominant station 1, 3, 4 and *C. minuta* and *A. minutissimum* at station 1, 2, 3, *N. palea*; at station 1, 2, 4, *C. affinis*; at station 2, 3, 4, *C. silesiaca*; at station 2, 3, *N. cryptocephala*, *C. solea* were dominant only at station 1 and *N. fonticola* and *A. veneta* only at station 3, *C. amphicephala* was dominant only at station 4 and *Phormidium phormosum* only at station 2. Dominance values (%) of some taxa were given Figure 4. The highest abundance of taxa has differed according to stations and month (Fig. 5). *D. moniliformis* reached its highest abundant (1396.5 org/cm²) in March, *U. ulna* (2245.7 org/cm²) in February, *A. minutissimum* (2000.4 org/cm²) in March, *C. affinis* (2302.4 org/cm²) in February, *C. silesiaca* (641.6 org/cm²) in June.

According to the Simpson Index, the highest diversity

Table 1. Frequencies (%) and list of epipelagic algae.

Taxa	Stations			
	1	2	3	4
<u>Bacillariophyta</u>				
<u>Cocconeidales</u>				
<i>Achnanthydium minutissimum</i> (Kützing) Czarnecki	100	90	60	70
<i>Planothidium lanceolatum</i> (Brébisson ex Kütz) Bukh.	30	-	-	-
<i>Cocconeis placentula</i> Ehrenberg	80	90	90	50
<u>Mastogloiales</u>				
<i>Achnanthes exigua</i> Grunow	20	-	-	-
<u>Bacillariales</u>				
<i>Denticula kuetzingii</i> Grunow	-	-	10	-
<i>Hantzschia amphioxys</i> (Ehrenberg) Grunow	60	10	-	-
<i>Nitzschia fonticola</i> (Grunow) Grunow	-	-	30	-
<i>Nitzschia palea</i> (Kützing) W.Smith	90	70	70	70
<i>Nitzschia sigmoidea</i> (Nitzsch) W.Smith	40	90	90	70
<u>Cymbellales</u>				
<i>Encyonema minutum</i> (Hilse) D.G.Mann	60	80	40	40
<i>Encyonema silesiacum</i> (Bleisch) D.G.Mann	-	30	30	30
<i>Cymbella helvetica</i> Kützing	-	10	-	30
<i>Cymbella affinis</i> Kützing	60	90	80	90
<i>Cymbella lanceolata</i> (C. Agardh) Mahoney & Reimer	-	20	-	40
<i>Cymbella tumida</i> (Brébisson) van Heurck	-	60	30	80
<i>Cymbella laevis</i> Nägeli	-	-	-	10
<i>Cymbopleura amphicephala</i> (Nägeli) Krammer	30	10	30	80
<i>Encyonopsis microcephala</i> (Grunow) Krammer	20	20	-	10
<i>Gomphonema parvulum</i> (Kützing) Kützing	100	10	50	40
<i>Gomphonema truncatum</i> Ehrenberg	50	-	-	-
<i>Gomphonema olivaceum</i> (Hornemann) Brébisson	20	50	-	30
<i>Gomphonema angustum</i> C.Agardh	-	-	-	20
<i>Gomphonema minutum</i> (C.Agardh) C.Agardh	10	20	-	-
<i>Rhoicosphenia abbreviata</i> (C.Agardh) Lange-Bertalot	20	-	-	10
<u>Eunotiales</u>				
<i>Eunotia praerupta</i> Ehrenberg	10	10	-	-
<u>Tabellariales</u>				
<i>Diatoma mesodon</i> (Ehrenberg) Kützing	20	10	-	-
<i>Diatoma moniliformis</i> (Kützing) D.M.Williams	70	50	30	60
<i>Diatoma vulgaris</i> Bory de Saint-Vincent	40	40	10	90
<i>Fragilaria constricta</i> Ehrenberg	-	-	40	10
<i>Fragilaria</i> sp.	10	-	-	40
<i>Meridion circulare</i> (Greville) C.Agardh	30	10	50	10
<u>Licmophorales</u>				
<i>Ulnaria biceps</i> (Kützing) P.Compère	-	-	10	-
<i>Ulnaria ulna</i> (Nitzsch) P.Compère	100	100	90	90
<u>Melosirales</u>				
<i>Melosira varians</i> C.Agardh	70	20	20	40
<u>Naviculales</u>				
<i>Caloneis silicula</i> (Ehrenberg) Cleve	50	60	20	50
<i>Caloneis bacillum</i> (Grunow) Cleve	10	-	-	-
<i>Caloneis schumanniana</i> (Grunow) Cleve	10	-	-	-
<i>Craticula cuspidata</i> (Kützing) D.G.Mann	60	20	-	-
<i>Gyrosigma acuminatum</i> (Kützing) Rabenhorst	50	20	20	20
<i>Gyrosigma</i> sp.	50	50	10	-
<i>Gyrosigma scalpoides</i> (Rabenhorst) Cleve	-	50	30	60
<i>Hippodonta capitata</i> (Ehrenberg) Lange-Bertalot	10	-	-	-
<i>Navicula cryptocephala</i> Kützing	70	40	20	-
<i>Navicula radiosa</i> Kützing	60	60	-	80
<i>Navicula viridula</i> (Kützing) Ehrenberg	50	70	70	60

Table 1. Continued.

Taxa	Stations			
	1	2	3	4
<i>Navicula cari</i> Ehrenberg	60	40	70	50
<i>Navicula sp.</i>	10	-	50	30
<i>Navicula capitatoradiata</i> Germain	10	40	20	30
<i>Neidium affine</i> (Ehrenberg) Pfizer	10	-	-	-
<i>Neidium productum</i> (W.Smith) Cleve	-	-	30	-
<i>Neidium dubium</i> (Ehrenberg) Cleve	-	-	20	-
<i>Neidium ampliutum</i> (Ehrenberg) Krammer	10	-	-	20
<i>Pinnularia dactylus</i> Ehrenberg	20	-	-	-
<i>Pinnularia viridis</i> (Nitzsch) Ehrenberg	30	-	-	-
<i>Pinnularia microstauron</i> (Ehrenberg) Cleve	-	-	-	10
<i>Stauroneis sp.</i>	10	-	-	-
<i>Stauroneis anceps</i> Ehrenberg	40	-	-	10
<i>Stauroneis smithii</i> Grunow	30	-	-	-
<i>Sellaphora pupula</i> (Kützing) Mereschkovsky	50	30	10	40
Rhopalodiales				
<i>Epithemia adnata</i> (Kützing) Brébisson	-	10	-	-
<i>Epithemia turgida</i> (Ehrenberg) Kützing	10	-	-	-
<i>Rhopalodia gibba</i> (Ehrenberg) Otto Müller	50	-	-	-
Surirellales				
<i>Cymatopleura solea</i> (Brébisson) W.Smith	80	90	60	70
<i>Cymatopleura elliptica</i> (Brébisson) W.Smith	40	20	-	60
<i>Cymatopleura solea var. apiculata</i> (W.Smith) Ralfs	-	-	-	10
<i>Surirella angusta</i> <u>Kützing</u>	80	50	40	60
<i>Surirella minuta</i> Brébisson	80	70	60	60
<i>Surirella linearis</i> <u>W.Smith</u>	-	-	-	10
<i>Surirella tenera</i> <u>W.Gregory</u>	-	20	-	20
Thalassiophysales				
<i>Amphora ovalis</i> (<u>Kützing</u>) <u>Kützing</u>	10	70	70	80
<i>Amphora veneta</i> Kützing	10	-	50	10
Thalassiosirales				
<i>Cyclotella sp.</i>	10	-	-	-
Chlorophyta				
Sphaeropleales				
<i>Pseudopediastrum boryanum</i> Turpin) E.Hegewald	10	-	-	-
<i>Pediastrum boryanum var. cornutum</i> (Raciborski) Sulek	10	-	-	-
<i>Scenedesmus communis</i> E.Hegewald	20	-	-	-
<i>Scenedesmus sp.</i>	-	10	-	-
Cyanophyta				
Chroococcales				
<i>Chroococcus sp.</i>	10	-	-	-
Nostocales				
<i>Nostoc sp.</i>	10	-	-	-
Synechococcales				
<i>Merismopedia glauca</i> (Ehrenberg) Kützing	-	-	40	-
<i>Merismopedia sp.</i>	10	-	-	-
Oscillatoriales				
<i>Oscillatoria nitida</i> <u>Schkorbatov</u>	10	-	-	-
<i>Oscillatoria sp.</i>	10	-	-	-
<i>Microcoleus amoenus</i> (Gomont) Strunecky, Komárek & J.R.Johansen	20	-	-	-
<i>Phormidium limosum</i> (Dillwyn) P.C.Silva	50	-	10	-
<i>Phormidium formosum</i> (Bory de Saint-Vincent ex Gomont) Anagnostidis & Komárek	50	10	-	-
Charophyta				

Table 1. Continued.

Taxa	Stations			
	1	2	3	4
<u>Desmidiaceae</u>				
<i>Closterium</i> sp.	20	30	-	-
<i>Closterium costatum</i> Corda ex Ralfs	10	-	-	-
<i>Cosmarium</i> p.	10	-	-	-
<i>Cosmarium obtusatum</i> (Schmidle) Schmidle	-	10	10	40
<u>Zygnematales</u>				
<i>Spirogyra</i> spp.	-	-	-	10
<i>Zygnema</i> sp.	-	-	-	10

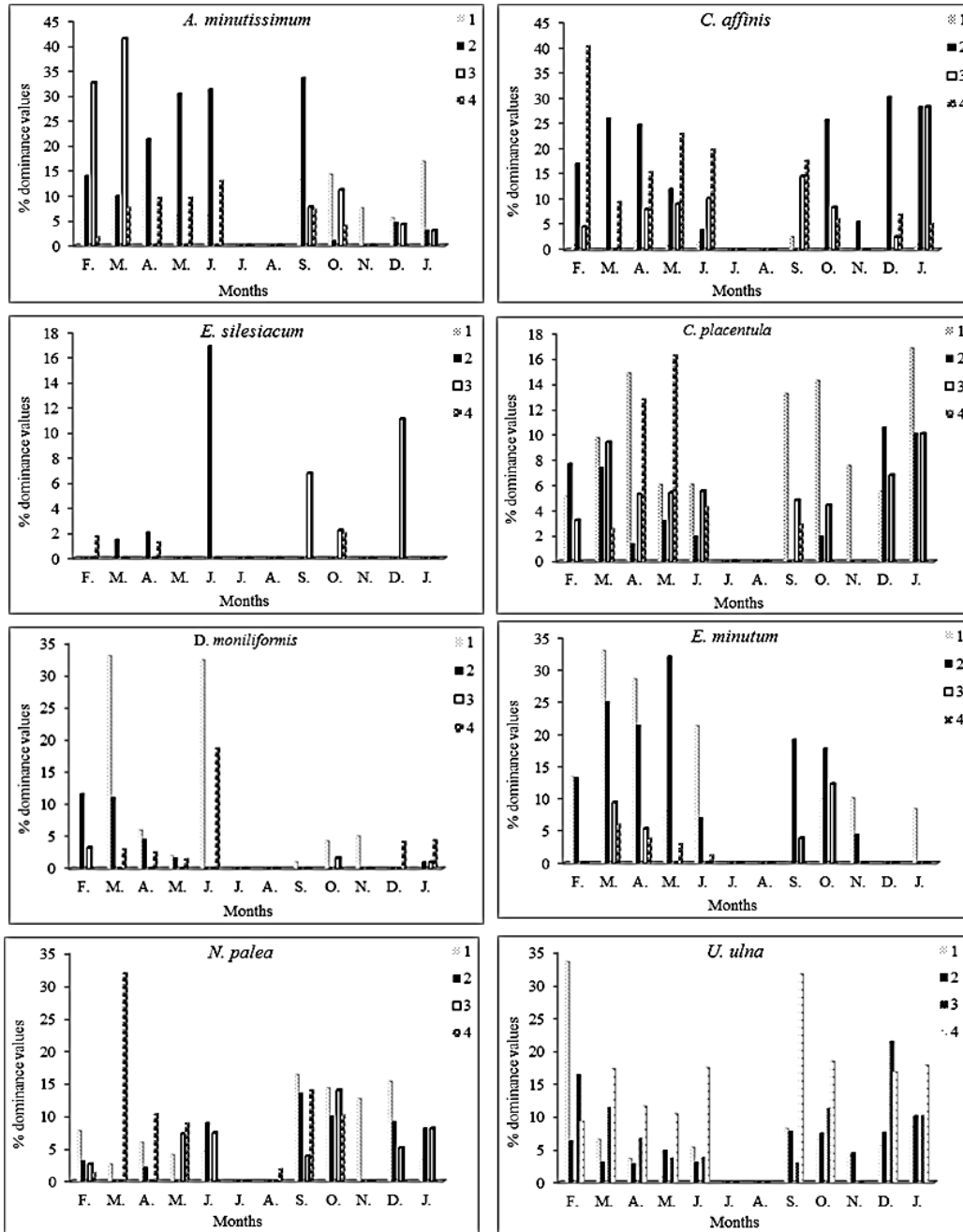


Figure 4. Dominance values (%) of some taxa.

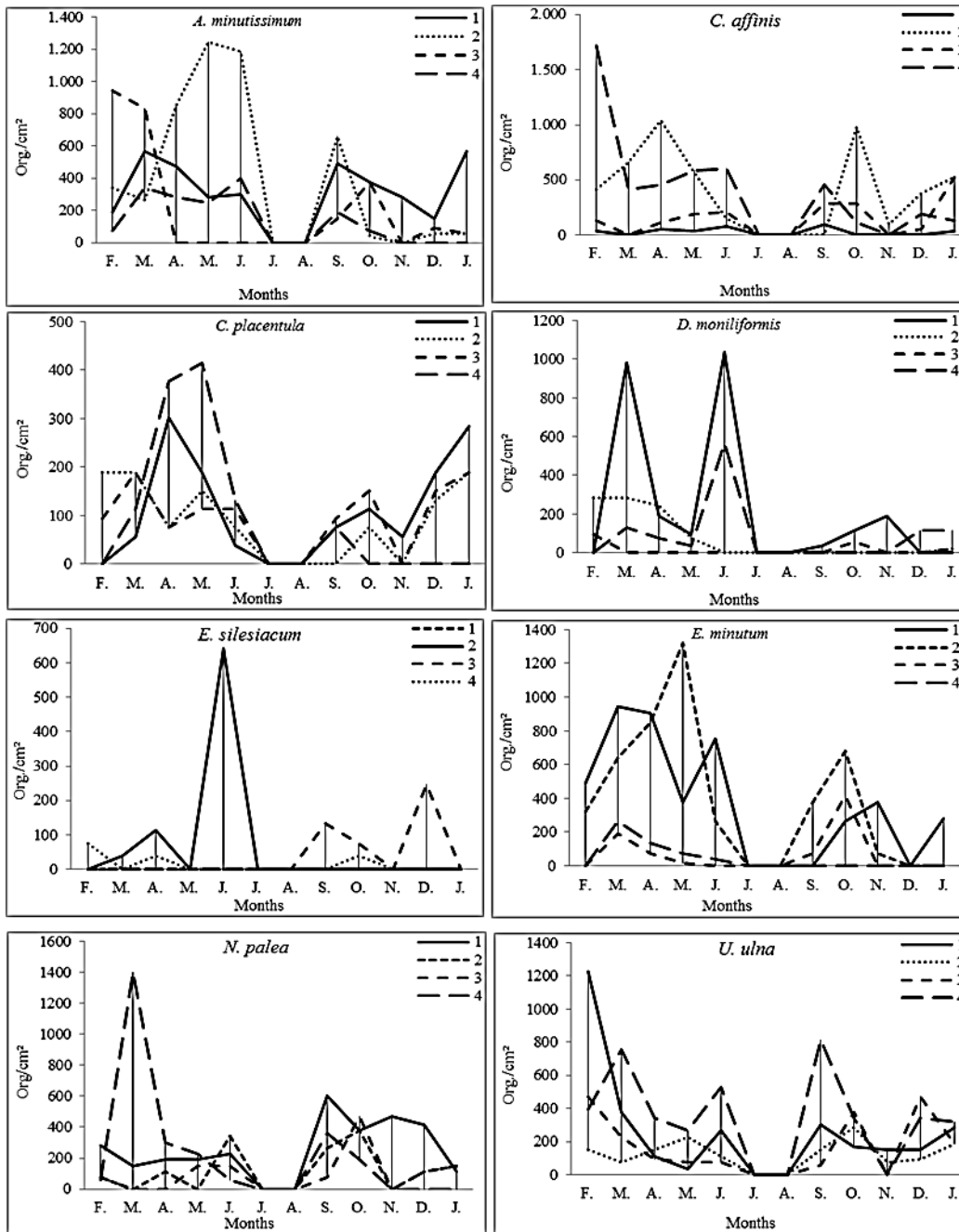


Figure 5. Seasonal changes in the density of dominant epipellic algae.

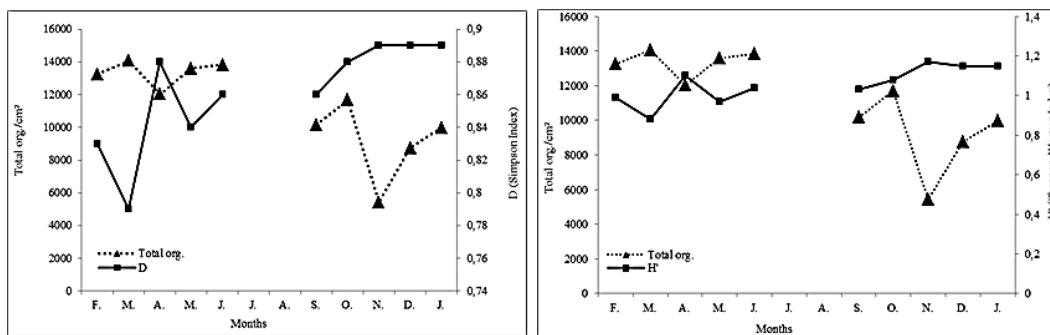


Figure 6. The seasonal variations in the total organisms and diversity of the epipellic algae.

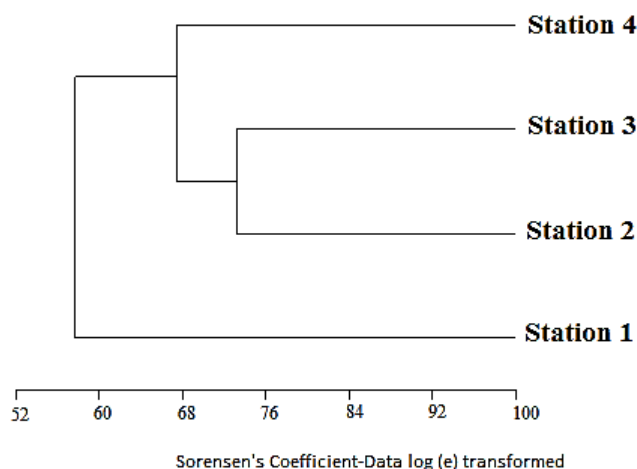


Figure 7. UPGMA dendrogram for four stations.

value was calculated as 0.89 (in November, December and January) while the Shannon Weaver Index was estimated as 2.3 (in November, December and January); the lowest index value for either Simpson or Shannon-Weaver was observed as 0.8 (March). According to Sorensen's Similarity Index, the highest similarity was observed between station 2 and station 3 (73%), the lowest one was observed between station 2 and station 5 (52%) (Fig. 7). There was positive relationship between total number of species and index values (Fig. 6).

Discussion

A total of 91 taxa belonging to epipellic algae were identified from Köprüçay River (Antalya). Diatoms constituting 79.12 % of the total epipellic community were predominant group. Results with regard to epipellic algae taxon were similar to ones that had been documented in other studies, in rivers and lakes (Moore, 1974; Antoine and Evens, 1986; Kara and Şahin, 2001; Kolaylı et al., 1998; Şahin, 2003; Atıcı et al., 2005).

In Köprüçay River (Antalya), *A. minutissimum*, *C. placentula*, *C. solea*, *C. affinis*, *D. vulgaris*, *G. parvulum*, *N. palea*, *N. sigmoidea* and *U. ulna* were found to be the common taxa. *U. ulna* was also reported to be common in Değirmendere River (Kara and Şahin, 2001). *A. minutissimum*, *C. affinis*, *C. placentula* and *U. ulna* were common algae in the freshwater systems (Winter and Duthie, 2000; Şahin, 2003; Špačková et al., 2009). Various researchers had reported that *A. minutissimum*, *N. palea*, *C. placentula*, *C. solea*, *C. affinis*, *D. vulgaris*, *U. ulna*, *N. sigmoidea* and *G. parvulum* are frequently observed in epipellic flora

(Aykulu, 1982; Altuner, 1988; Ertan and Morkoyunlu, 1997; Aksın et al., 1999; Çetin and Yavuz, 2001; Yıldırım et al., 2003; Sıvacı and Dere, 2006). The epipellic flora of stream or river consists mainly of diatoms, which are the most common algal group in freshwater systems (Round, 1981; Wehr and Sheat, 2003).

According to the stations and months, the abundance of epipellic algae had shown variability. The highest quantity for total density was 5114 org/cm² in March (station 1), the lowest quantity for total density was 1121 org/cm² in December (station 2). The same result was reported by the studies which were related to epipellic algae (Şahin, 2004; Kırak and Gürbüz, 2005).

Cocconeis placentula, *D. moniliformis*, *U. ulna*, *C. minuta*, *A. minutissima*, *N. palea*, *C. affinis*, *C. silesiaca*, *N. cryptocephala*, *C. solea*, *N. fonticola*, *A. veneta*, *C. amphicephala* and *Phormidium phormosum* were dominant taxa in the epipellic community. Some studies have been reported that dominating of *A. minutissimum*, *N. palea*, *U. ulna*, *D. vulgaris*, *N. cryptocephala*, *C. minuta*, *C. affinis* and *C. placentula* (Kolaylı et al., 1998; Kara and Şahin, 2001; Sivaci et al., 2007; Kırak and Gürbüz, 2010). Round (1981) reported that Achnanthes, Amphora were dominant in freshwater flora. Members of Cyanophyta, Charophyta and Chlorophyta were not important in the epipellic population. One taxa belonging to Cyanophyta, *Phormidium phormosum* was only dominant in November. Kırak and Gürbüz (2005) reported that these taxa were dominant in epipellic flora.

In this study, the highest diversity was observed in autumn and winter period (Simpson Index 0.89 and Shannon-Weaver Index 2.3), the lowest diversity was observed in spring period (Simpson and Shannon-Weaver Index 0.8). It was observed that diversity showed an inverse pattern with cell number in the Köprüçay River. Therefore species diversity was declining with the increase in total cell number. When *A. minutissimum* (830.36 org/cm² in March), and *E. minutum* (2038.16 org/cm² in March) were observed as the highest cell number, diversity was decreasing/diversity declined. *A. minutissimum* occupied 41.51% of the total epipellic flora and *E. minutum* occupied 33% in March. Kolaylı and Şahin (2009) had mentioned that the decrease in diversity index was caused by the high relative abundance of the dominant taxa. In November, December and January diversity index value had increased. In these months cell

numbers were small, dominant taxa, for example *A. minutissimum* had the lowest cell number (283.08 org/cm²) in November. The lowest cell number (283.08 org/cm²) was observed for *E. minutum* in January. Similar results were reported in the previous studies (Şahin, 2004; Kolaylı and Şahin, 2009). The primary reproduction was less in winter, low rate of reproduction of the benthic diatoms were caused by the high turbidity of the water and another factor was the instability of the substratum, which can be washed away during rough weather (Hoek et al., 1995). These phenomena obviously supported the results obtained from epipellic algae in Köprüçay River. In the various previous studies, it was reported that the biomass and growth of algae were positively correlated with light intensity and temperature (Muller, 1994; Sıvacı and Dere, 2006; Kolaylı and Şahin, 2009).

Additionally, there were positive effect of water temperature and flood on the development of the epipellic algal flora in Köprüçay River.

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