

Seasonal Variation in Food Preference and Feeding Ecology of Two Juvenile Marine Fishes, *Pseudotolithus senegalensis* (Sciaenidae) and *Brachydeuterus auritus* (Haemulidae) off Cape Coast, Ghana

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Abstract

Aspects of the feeding habits and diet of juveniles of the cassava croaker *Pseudotolithus senegalensis* (Valenciennes, 1833) (Sciaenidae) and bigeye grunt *Brachydeuterus auritus* (Valenciennes, 1831) (Haemulidae) in the inshore waters of Cape Coast, Ghana are reported in the study. Both species had a similar diet consisting of larvae of fish, shrimps and cuttlefish. The croaker ingested prey up to 77% of its total length while the bigeye grunt consumed prey up to 70% of its total length. Analysis of the stomach contents, based on the frequency of occurrence, and numerical and gravimetric compositions of these food items indicated that shrimps were the main food of *P. senegalensis* while *B. auritus* fed mainly on fish. While shrimps constituted the predominant food of the croakers all-year-round, the bigeye grunts appeared to shift their preference for fish to shrimps from June to September. The results of the study are compared with those on croakers from other parts of the Gulf of Guinea. The study, however, appears to be the first to give a detailed account of the food preference and feeding ecology of the bigeye grunt.