

A comparative study of food habits of
houndsharks, Triakidae, caught from the Seto
Inland Sea, Japan

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INTRODUCTION

The houndsharks, the family Triakidae, are distributed in the coastal waters in Japan (Compagno, 1984). Though the catches of the houndsharks in Japan are not so much, they are important food in the each coastal region of Japan (Yamaguchi, 2000). There are a few biological studies of houndsharks. In the present study, the comparison of food habits of houndsharks in the central part of the Seto Inland Sea, Japan, was examined.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Specimens of four houndsharks, *Triakis scyllium*, *Hemitriakis japonica*, *Mustelus griseus* and *M. manazo*, were collected from Imabari Fish Market between March 1997 and November 2000, which faces the central part of the Seto Inland Sea. For each specimen of houndshark, prey items were identified and counted. The wet weight of each food item was weighted. The shapes of gape and teeth of each houndshark were observed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main prey items of four houndsharks were crustaceans, such as crabs and shrimps, cephalopods, polychaetes and fish. For each houndshark, the small sized (<700mmTL) *T. scyllium* fed on echinurans and its food habits shifted to cephalopods with growth. *H.japanica* often fed on cephalopods or fish regardless of its body size. On the other hand *M.griseus* and *M.manazo* fed on crustaceans and polychaetes in any body sizes. The similarity of food habits corresponded well to the shape of teeth of each houndshark, that is *T. scyllium* and *H. japonica* have peaked teeth, and *M.griseus* and *M.manazo* teeth like tiled.

REFERENCES

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