PRELIMINARY STUDY ON OLIGOCHAETES (ANNELIDA, OLIGOCHAETA) AND WATER MITES (ACARI, HYDRACHNIDIA) FROM THE HYPORHEIC ZONES OF THE CRIŞUL REPEDE RIVER (ROMANIA)

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This paper is a preliminary study on oligochaetes and water mites from interstitial habitates of the Crişul Repede, one of the most important rivers in north-western Romania. Fourteen oligochaeta species and nine water mite species were collected from nine sampling sites located in the Crişul Repede catchment area. The highest number of both oligochaetes and water mites were found at Aleşd station where the samples were collected by the Karaman-Chappuis method. In the Crişul Repede catchment area the diversity of oligochaetes and water mites was higher than the one recorded on the Arieş River.

1. INTRODUCTION

Freshwater oligochaetes have long been recognized as common and permanent inhabitants of diverse aquatic habitats including lotic and lentic systems, surface waters, groundwater, and coarse as well as fine sediments (BRINKHURST and JAMIESON, 1971). In particular, oligochaetes are recognized as permanent and abundant taxa in hyporheic sediments where they constitute a relevant tool for ecological studies (GIERE, 1993).

Water mites represent the most important group of Acari which live in interstitial freshwaters (SCHWARZ *et al.,* 1998). There are about 500 species worldwide, representing 10% from the total number of water mites (DI SABATINO *et al*., 2000).

Previous research regarding oligochaeta and water mite communities from interstitial zones located in the Crişul Repede catchment area were made many decades ago, as follows: SZALAY (1943, 1944, 1945), MOTAŞ and TANASACHI (1946), PLEŞA *et al*. (1964), BOTEA (1966, 1968), BOTEA and PLEŞA (1968).

The paper deals with oligochaeta and water mite communities and their distribution in the hyporheic zone from the Crişul Repede River and some of its tributaries.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The samples were collected in the autumn of 2000 from the Crişul Repede catchment area. The study included nine sampling stations: Bologa, Negreni, Bulz,

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