Feeding aspects of fish larvae and juveniles at Bransfield and Gerlache Straits (Antarctic Peninsula) during the Summer of 2002/03 and 2003/04

Juliana Lira de Andrade[1] & Frederico Werneck Kurtz[2]

[1] Mestranda em Ciências do Mar (USU) – julianalira@uol.com.br
[2] Departamento de Oceanografia e Hidrologia (UERJ) – fwkurtz@uerj.br

Starvation is one of the main factors influencing larval mortality. Hence, studies upon trophic mechanisms are important to understand the recruitment processes. This study is part of the High Latitudes Oceanography Group (Net 1 – Brazilian Antarctic Program), and its objective was to verify feeding aspects of fish larvae and juveniles. Sampling occurred during the summer of 2002/03 and 2003/04 (Antarctic Operations XXI and XXII, respectively). A bongo net, 330μm in mesh, was employed in oblique hauls. Main food items ingested by *Pleuragramma antarcticum* were the copepod *Metridia gerlachei*, which is one of the dominant plankton species in the area, and tintinids. The presence of Antarctic krill *Euphausia superba* and fish larvae *Nototheniops larseni* into *Chionodraco rastrospinosus* diet matches data from other studies developed at this region. *Trematomus scotti* had exclusively copepods on its diet, as well as *Lepidonotothen kempi*.