

**Composition and Abundance of Meiofaunal Assemblages found
in Banate Bay during NE Monsoon and Early Summer**

by

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A Special Problem Research

Presented To

The Faculty of the Division of Biological Sciences

College of Arts and Sciences

University of the Philippines Visayas

Miag-ao, Iloilo

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree

Bachelor of Science (Biology)

May 2015

Abstract

The study was conducted in Banate Bay, Philippines to describe the composition and abundance of the meiofaunal assemblage in the area. Field sampling was done during December 2012 and March 2013.

A total of 41 taxa were identified, dominated by nematodes followed by harpacticoid copepods. The overall mean density of meiofauna in the shallow waters of Banate bay was 28.8 ind.cm⁻². The high meiofaunal density recorded in the present study was due to sediment granulometry, water depth and percent organic matter. Macrofauna:meiofauna ratio was also high due to sparse number of macrofauna observed and the physical disturbances associated with seasonal rainfall. The highest density was recorded in March 2013 and the lowest was recorded in December 2012, albeit no significant difference. The temporal distribution of meiofauna was positively correlated with salinity ($R = 0.59$). Seasonal rainfall also influenced the meiofaunal abundance by affecting turbidity and salinity as well as causing physical disturbances (e.g., storm). Spatial distribution of meiofauna between the stations was influenced by salinity rather than the sediment granulometry, organic matter and turbidity.