Preliminary results of the feeding behaviour of *Plesionika narval* (Crustacea, Decapoda, Pandalidae) in the S.E Aegean Sea (E. Mediterranean Sea)

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* *Plesionika narval* (Fabricius, 1787) is of high ecological and commercial interest to fisheries in the S.E. Aegean Sea (E. Mediterranean Sea), however, no adequate information is available on its feeding habits from this area. The aim of this study was to describe the feeding behaviour of *P. narval* in the S.E. Aegean Sea (Dodecanese islands) based on information of sex, month and depth (shallow waters: 0-100, deep waters: 100-180 m).

The individuals were monthly collected with shrimp traps from four locations during the period November 2014 to March 2015 within the frame of Plesionika Manage (Operational Programme Fisheries 2007-2013) scientific project.

A total of 267 males and 708 females of *P. narval* were analysed. The diet composition (abundance, prey occurrence) and feeding activity (stomach content weight, vacuity and repletion index) of *P. narval* were examined.

*Plesionika narval* showed a high feeding preference on pelagic and benthic resources, considering as an active predator and an occasional scavenger. The major common preys are plant debris (27.65% of the total preys), crustaceans (20%), foraminifera (11.92%), polychaetes (2.85%), and molluscs (3%). No clear differentiation in the feeding behaviour between sexes was observed. Within females, significant differences in vacuity index were found between deep and shallow depths (t-test, P<0.05). The maximum and minimum stomach fullness was recorded in November (5.33±1.66) and March (2.36±1.37) for males, respectively and in January (4.79±0.71) and December (1.53±0.88), respectively, for females. The highest percentage (F%) and (N%) for each type of prey in both sexes found in November.

**Keywords:** narwal shrimp, pandalids, diet, feeding activity, Dodecanese islands