

Abstract

This work focuses on food preferences of freshwater triclad *Crenobia alpina* and its position in spring food web. It explores the ability of *C. alpina* to capture living prey, considers ability of *C. alpina* and to survive feeding on several types of food. Furthermore it gives view on its occurrence and ecological preferences in context of other spring species. One chapter is concerned with taxonomy, anatomy and ecology of Tricladida and *C. alpina* itself. Short term food-preference experiments show the ability of *C. alpina* to capture living Lumbriculidae and larvae of Ephemeroptera. We don't confirm feeding of *C. alpina* on living *Gammarus*, although their occurrence in our springs and ecological preferences are similar. *C. alpina* feeds significantly more on damaged prey without substantial affinity to any species. A year-long experiment on *C. alpina* in lab conditions finds that this flatworm is able to survive and even breed with nothing but filtered water. This fact connected with the observation of huge densities of flatworms in spring source, opens up a question whether *C. alpina* can be considered a real predator.

Key words: *Crenobia alpina*, triclad flatworms, food preferences, spring