

The ecological condition of the Criş/Körös¹ catchment area on the basis of planktonic fauna

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Abstract

In this paper a summary is given of the results of zooplankton research on the Criş/Körös catchment area in 1994-1995. In this period 103 Rotatoria, and 15 Cladocera taxa were recorded all together. The Copepoda fauna was characterized by occurrence of juvenile forms. Different sections in the watercourses could be separated on the basis of composition of the planktonic fauna. The human effects (damming-up, reservoirs, pollution, technical interventions) change the ecological state, increases the degree of trophity and saprobity, and decreases the diversity. On the basis of the zooplankton community the protection of Criş/Körös catchment area is justified.

Key words: Criş/Körös catchment area, Rotatoria, Cladocera, Copepoda, zooplankton abundance, diversity, ecological condition.

Introduction

A detailed survey of the Körös/Criş catchment area was conducted in July-August 1994-1995. I performed the determination of the zooplankton from the biological examinations, and investigated the groups of Rotatoria, Cladocera and Copepoda from the zooplankton elements in detail. In the course of the investigation of samples I addressed the following main questions:

- What sort of qualitative and quantitative changes characterize the zooplankton of the Criş/Körös catchment area?
- What sort of species describe the rivers in the given period?
- What sort of riparian categories are found along the longitudinal section? Are they separable, and if so, what kinds of reaches are they?
- How can we describe the water quality of the rivers by the composition of the planktonic fauna during the period of examinations?

1 The first name is Romanian, and the second Hungarian.

At the present time very few data are known about planktonic fauna of the Körös/ Criș catchment area. In Romania Rudescu (1960), Damian-Georgescu (1963, 1970), and Negrea (1983) refer to planktonic faunal, taxonomic research which mainly refers to the Danube, to the delta of the Danube, to the sea, to the high mountains, etc. I did not find any Romanian literature referring to the Criș catchment area. In Hungary, Megyeri (1972) examined the zooplankton of Hármas-Körös. Along the whole Hungarian section of the Körös water-system the Rotatoria and Entomostraca fauna were studied by Zsuga, Nagy (1989, 1991). Gulyás et al. published results about planktonic fauna of Körös catchment area (Gulyás, Bancsi, Zsuga 1995). In the Hungarian reaches there were mainly microvegetation investigations. The earliest data were published by Domján (1942) who examined the water fungi, and by Szalai (1942) who writes about the pseudophytoplankton of Körös. Kol (1954) performed studies of algae from the rice-field. Uherkovich (1963, 1964) investigated the potamophytoplankton and saprobiofogical conditions of the River Körös. Kiss examined the algal vegetation of the alkali waters of this region (1959, 1959/a, 1970). The phytoplankton of Körös backwaters was described by Vasas (1980, 1980/a, 1986). Data were published about limnology of two backwaters by Varga (1931). Grigorszky et al. performed examinations about Dinoflagellates (Grigorszky, Vasas, Mészáros, Sümegi 1993, Grigorszky, Vasas, Borics 1995, Grigorszky, Borics, Fodor 1996). The macrovegetation of this area were investigated by Borbás (1881), Kiss (1968), Koren (1883), and Máthé (1936).

Material and methods

The samples were taken in August of 1994 and 1995. I investigated the zooplankton composition of the catchment area altogether in 29 sampling sites. I performed detailed qualitative and quantitative examinations of the Rotatoria, Cladocera and Copepoda fauna from the zooplankton groups. For the investigations 50-100 liters water was collected with a plankton net made from silk, mesh-sized 45 µm. The filtered samples were conserved on site by using 40 % formaldehyde solution to reach 4 % final concentration. The quantity of zooplankton was counted by using a plexi-box sized 80 x 35 x 6 mm and cubby-hole numbered with a graticule of 5 x 5 mm. For the preparation of Rotatoria mastax I used hypochlorid (NaOCl) solution. Animals were determined using the identification keys by Bancsi (1986, 1988), Damian-Georgescu (1963, 1970), Dévai (1977), Donner (1965), Gulyás (1974), Koste (1978), Kutikova (1970), Negrea (1983), Rudescu (1970).

Results

Rotatoria fauna

The Crișul Alb/Fehér-Körös and Crișul Negru/Fekete-Körös are characterized with little abundance (Fig. 1.) and number of species (Fig. 2.) at the riverhead; the diversity (Fig. 3.) is also low. Only those well adapted species which can tolerate the fast water velocity are found. At the further reaches the fauna changes, the number of species rises, and the planktonic, metaphytic as well as benthic organisms are found. At the sections before the confluence of the two rivers the species composition indicates an increase of trophity, some organisms indicate a moderately polluted limnosaprobic state (*Cephalodella forficula*, *Lophocharis salpina*, *Rotaria* spp.). The metaphytic elements are most proportional in the Crișul Alb/Fehér-Körös at Gyulavári, while the percentage of these species is few in the Crișul Negru/Fekete-Körös and the planktonic organisms dominate. An euplanktonic species (*Polyarthra dolichoptera*) is determinant (66 %). Although the number of species is nearly equal in the two rivers, the diversity and proportions differ from each other.

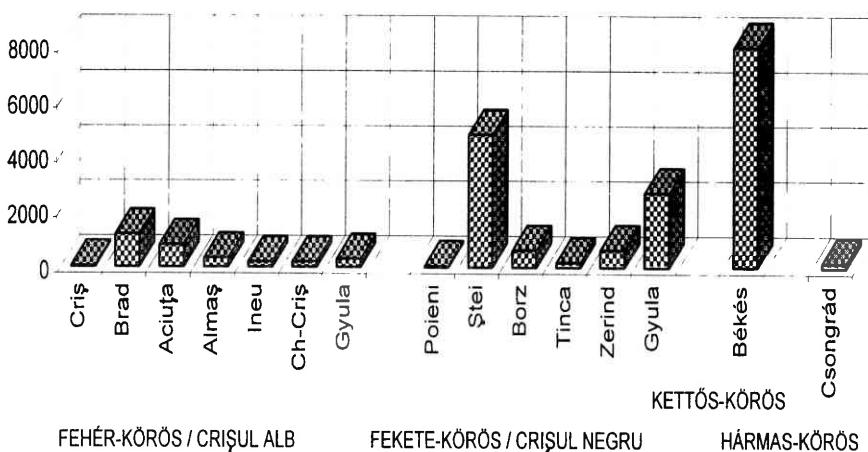


Fig. 1. Rotatoria abundance in the Criș/Körös watercourses (i/100 l)

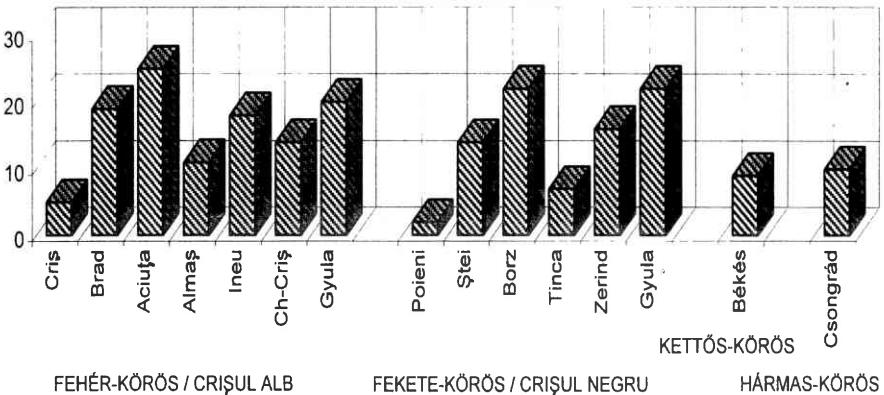


Fig. 2. Number of Rotatoria species in the Criș/Körös watercourses

In the Kettős-Körös a high quantity of Rotatoria plankton is found (Tab. 1.), but the number of species is little (Fig. 2.). The diversity and evenness are low (Fig. 3.), thus indicating an eutrophic state. Two planktonic species are in large number *Polyarthra dolichoptera* (55,6 %) and *Trichocerca pusilla* (25 %), while the proportion of the other organisms is lower. The Rotatoria plankton composition of the river is considerably determined by the damming-up of the flow.

In the Hármas-Körös little abundance and small number of species are found (Tab. 1.). Previous examinations also show these results (Zsuga, Nagy 1989, 1991, Gulyás, Bancsi, Zsuga 1995).

In the catchment area of Crișul/Sebes-Körös Repede the Drăgan/Dregán, Iad/Jád, and Barcău/Berettyó were also examined.

In the Stream Drăgan only few Rotatoria organisms were found (Fig. 4.) as a result of the fast water velocity. The abundance and species number (Fig. 5.) are also few in the Stream Iad. In this stream was found a rare Rotatoria organism (*Cephalodella theodora*), which was described earlier only from a Central-German pond in Europe (Koste 1978). Additional data about its other presence have not yet been compiled. Standing waters are determined as its habitat by Ilies (1978) in the Limnofauna Europea, evidently on the basis of mentioned description. In contrast with this, during examinations it was found not only in the Iad, but in the Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös, too. Our knowledge about its ecology is deficient, but presumably it can adapt to the fast water velocity and occurs not only in standing waters, but also in running waters, streams and rivers.

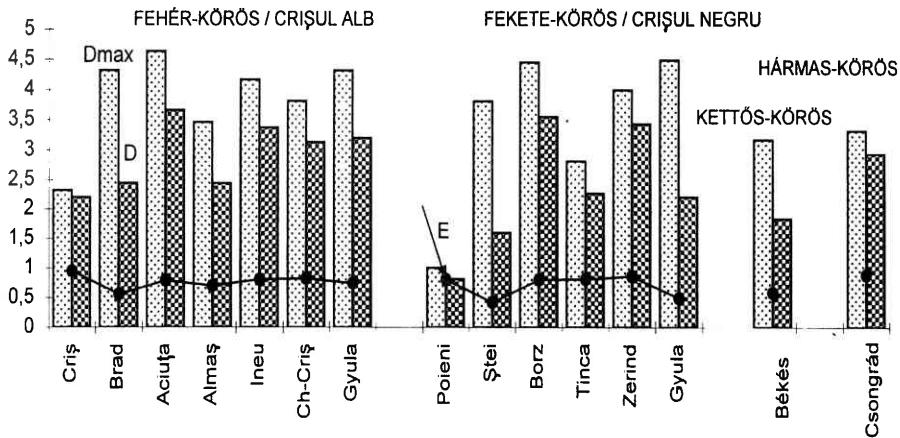


Fig. 3. Diversity and evenness in the Criș/Körös watercourses

A mixed composition characterizes the Rotatoria fauna at the upper reach of Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös. There are found well adaptable, cosmopolitan organisms. From Șaula to Stana de Vale the abundance, the number of species and diversity decrease (Fig. 4-6.). At sampling sites Aleșd and Fughiu the quantity of Rotatoria is very similar (Tab. 2.), but the species composition totally differs. At Aleșd the high rate of organic detritus feeders, *Rotaria* spp. (41,2 %), indicates a richness in organic nutrients and polluted water quality. At Fughiu the euplanktonic elements dominate, the *Synchaeta pectinata* and *Polyarthra dolichoptera* occurring in the largest proportion (49,4 % and 34,2 % respectively). The decrease of diversity (Fig. 6.) also indicates a qualitative change, which ensues by the effect of Tileagd Reservoir. Considering the whole catchment area the highest abundance and the most number of species were found at Cheresig (Fig. 4-5.). At this sampling site the diversity was also high (Fig 6.). The planktonic elements dominate and more species indicate the rise of trophity (*Brachionus angularis*, *Filinia longiseta*, *Trichocerca pusilla*) and saprobity (*Rotaria* spp.). The causes of these considerable quantitative and qualitative change are the effects of Tileagd Reservoir, pollution from Oradea, the slowing down of water movement and an increase of water temperature. From Cheresig to Szeghalom the abundance and number of species decrease (Fig. 4-5.). In this section were found two species (*Brachionus bidentata*, *Sinantherina procera*), which are more frequent in warmer waters (in tropical, subtropical area) according to the special literature (Bancsi 1988, Koste 1978).

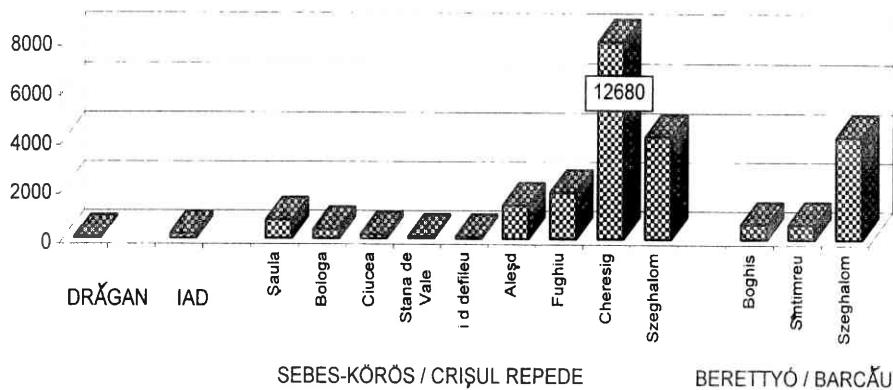


Fig. 4. Rotatoria abundance in the Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös and its tributaries (1/100 l)

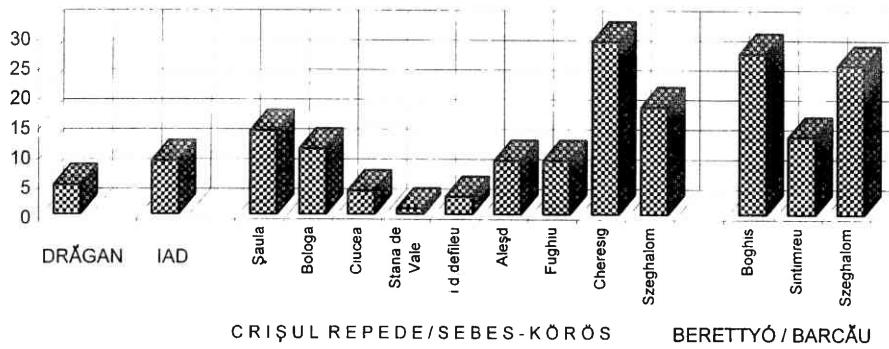


Fig. 5. Number of Rotatoria species in the Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös and its tributaries

The Rotatoria fauna of Barcău/Berettyó was examined at three sampling sites. At the upper reach (Boghiş) the abundance is little (Fig. 4.), but the species composition is the most diverse (Fig. 6.). In the region of Sântimreu the abundance is similar to the upper reach (Tab. 2.), but the number of species and diversity is lower (Fig. 5 and 6.) and the planktonic elements become dominant (*Brachionus angularis*). Before the mouth, at Szeghalom an eutrophic state is characteristic with high abundance and very diverse (planktonic, metaphytic, benthic species) composition of fauna.

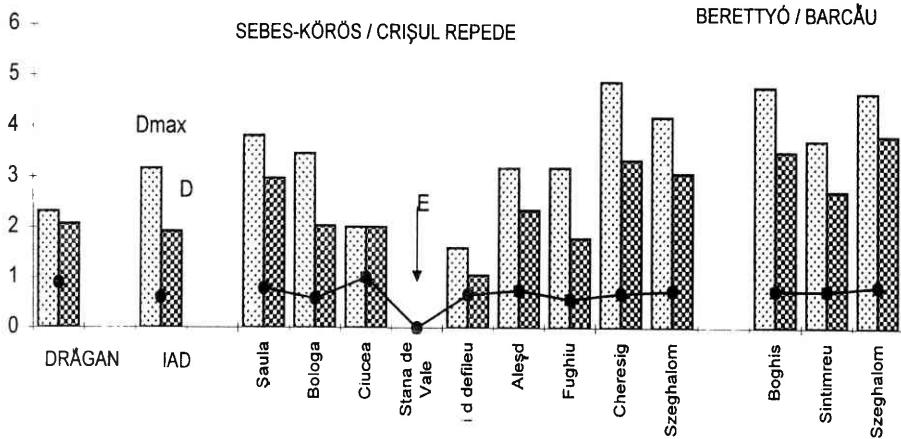


Fig. 6. Diversity and evenness in the Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös and its tributaries

Crustacea fauna

The abundance and number of species of Cladocera were few in the entire catchment area (Fig. 7-8.). The abundance was relatively larger only in the Kettős-Körös, in the Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös at Fughiu, and in the Barcău/Berettyó at Szeghalom. The larger number of the found species are well adaptable, cosmopolitan organisms (*Bosmina longirostris*, *Chydorus sphaericus*), and the metaphytic elements (*Alona* spp., *Graptoleberis testudinaria* *Pleuroxus aduncus*, *Simocephalus vetulus*) indicate eutrophic water quality.

The Copepoda abundance usually was larger than Cladocera, and dominated the juvenile nauplius and copepodit forms. There is special attention to the very high Copepoda abundance in the Kettős-Körös (Fig. 7.). As an effect of damming-up (at Békés) the quantity of nauplii rises considerably.

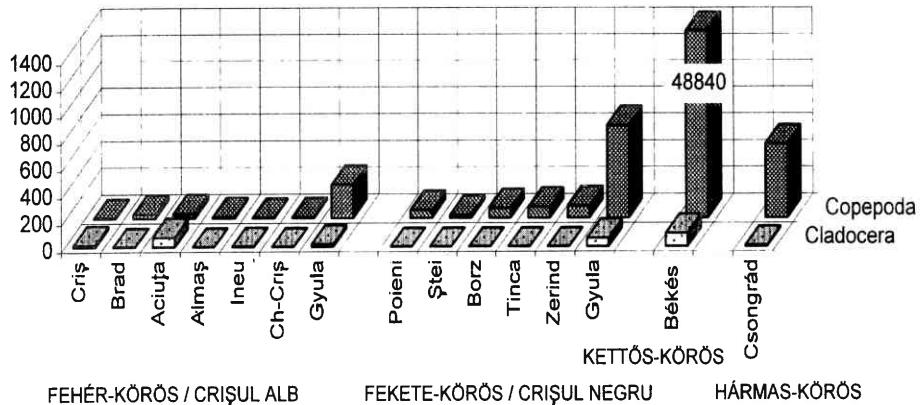


Fig. 7. Crustacea abundance in the Criș/Körös watercourses (i/100 l)

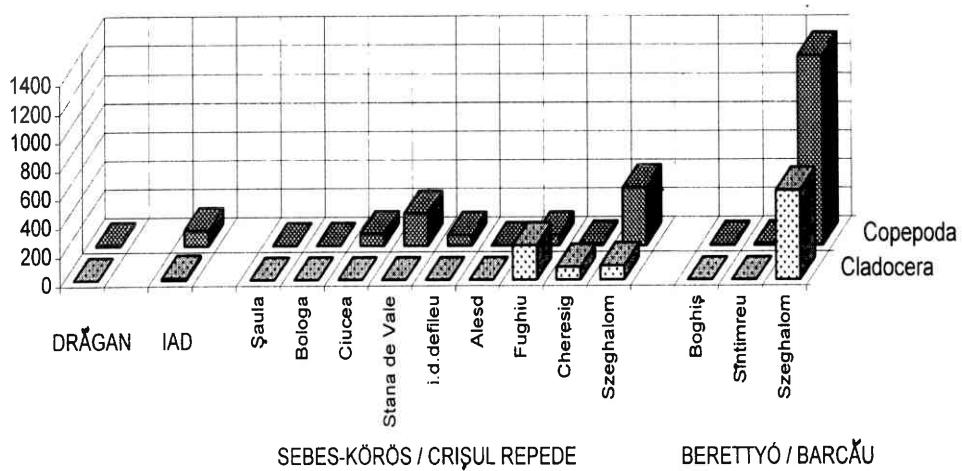


Fig. 8. Crustacea abundance in the Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös and its tributaries (i/100 l)

Conclusions and Proposals

On the basis of the quantitative and qualitative composition of zooplankton the following sections in the watercourses of catchment area could be separated.

- Quantitatively poor fauna, well adaptable, and wide range of tolerance organisms, fast velocity: Drăgan, Iad, upper stretch of Crișul Alb/Fehér-Körös (Criș), Crișul Negru/Fekete-Körös (Poieni), Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös (from Șaula to i.d. defileu).
- Little abundance, little number of species, medium diversity, slow-flowing: Crișul Alb/Fehér-Körös (Almaș), Crișul Negru/Fekete-Körös (Zerind), Hármas-Körös (Csongrád).
- Quantitatively rich zooplankton, slow-flowing, eutrophic state: Crișul Negru/Fekete-Körös (Gyula), Kettős-Körös (Békés), Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös (Cheresig, Szeghalom), Barcău/Berettyó (Szeghalom).
- Qualitative rich fauna, medium abundance, high diversity, favourable water quality: Crișul Alb/Fehér-Körös (Aciuța, Ineu, Ch-Criș, Gyula), Crișul Negru/Fekete-Körös (Borz, Zerind), Barcău/Berettyó (Boghiș).
- Moderately, from time to time heavily polluted, rich in organic nutrients water quality: Crișul Alb/Fehér-Körös (Brad), Crișul Negru/Fekete-Körös (Ștei), Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös (Aleșd, Cheresig).

In the course of examinations more species were found in the watercourses which are rare in the planktonic fauna of Europe (Ilie 1978). Their occurrence can be appreciated as new data considering their habitat and ecological claim is collected. Their abundance is usually small, but they are not threatened with extinction.

Rare species

Brachionus bidentata (Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös – Cheresig, Szeghalom), Brachionus bidentata erassispineus (Crișul Repede/Sebes-Körös – Cheresig, Szeghalom), Brachionus diversicornis homoceros (Crișul Alb – Aciuța), Cephalodella limosa (Crișul Alb – Aciuța, Ch-Criș), Cephalodella fluviatilis (Crișul Alb – Aciuța), Cephalodella theodora (Iad, Crișul Negru – Stei, Crișul Repede – Bologa, i.d. defileu, Aleșd), Encentrum fluviatilis (Barcău – Boghiș), Encentrum wiszniewski (Barcău – Boghiș), Eosphora thoa (Barcău – Boghiș), Hexarthra fennica (Crișul Alb – Aciuța), Lecane stichaea (Iad), Pseudoharringia similis (Crișul Repede – Șaula, Bologa), Sinantherina procera (Sebes-Körös – Szeghalom), Taphrocampa selenura (Crișul Alb – Aciuța, Inau, Ch-Criș, Crișul Negru – Borz, Zerind), Trichocerca insignis (Crișul Alb – Brad)

On the basis of the occurrence of rare organisms, the protection of Criş/Körös catchment area is justified. The elimination of pollution is needed, as is the reduction of technical interventions which change the water quality, transform, and make unofficial the various, diverse biocenosis.

Summary

On the basis of examinations it can be ascertained that the abundance and species number are little at the upper reach of streams and rivers. In the next sections there is characteristic a mixed zooplankton community, the planktonic, metaphytic as well those living on the surface of sediment organisms are found. Approaching the plain the euplanktonic elements become dominant. The effects of damming-up, reservoirs and pollution changes the water quality, increases the degree of trophity and saprobity, and some species indicate the rise of the inorganic nutrient and organic matter content of water and sediment.

On the catchment area of Criş/Körös were found 103 Rotatoria taxon, from these were 14 rare species. The Cladocera community was quantitatively and qualitatively poor, only 15 Cladocera taxon occurred. The Copepoda fauna was characterized by occurrence of juvenile forms (nauplii and copepodits) in the course of examinations.

Table 1.

TAXA	CRISUL ALB / FEHÉR-KÖRÖS						CRISUL NEGRU / FEKETE-KÖRÖS						HARMAS KÖRÖS					
	Cris	Ered	Actuas	Almaš	Ineu Cr-Cris	Gyula	Poteni	Sbei	Borzs	Tinca	Zemid	Gjula	Békés	Békés	Békés	Békés	Csongrád	
Keratella cochleata (Gosse)	8		8		4												20	
Keratella quadrata (O.F.Müller)																		
Leucane bulla Gossé	16	10	20		123		10	8	80	110	192		80				20	
Leucane closterocéa (Schmarda)	80	10	4	12	8		10	40	56	24	60	32						
Leucane hamata Stokes	16																	
Leucane luna (O.F.Müller)																		
Leucane lunaris (Ehrenberg)	8		4	4	24												30	
Leucane quadridentata (Ehrenberg)																	10	
Leucane stenroosi (Maisner)																		
Lepadella patella oblonga Ehrb	96	32	10	4	8													
Lophocharaxis oxytenuis (Gosse)																		
Lophocharaxis saipina (Ehrenberg)	8																	
Monommata grandis Tessin																		
Mytilina crassipes (Lucks)	4																	
Myt. ventralis macrocantha Gosse																		
Platylas patulus (O.F.Müller)																		
Platylas quadricornis (Ehrenberg)																		
Pleurotrocha petromyzon Ehrb																		
Polyarthra dolichopera (Idelson)																		
Pompholyx sulcata Hudson																		
Rotalia rotatoria (Pallas)	16																	
Rotalia sp.	8	544	288	170	16	48	8		3480	168	24	60	64				30	
Scandium longicaudum (O.F.Müller)																		
Squatinnella rostrum (Schmarda)																		
Synchaeta oblonga Ehrenberg																		
Synchaeta pecinata Ehrenberg																		
Taphrocampa selenura Gosse	8		8	4														
Testudinella patina (Hermann)			10	4	4													
Trichocerca birostis Minkiewicz																	48	
Trichocerca elongata (Gosse)																	16	
Trichocerca ferrisi (Gosse)																		
Trichocerca insignis (Herrick)	16																	
Trichocerca pusilla (Lauterborn)																		
Trichocerca rufitarsis (O.F.Müller)																		
	68	48	8														10	

TAXA	S a m p l i n g s i t e s				K E T T O S K Ö RÖ S				H A R M Á S K Ö RÖ S					
	Cris	Brad	Acujoa	Almasj	Ineu (Ch-Cris)	Gyula	Poeni	Šieu	Borz	Tirca	Zemind	Gyula	Bétes	Csongrád
Trichocerca similis (Wierzejski)														4
Trichocerca tenular (Gosse)														
Trichocerca sp.														
Trichoptera curta (Skorikov)														
Trichoptera letracitis paupera (Ehrb.)														
Total Rotatoria (I/100 l)	36	1176	792	320	188	192	292		40	4830	608	168	620	2708
CLADOCERA														8640
Alona costata Sars														
Alona elegans Kurz														
Alona lectangula Sars														
Bosmina longirostris (O F Müller)	16			72		4								
Chydorus sphaericus (O F Müller)														
Diaphanosoma mongolianum														
Graptoleberis testudinaria (Fischer)														
Mona micura Kurz														
Pleuroxus aduncus (Jurine)														
Scapholeberis kingi Sars														
Juv Cladocera	16	0	72	0	4	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	64	110
Total Cladocera (I/100 l)														10
COPEPODA														
naiplius	12	24	10	4	8	168	40	10	40	64	90	608	48320	400
coopepodit	16	8				88	20	10	32	16	80	520	150	
Total Copepoda (I/100 l)	0	28	32	10	4	8	256	60	20	72	80	90	688	48840
Total zooplankton (I/100 l)	52	1204	896	330	204	200	568	100	4830	680	248	710	3460	57580
														730

Sampling sites								
DRĂGAN IAD	TAXA	BARCAU / BERETYO	CRIȘUL REPEDE / SEBEŞ-KRÖS					
ROTATORIA								
<i>Anuraeopsis lisса (Gosse)</i>		Boghiș	Sântimbru					
<i>Asplanchna prodonta (Gosse)</i>								
<i>Brachionus angularis</i> Gosse		40	12					
<i>Brachionus bidentata</i> Anderson								
<i>Br. bidentata crassispineus</i> Hauer		8	176	160				
<i>Brachionus budapestinensis</i> Daday								
<i>Brachionus calyciflorus</i> (Pallas)								
<i>Brach calyc amphiceros</i> Ehrb								
<i>Brach calyc anatreiformis</i> (Ehrb)								
<i>Br. quadridentatus</i> rheanus Lauterb		32	200					
<i>Br. quadr brevispinus</i> (Ehrb.)								
<i>Br. quadr clinoribiculans</i> (Škrirkov)								
<i>Brachionus urceolans</i> O. F. Müller								
<i>Cephalodella biunguialis</i> Wulfert		8	40	40	36	8		
<i>Cephalodella tortifolia</i> (Ehrb.)								
<i>Cephalodella gibba</i> (Ehrb.)								
<i>Ceph megioccephala</i> (Glascott)								
<i>Cephalodella sterea</i> (Gosse)								
<i>Cephalodella theodora</i> Koch-Althaus								
<i>Cephalodella ventripes</i> (Dixon-Nutta)		56						
<i>Cephalodella sp.</i>								
<i>Coleurella adriatica</i> Ehrenberg	2	4	16					
<i>Coleurella colorus</i> Ehrenberg								
<i>Coleurella uncinata</i> O. F. Müller								
<i>Dicranophorus caudatus</i> Ehrenberg		24						
<i>Dicranophorus grandis</i> Ehrenberg		4						
<i>Dicranophorus uncinatus</i> (Mine)								
<i>Encentrum felis</i> (O. F. Müller)								
<i>Encentrum flavivittis</i> Wulfert								
<i>Encentrum saundersae</i> (Hudson)								

Table 2.

CRISUL REPEDÉ / SEBES KÖRÖS								
TAXA	IAD	Boghiș	Sătmăre	Szeghalom	Clujca	Stana de Vale	i d defileu	Alesd Füghiu
<i>Enicentrum wiszniewski</i> (Wulfert)		16						
<i>Eosphora rhoa Harring et Myers</i>		8						
<i>Euchlanis dilatata Ehrenberg</i>	4	8	240	12	40		160	24
<i>Filinia longiseta</i> (Ehrenberg)			80				24	20
<i>Filinia terminalis Plaet</i>							880	480
<i>Keratella cochlearis</i> (Gosse)		8						80
<i>Keratella cochi. tecta</i> (Gosse)		16					144	480
<i>Lecane bulla osse</i>				200				160
<i>Lecane closteroceca</i> (Schmarda)	4	16	320	12	16			20
<i>Lecane flexilis</i> (Gosse)						80		320
<i>Lecane hamata Stokes</i>		8	200			80		80
<i>Lecane luna</i> (O F Müller)				20				320
<i>Lecane luna presumpta Ahlstrom</i>					8			80
<i>Lecane lunaris</i> (Ehrenberg)	2	8	20					
<i>Lecane stictacea Harring</i>	4							
<i>Lecane ohioensis</i> (Herrick)				80				
<i>Lecane stictocosi</i> (Meissner)				40				
<i>Lepadella patellia</i> (O F Müller)	4	16	160	12				80
<i>Miyilia compressa</i> (Gosse)							80	
<i>Mytil ventralis macracantha</i> Gosse								20
<i>Philodina sp</i>	2							
<i>Platyias quadricornis</i> (Ehrenberg)				8			648	1280
<i>Polyarthra dolichoptera</i> (Delson)				32				480
<i>Polyarthra vulgaris Carlin</i>						12		
<i>Proaies sigmoidaea Skorikov</i>							24	
<i>Proaies sp</i>								
<i>Pseudoharringtonia similis Fadéew</i>					6	32		
<i>Rotaria sp</i>	8	100	240	160	480	36	216	40
<i>Scardium longicaudum</i> (O F Müller)						20		4000
<i>Sinantherina procera</i> (Thorpe)								720
<i>Synchaeta oblonga</i> Ehrenberg	4	8		160		8		40
								80

Sampling sites

		CRISUL REPEDE / SEBEŞ-KÖRÖS						
		Şauia	Bologa	Ciucea	Stana de Vale	i d defileu	Aleşd Fughiu	Chereşig Szeghalom
TAXA								
<i>Synchaeta pectinata</i> Ehrenberg		16						
<i>Testudinella patina</i> (Hermann)		8		6				
<i>Trichocerca birostris</i> Minkiewicz							24	320
<i>Trichocerca pusilla</i> (Lauterborn)			16	160				720
<i>Trichocerca tenuior</i> (Gosse)			8					160
<i>Trichocerca</i> sp				40				
Total Rotatoria (l/100 l)	18	592	600	4180	372	368	60	72
							1360	1896
								12680
								4180
DRĂGANIAD								
BARCAU / BERETTYÓ		Boghis	Ştiurmeu	Szeghalom				
<i>Alona costata</i> Sars								
<i>Alona rectangula</i> Sars								
<i>Bosmina longirostris</i> (O.F.Müller)								
<i>Ceriodaphnia pulchella</i> Sars								
<i>Ceriodaphnia quadrangularis</i> O.F.Müller								
<i>Chydorus sphaericus</i> (O.F.Müller)								
<i>Graptoleberis testudinaria</i> (Fischer)								
<i>Simoccephalus serrulatus</i> (Koch)								
<i>Simoccephalus vetulus</i> (O.F.Müller)								
Juv Cladocera								
Total Cladocera (l/100 l)	0	16	0	620	0	0	0	240
								90
								100
COPEPODA								
nauplius		4	8	600			66	24
copepodit		2	8	720		80	220	6
Total Copepoda (l/100 l)	4	108	4	8	1320	0	80	72
								50
								400
Total zooplankton (l/100 l)	4	312	596	6120	372	368	240	280
								144
								1360
								2208
								12820
								4680

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