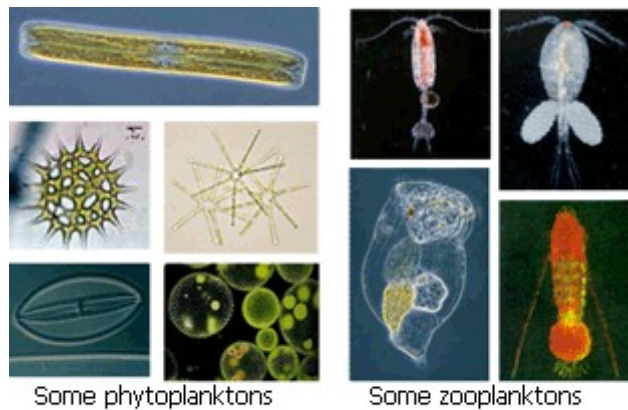


FEEDING HABITS OF PEARL MULLET

As many other members of the Cyprinidae family, the pearl mullet too mostly feeds on plankton. The amount of phytoplankton and zooplankton as food items varies with the size of fish and with the developmental stage it lives through. With its salty-alkaline waters, Lake Van is a relatively poor ecosystem in terms of biological diversity. According to research data, there are 103 phytoplankton and 36 zooplankton individual species identified so far (Selçuk, 1993). When studying the pearl fish biology, the gastric content analysis of sample fish groups has indicated that there are actually two major food items as Chrinomids and Copepods. The pearl mullet mostly feeds on phytoplankton at the beginning of fry and juvenile fish periods. Diatomeae are among the most preferred phytoplankton. As fish grows, the amount of phytoplankton in its daily diet decreases whereas the amount of zooplankton increases in time. Adult fish mostly prefer feeding on Chrinomids and Copepods.



Kaynak: <http://www.microscopy-uk.org.uk/mag/indexmag.html>

For the pearl mullet, Calanoid Copepods are the most important food items. As a result of studies especially carried out during winter, it can be said that Copepods constitute the main gastric content of fish (Akgül 1984, Danulat and Selçuk 1992,

Selçuk 1993, Sarı 1997, Sarı 2005). We can conclude that the pearl mullet is a typical planktivore. At a younger age, it mostly feeds on phytoplankton but as it gets older especially during winter it prefers feeding on zooplankton.

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