

Seasonal Profile of the Feeding Ecology of *Auchenoglanis Occidentalis* from Tagwai Lake, Minna Niger State, Nigeria

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Abstract : The food and feeding habits of *Auchenoglanis occidentalis*, which is commonly called the “BuBu” cat fish or the giraffe cat fish from Tagwai Lake Minna, was analysed from January to June, 2013. A total of 216 fish specimen were used for the study which were obtained from the local fishermen operating in Tagwai Lake Minna. Fishing gears used include cast nets and gills nets of various sizes. They also use hook and lines. The frequency of occurrence and dominance method were used to analyse the food in the gut. *Auchenoglanis occidentalis* from Tagwai Lake, Minna had a broad spectrum of food items in the gut, ranging from insects, fish, plant materials to protozoan. The percentage of insects was (31.75%), fish (12.70%), Chyme (20.63%), plant materials (20.63%), protozoa (1.59%) and soil (12.70%). The presence of different food items in the gut of the *Auchenoglanis occidentalis* which ranged from animal to plant and soil made it to be considered as an omnivore bottom feeder. The food habits of this fish showed no remarkable difference between the dry season months and the rainy season months. The broad food spectrum of the fish makes them a good aquaculture candidate. It also suggests that the specie feed both in surface water and near the substratum (sand).

Keywords : *Auchenoglanis occidentalis*, ecology, Tagwai Lake, Nigeria

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