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Food web including metazoan parasites for a tidal basin in Germany and Denmark

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DAVID W. THIELTGES,[1,6] KARSTEN REISE,[2] KIM N. MOURITSEN,[3] JOHN P. MCLAUGHLIN,[4] AND ROBERT POULIN[5]

[1]*Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ), P.O. Box 59, NL-1790 AB Den Burg, The Netherlands*
[2]*Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research, Wadden Sea Station Sylt, Hafenstrasse 43, 25992 List, Germany*
[3]*Department of Biological Sciences, Aarhus University, 8200 Aarhus N, Denmark*
[4]*Department of Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology, University of California, Santa Barbara, California 93106-9610 USA*
[5]*Department of Zoology, University of Otago, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand*

Abstract. This data set presents a food web for the Sylt tidal basin, an intertidal ecosystem in Germany and Denmark. The intertidal part of this bight consists of extensive tidal flats with the main habitats being lugworm sandflats, seagrass meadows, and mixed mussel and oyster beds. This food web has three noteworthy attributes: (1) high resolution of free-living organisms, (2) inclusion of metazoan parasites and other infectious agents, and (3) inclusion of ontogenetic stages of parasites with complex life cycles. The food web contains 230 nodes, 161 species/assemblages, and 3338 links. Of the 161 species/assemblages, 6 are basal, 120 are free-living, and 35 are infectious. Data on the free-living assemblages and parasitism were gathered during original field sampling and supplemented with information from additional published sources and local expert knowledge. Taxonomic resolution is high, although a few functional or taxonomic groups (e.g., phytoplankton, macroalgae) are lumped into single nodes. Each ontogenetic stage of parasites with complex life cycles is treated separately and coded accordingly. For each node, we have included additional information such as taxonomy, life history, residency, and vagility. Further, for each link, we define a specific interaction type. We present the data and metadata in the system-neutral format standardized by R. F. Hechinger and colleagues, and thus we recognize variables that are not represented in our data set but may be added by further study.

Key words: benthos; complex life-cycles; consumer–resource; food webs; infectious agents; intertidal parasites; Sylt Basin; trematodes; trophic interactions.

The complete data sets corresponding to abstracts published in the Data Papers section of the journal are published electronically in *Ecological Archives* at ⟨http://esapubs.org/archive⟩. (The accession number for each Data Paper is given directly beneath the title.)

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[6] E-mail: david.thieltges@nioz.nl