Reproductive Biology of Banana Prawn (*Penaeus merguiensis* De Man, 1888) along the Eastern Gulf of Thailand

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Abstract

Study on reproductive biology of banana prawn (*Penaeus merguiensis* De Man, 1888) along the Eastern Coast of the Gulf of Thailand was conducted during January-December 2009. Data and samples were collected from push nets, trammel nets and less than 14 m-otter-board trawlers landed at the fishing ports from Rayong to Trat Provinces. The results showed that fishing ground of banana prawn was 1-31 kilometer from shore at the depth of 2-30 meter extending along the eastern Gulf of Thailand. They were fished throughout the year especially in October-May. A total of 4,687 banana prawn was collected having the total lengths of 6.8-23.7 (13.8±2.0) cm. There were 2,149 males sized at 7.8-22.9 (13.4±1.6) cm in total length and 2,538 females sized at 6.8-23.7 (14.0±2.3) cm in total length. From length frequency distributions, it was found that females had bigger sizes than those of males. Size at first maturity in females was 15.2 cm in total length. Sex ratio of male to female was 1:1.18 which was significantly different (p<0.05). The banana prawn spawned all year round with peaks in June-September and November-January.

**Key words:** banana prawn, reproduction, the Eastern Gulf of Thailand

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