



## The long term effect of forest logging on the macroinvertebrates in a Fijian stream

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### Abstract

The species richness and abundance of macroinvertebrates were assessed in two adjacent similar streams, the Nabukavesi and Wainikovu creeks (Viti Levu, Fiji) at intervals of 2 months for 3 years. Previous logging of rain forest in the Nabukavesi catchment had subjected it to suspended sediment loads and to sediment and grit deposition on its substrate. In contrast the forest in the Wainikovu catchment had not been logged. Species richness was significantly higher (11–18 species; total 38 spp.) in the unlogged Wainikovu Creek than in the Nabukavesi Creek (eight to 15 species; total 34 spp.) over the 3-year period. Diversity indices confirmed greater species diversity in the Wainikovu creek. The total abundance of invertebrates varied considerably within streams, but not significantly between them over 3 years. The most abundant species in both streams were the caddis fly, *Abacaria fijiana*, mayflies, *Cloeon* spp. and *Pseudocloeon* sp. and atyid shrimps, *Caridina* spp.

### Introduction

Many stream ecosystems in tropical Asia have undergone modification, degradation and loss of species due to human activities (Dudgeon, 1994). Asian rivers have been modified by human activities such as deforestation and overgrazing, which cause increased suspended-sediment loads and extensive flooding. Dam building, irrigation schemes and pollution from industrial effluent, mining waste and sewage have also had devastating effects (Dudgeon, 1994; Trihadinigrum et al., 1996)

With increasing development and industrialisation in tropical islands their stream and river ecosystems are also threatened. Deforestation is occurring on the larger islands in Fiji and its long-term effects on the fauna of streams and rivers is important especially to inland Fijians who depend on freshwater fish, shrimps, crabs and snails for food. To study the long-term effects of logging operations two nearby streams were monitored for 3 years at 2-monthly intervals. Eighteen months previously, the Nabukavesi creek had been subjected to suspended-sediment loads and sediment

deposit from the logging of rain forest in its catchment. The other stream, Wainikovu creek was of similar size but the forest in its catchment had not been logged (Figure 1).

### Study area

The study area was on Viti Levu, the largest of the 300 islands in the Fiji group (Figure 1) in the South Pacific. The Fijian freshwater invertebrate fauna has taxa (crustaceans and most gastropods) whose ancestors originated in South East Asia and others (most insects) that are more closely related to Australasian forms.

Nabukavesi creek flows directly into the sea 13 km downstream from the site, while the Wainikovu creek flows into the Navua river before reaching the sea. However, the sites in the two streams were only 7 km apart and were at similar altitude of 90–120 m. The streams were approximately 10 m wide at normal water flow. Both were second order streams or, according to the classification in Resh & de Szalay (1995),

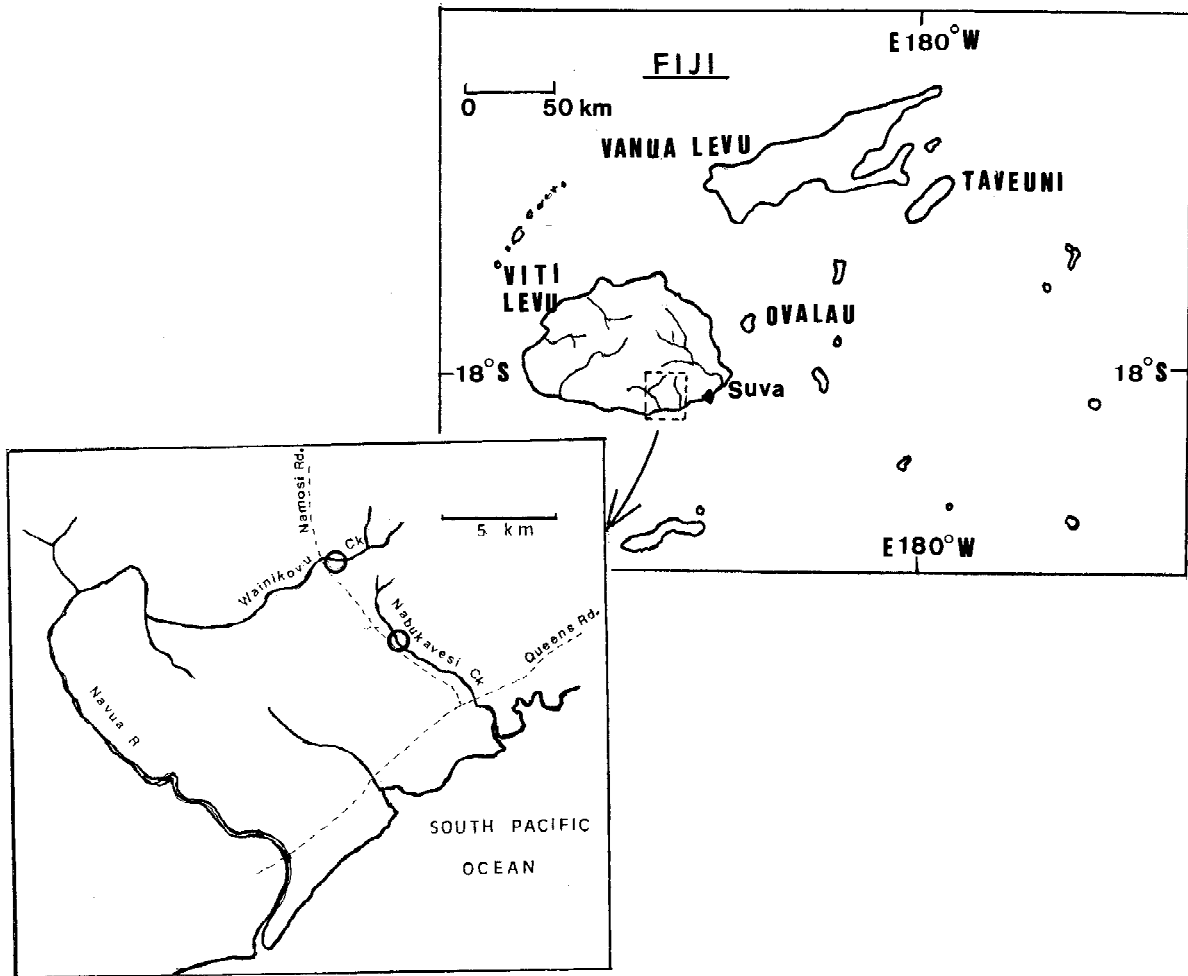


Figure 1. Map of the larger Fiji Islands and an enlargement of the sampling sites in the Nabukavesi and Wainikovu creeks in south eastern Viti Levu.

tropical island midwater reaches, although neither stream was shaded as were the midwater reaches of the streams in Moorea, French Polynesia and Hawaii (Resh & de Szalay, 1995). Grassy areas with low shrubs bordered the streams for 10 m on each side. These gave way to steep forested hillsides. Filamentous green algae grew on the cobbles but macrophytes were absent from both streams. Roots and leaves of grass, reeds and ferns hung down into the water and provided a habitat for invertebrates.

Previous to this study, the Nabukavesi creek had been sampled in April 1987 when 15 invertebrate taxa were found and again in April 1988 when 14 taxa were present. These were *Cloeon* sp. A, *Pseudocloen* sp., *Nesobasis* sp. A, sp. B, and sp. E, *Hydrobiosis* sp., *Anisocentropus* sp., *Nymphula* sp. A, *Abacaria fijiana*,

*Tipula* sp., *Macrobrachium* lar, *Caridina longirostris*, *C. nilotica*, *Alyopsis spinipes*, *Varuna litterata*, *Fluviopupa pupoidea*, *Melanoides tuberculata*, *M. lutosa* and a species of planarian worm. Total abundance was 201 in 1987 and 176 in 1988.

During 1989–90 when 70% of the accessible forest was cut down 1.5 km upstream from the sampling site in the Nabukavesi valley, the stream was discoloured and the cobble and boulder bottom was covered with a 1–80 mm layer of mud and grit. Samples taken at that time from the same site revealed only five invertebrate taxa: net-building caddis fly larvae (*Abacaria fijiana*), mayfly nymphs (*Cloeon* sp. A and *Pseudocloeon* sp.), moth larvae (*Nymphula*) and the atyid shrimp *Caridina longirostris* (Haynes, 1994).

Table 1. The mean of the physical (15 samples) and chemical conditions (3 samples) of the water in the Nabukavesi and Wainikovu creeks March 1992–May 1995

	Nabukavesi creek			Wainikovu creek		
	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range
Conductivity ( $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ .)	47.4	3.14	45.1–51	44.7	2.27	43–47
Hardness (mg $\text{CaCO}_3/\text{l}$ )	20.1	4.10	16.0–24.2	19.5	1.00	18–21
Phosphate ( $\mu\text{g PO}_4/\text{l}$ )	43.8	5.77	39.0–49.4	87.6	20.75	65–105.8
Current velocity ( $\text{cm s}^{-1}$ )	52.3	9.45	38.0–66	51.1	10.53	38–76
Depth (cm)	20.6	3.78	16.0–29	21.6	5.0	17–27.5
Temperature ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ )	23.8	1.38	21.5–26.5	23.0	1.57	20–26
Discharge ( $\text{m}^3 \text{s}^{-1}$ )	1.1	0.42	0.6–2.3	1.1	0.45	0.7–2.0
pH	7.4	0.56	6.9–8.3	7.2	0.64	6.1–8.0

The region of Viti Levu where the two streams are located is in the path of the south east tradewinds and are in the rain shadow of the hills (Figure 1). The cyclone season is from November–March when the air temperature is higher generally 28–35  $^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### Materials and methods

Secondary growth covered the logged Nabukavesi hill-sides when sampling began (a year and a half after logging stopped) on March 1992 and continued until May 1995. Each site in the Nabukavesi and Wainikovu creeks were sampled 15 times at approximately 2-monthly intervals.

At each sampling site the invertebrates clinging to 15 large stones and boulders (120–300 mm across) were collected along a 10-m stretch of riffle and runs at each sampling. As only macroinvertebrates were being investigated, a square net of 1-mm mesh was held downstream while each boulder was sampled. The boulder was moved into the net and the contents of the net and the invertebrates and detritus adhering to the boulder were washed into a plastic bag and taken to the laboratory for identification and counting. Fifteen stones had previously been found to give a satisfactory index of precision ( $D$ ) of 13% (Elliott, 1977).

Six net (1-mm mesh) sweeps of the side vegetation were taken along the 10-m stretch and the invertebrates were similarly identified and counted.

Identification of most taxa was possible to genus level because the invertebrate fauna of Fijian streams has received growing research attention. The atyid shrimps were investigated by Choy (1991), the gastropods by Haynes (1984, 1985, 1987), while Cowie

(1981) made a survey of aquatic insect larvae. However, many aquatic young stages still cannot be matched with the adults. Adult Trichoptera were described by Mosely (1941), while Ross (1953) discussed the trichopteran genus *Apsilochorema*. Tillyard (1924) described an adult collection of dragonflies from Viti Levu.

Water temperature, depth, and pH were measured by a Hanna electronic water test meter and the velocity with a current stick on each sampling occasion. Discharge was calculated from these results. Water samples were collected from each stream on three occasions during 1993 and the samples were analysed for phosphates and hardness by the Institute of Applied Sciences, University of the South Pacific using standard methods (APHA, 1989).

### Results

The water was normally clear and the chemistry was similar in both streams except for the higher amount of phosphate in the Wainikovu creek (Table 1).

Temperature, pH, depth, water velocity and discharge (Table 1) fluctuate according to the amount of rainfall during the 24 h prior to sampling. Mann–Whitney  $U$ -tests confirmed that there was no significant difference between the values in each stream.

The substrate of both streams was stable except during very heavy rainfall when some cobbles and boulders shifted. However, it is worth recording that cyclone Kina, which struck Viti Levu on 1 January 1994 and which caused extensive flooding of the Navua river over low-lying land, did not effect the invertebrate richness or abundance in either creek when

Table 2. Mean abundance and standard deviation of the taxa found when sampling the Nabukavesi and Wainikovu creeks 15 times between March 1992 and May 1995

	Nabukavesi creek				Wainikovu creek			
	Stones		Plants		Stones		Plants	
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
<b>TURBELLARIA</b>								
Planarian sp.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.13	0.35
<b>GASTROPODA</b>								
<i>Clithon diadema</i>	0.07	0.26	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Physastra nasuta</i>	0	0	0.2	0.77	0	0	0	0
<i>Fluviopupa pupoidea</i>	0.07	0.26	0	0	0.53	1.13	0.2	0.56
<i>Melanooides lutosa</i>	0.07	0.26	0.13	0.35	0.13	0.35	0	0
<i>Melanooides tuberculata</i>	0.27	0.59	3.6	0.37	0.6	0.74	1.13	2.2
<b>CRUSTACEA</b>								
Ostrocooda sp.	0.07	1.26	0	0	0.13	0.52	0	0
<i>Varuna litterata</i>	0.13	0.52	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Caridina nilotica</i>	0	0	0.53	1.36	0	0	5.2	14.39
<i>Caridina longirostris</i>	1.93	6.15	1.33	1.40	0.6	1.24	11.73	10.75
<i>Alyopsis spinipes</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.27	0.59
<i>Atyoida pilipes</i>	0	0	0.40	0.91	0	0	1.13	2.03
<i>Macrobrachium lar</i>	0	0	0.20	0.41	0	0	0.27	0.59
<b>ARACHNIDA</b>								
Hydrachnellidae sp.	0.27	0.59	0	0	0.47	1.30	0.07	0.26
<b>HEMIPTERA</b>								
Limnogynous sp.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.27	1.03
<i>Anisops</i> sp.	0.33	0.90	4.0	6.71	0	0	3.4	5.30
<b>DIPTERA</b>								
<i>Tipula</i> sp.	0	0	0.13	0.35	0.27	0.70	0	0
Chironomidae sp.	4.27	6.54	1.47	2.97	2.87	4.76	1.0	3.87
<i>Simulium jollyi</i>	0.4	0.83	0.13	0.35	3.53	6.74	0.87	2.59
<b>LEPIDOPTERA</b>								
<i>Nymphula</i> sp. A	3.27	4.23	0.17	0.26	3.33	4.39	0.27	0.59
<i>Nymphula</i> sp. B	0.67	1.40	0.13	0.35	0	0	0	0
<b>COLEOPTERA</b>								
<i>Hydrophilus</i> sp.	0.13	0.35	0.07	0.26	0.47	1.25	0.47	0.64
<b>TRICHOPTERA</b>								
<i>Goera</i> sp.	0.93	2.15	0	0	0.07	0.26	0	0
Odontoceridae sp.	1.27	2.05	0.20	0.56	1.87	4.55	0.40	0.83
Leptoceridae sp.	0.33	0.90	0	0	0.13	0.52	0	0
<i>Anisocentropus</i> sp.	1.87	4.49	0.07	0.26	0	0	1.33	4.64
<i>Oxyethira</i> sp. A	1.13	2.33	4.93	6.25	1.47	3.56	3.60	7.94
<i>Oxyethira</i> sp. B	0.13	0.52	0	0	1.53	3.80	0.13	0.52
<i>Hydrobiosis</i> sp.	0.07	0.26	0	0	1.13	4.12	0.27	1.03
<i>Apsilochorema</i> sp.	2.13	3.78	0.07	0.26	0.93	1.44	0	0
Philoptamidae sp.	0.07	0.26	0	0	0.2	0.56	0.13	0.35
<i>Abacaria fijiana</i>	40.33	30.42	0.67	1.23	36.13	23.89	0.07	0.26
<b>ZYGOPTERA</b>								
<i>Nesobasis</i> sp. A	0.13	0.35	0.27	0.80	0.67	1.18	0.40	1.30
<i>Nesobasis</i> Sp. B	0.40	1.06	1.47	4.22	0.53	0.99	1.33	3.15
<i>Nesobasis</i> sp. C	0.07	0.26	1.07	2.37	0.27	0.59	2.80	7.21
<i>Nesobasis</i> sp. D	0	0	0	0	0.13	0.35	0.40	1.12
<i>Nesobasis</i> sp. E	0	0	0	0	0.07	0.26	1.67	4.70
<i>Nesobasis</i> sp. F	0	0	0	0	0.13	0.52	0.93	2.46
<b>EPHEMEROPTERA</b>								
<i>Pseudoclocon</i> sp.	41.13	48.81	7.47	14.68	20.67	36.56	3.73	7.56
<i>Cloeon</i> sp. A	2.87	6.2	11.93	12.10	3.2	6.88	14.2	20.24
<i>Cloeon</i> sp. B	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.13	14.84



All diversity indices are less in the Nabukavesi creek than in the Wainikovu creek (except Simpson's which increases with decreasing diversity).  $N_1$  and  $N_2$  indicate greater dominance of fewer species in Nabukavesi creek than in the Wainikovu. *Pseudocloeon* sp. and *Abacaria fijiana* accounted for 61% of the total invertebrates in the Nabukavesi creek while they only account for 42% in the Wainikovu.

Both streams had more grazers (68.2 and 65.5%) than any other type of consumer (Figure 2). Filter and gatherer collectors accounted for 48.5 and 54.7% of the consumers, and shredders only 7.5 and 7.7% in each stream (Figure 2).

*Pseudocloeon* sp. nymphs (and to a less extent *A. fijiana* larvae) abundance fluctuates in a similar way each year in both streams (Figure 3). The highest number occurred in May–June and the least in September–November, presumably because most had hatched into adults late in the year before the hot cyclone season began. They then spent this season, when the water temperature is higher and heavy rain is more likely, as adults or eggs.

## Discussion

Over the 3-year period, 1992–1995, 34 invertebrate taxa were identified from the Nabukavesi creek and 38 taxa from the Wainikovu creek. Both streams are relatively species rich compared with many tropical Pacific Island streams. Haynes (1987b) found 19 benthic invertebrates over a 1-year period in the Wainivosule creek, a small lowland stream about 25 km inland in Viti Levu. A team surveying in the highland Monasavu area (600 m altitude) found 25 invertebrate species (INR, 1977). Resh et al. (1990) found that taxa richness in the Opunohu river, Moorea, French Polynesia ranged from 16–28 per site, while Maciolek & Ford (1987) found 29 invertebrate species along the length of the Nanpil-Kiepw river, Ponape, Caroline Islands. Continental tropical streams generally have more species. Stout & Vandermeer (1975) found as many as 62 species at a site in the Rio Java, Costa Rica.

Mayfly nymphs, caddis fly larvae and atyid shrimps were the most abundant taxa in both Nabukavesi and Wainikovu creeks. On the other hand, gastropods had the greatest biomass of all invertebrate taxa in the Wainivosule creek (Haynes, 1987b), and were more abundant than insect larvae from December–April. Caddis flies and mayflies were also scarce October–December in the Nabukavesi and

Wainikovu creeks. The poverty of neritid gastropods in the Nabukavesi creek was unusual for a Fijian stream so near the sea (Haynes, 1985, 1987b) and can probably be attributed to sediment periodically covering the periphyton on which the gastropods grazed. Haynes (1985) found *Neritiina pulligera*, *N. pettiti*, *N. macgillvrayi* and *Septaria suffreni* in the Vago creek, a similar stream on Viti Levu.

Pacific islands such as Moorea (Marquet, 1991; Resh et al., 1990), Hawaii and Maui (Kinsie & Ford, 1977) and Ponape (Maciolek & Ford, 1987) also have more gastropods and decapod crustacean species richness in their lower reaches while insect species are more numerous upstream (Resh & de Szalay, 1995). Many island freshwater fish (e.g. gobies and eels) and invertebrates, e.g. crustaceans such as atyid shrimps, *Vanua litterata* and *Macrobrachium lar*, and neritid snails are diadromous and produce larvae that develop in the estuary or sea and the larvae or young adults then migrate upstream (Ryan & Choy, 1990; Maciolek & Ford, 1987).

The diversity of invertebrate taxa in the Wainikovu creek was significantly higher and it had more relatively abundant species than the Nabukavesi. However, although the density of invertebrates fluctuated in each stream, the means (145.5 and 147.7 per 15 stones and 6 sweeps) were not significantly different over 3 years.

Bisson et al. (1992) reported a decrease in invertebrate diversity in logged streams in northern California while invertebrate density increased. An increase of 17.2–27.6 times density and biomass of *Baetis* spp. occurred in an Appalachian stream, North Carolina, after its catchment had been logged (Wallace & Gurtz, 1986). In both streams logging involved the removal of overhanging vegetation that allowed more light to reach the stream and the water temperature to rise. This led to higher growth rates of periphyton, especially diatoms, and faster metabolism in invertebrates. Logging did not affect the amount of sunlight reaching the site in the Nabukavesi creek because the logging occurred 1–2 km upstream from the site, but the mayfly, *Pseudocloeon* sp. still reached higher densities in the Nabukavesi creek than in the unlogged Wainikovu creek. This suggests that the increase in abundance of some species in logged streams is not only caused by increased light reaching the stream but also to there being fewer species eating the available food.

Eight species – *Cloeon* sp. B, 3 species of damselflies *Nesobasis*, *Lymnogyrous* sp., *Alyopsis spinipes* and a small black planarian worm were present in Wainikovu creek but absent from the Nabukavesi

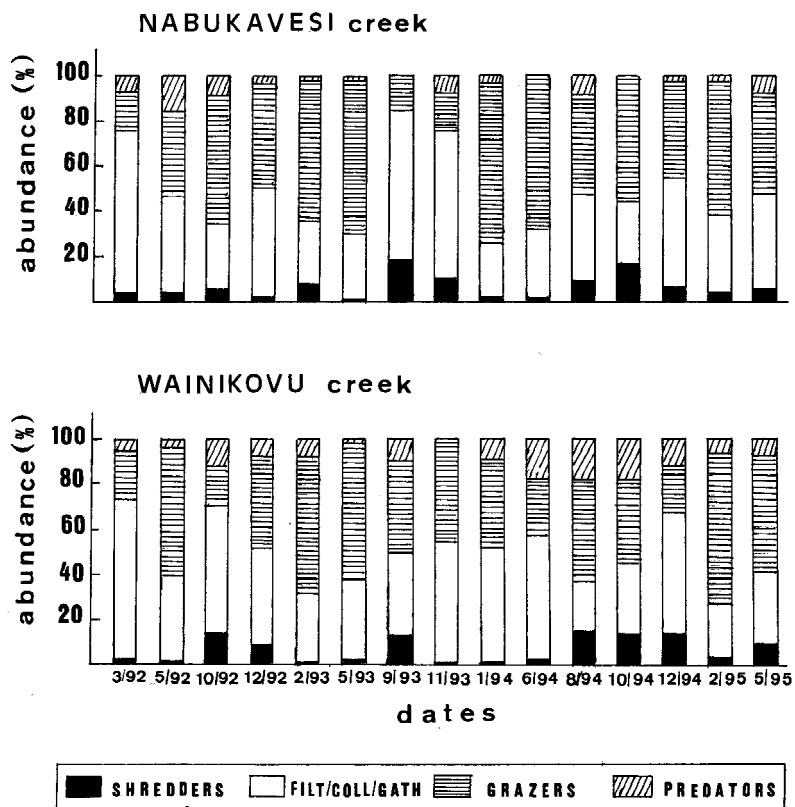


Figure 2. Percentage abundance of shredders, filtering and gathering collectors, grazers and predators in the Nabukavesi and Wainikovu creeks at each sampling date.

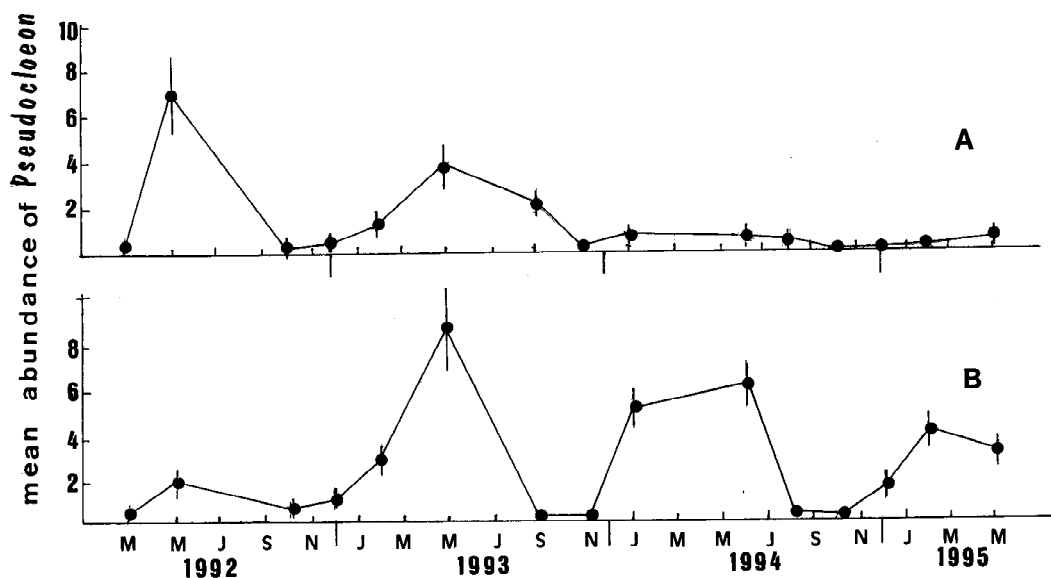


Figure 3. Seasonal variation of mean abundance of *Pseudocloeon* per 15 stones at each time of sampling and with standard error of the mean from March 1992–May 1995. (A) Wainikovu creek; (B) Nabukavesi creek.

creek. However, the small planarian, *Nesobasis* sp. E, and *A. spinipes* were present in the Nabukavesi creek in 1987/88 before logging began (unpublished data). The freshwater crab, *V. litterata*, *Nymphula* sp. B and the snail *Clithon diadema* were present in the Nabukavesi creek but were absent from the Wainikovu Creek. The neritid snail *C. diadema*, which was present only once, is more often found nearer the sea.

There was a low percentage of shredders in both streams possibly because the forest leaves entering the stream are tough with thick cuticle and are broken down slowly. Similarly, shredders contribute a negligible amount to the biomass of other Pacific island streams (Bright, 1982; Haynes, 1987b; Resh et al., 1990). Filtering collectors, gathering collectors and grazers were the main consumers present. Gastropods graze on periphyton on the surface of the leaves and boulders. Mayflies, *Pseudocloeon* sp. browse on the boulders while the caddis fly, *A. fijiana* and atyid shrimps are filter feeders. The shredders, present only in small numbers, were Leptocerid caddis, *Hydrophilus* adult, *Nymphula* spp. *Tipula*, and possibly the palaemonid shrimp, *M. lar*, although *M. lar* behaves more often as a omnivore/predator, so that it and the damselfly nymphs, *Nesobasis* spp., are the main predators (Choy, 1991; Cowie, 1981; Haynes, 1985, 1987a; Resh et al., 1990).

Luedtke et al. (1976) studied the affects of sand sediment on the colonization of stream insects in Canada and suggested that complete stream rehabilitation depended on two factors, the elimination of the sediment source and the ability of the stream to flush out deposited material. Selective logging in Ulu Segama rain forest, Sabah, Malaysia over 27 months caused an increase of up to 18 times as much sediment in the water. A year after logging ceased sediment yields had fallen to 3.6 times those of the undisturbed catchment (Douglas et al., 1992).

By March 1992 most of the mud and grit had been flushed from the Nabukavesi creek and the logged hillsides further up the valley were covered in secondary growth and therefore previous deforestation was no longer affecting the amount of sediment being washed into the stream. The Nabukavesi, like the Wainikovu was discoloured only after heavy rain. Abundant species, such as *Pseudocloeon* sp. and *A. fijiana* persisted in the Nabukavesi creek during logging when sedimentation was high, nearly all species had returned 2 years after logging ceased but three species (planarian sp., *A. spinipes* and *Nesobasis* sp. E), originally present in the Nabukavesi creek had not

returned after 5 years, although they were present in the unlogged Wainikovu creek.

After logging, species with patchy or sparse populations were slower to return to the Nabukavesi creek than more abundant ones. Many endemic species are found only in widely dispersed patches. Populations of the endemic Fijian shell-less opisthobranch gastropod, *Acochlidium fijianse* have been found only in the Nasekawa river, Vanua Levu (near Vunivesi village) and in the Lami river, Viti Levu (near Lami village) (Haynes, 1991) in spite of widespread gastropod surveys (Haynes, 1985, 1987a, b; Starmühlner, 1976). It seems probable, therefore, that one serious long term effect of sedimentation due to logging will be the extinction of some fresh water invertebrate species.

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