

Microhabitat Distributions of Juvenile Hydrothermal Vent Gastropods

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Early gastropod settlement patterns around a hydrothermal vent at 9°50' N East Pacific Rise were determined and compared to the distribution of adults of the same species. Post-settlement processes were also examined by deploying caged and uncaged settling blocks. These blocks were deployed in 4 different zones at the vent site for a 5-month period. The zones were characterized by different intensities of hydrothermal influence. Juvenile (<1mm) gastropods were identified and counted from the blocks. The most abundant species were *Lepetodrilus* spp., *Eulepetopsis vitrea*, *Clypeosectus delectus* and *Gorgoleptis* sp. (*Clypeosectus* and *Gorgoleptis* were combined due to morphological similarity). The number of juvenile *Lepetodrilus* spp. was higher in the area of high hydrothermal influence compared to no influence. There was a significant difference between adult and juvenile distributions for *Lepetodrilus* spp. and *Clypeosectus/Gorgoleptis* across all zones. Juvenile *Eulepetopsis vitrea* were more abundant on the caged than the uncaged blocks. These data suggest that initial settlement patterns of vent gastropods are modified by post-settlement processes for *Lepetodrilus* spp. and *Clypeosectus/Gorgoleptis*.