

# **UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

INSECT COMPOSITION OF SUNGAI CHUKAI MANGROVE FOREST IN TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA BASED ON SELECTED SAMPLING MRTHODS

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Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science

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### DEDICATION

This Master Research Thesis is dedicated to:

My beloved parents, Mr. Raja Alang Bin Raja Abd. Jalil and Mrs. Robaiyah Binti Muhammad. Also, to my late grandparents, you will always be in my memory.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science

### INSECT COMPOSITION OF SUNGAI CHUKAI MANGROVE FOREST IN TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA BASED ON SELECTED SAMPLING METHODS

By

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#### December 2015

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Insects are one of the most abundant organisms on earth and can be found almost everywhere in any types of ecosystem. However, their abundance in mangrove forest are hardly reported. In Malaysia, the study of insect in mangrove habitat is very crucial and most of the database were recorded in other regions. Therefore, the mangrove forest in Sungai Chukai, Kemaman, Terengganu was chosen as the study site and the area also has considered threatened due to the rapid development. This study was conducted to compare the abundance of insects in different zones, to determine the functional feeding group of insects, to compare the diversity of insects and lastly to investigate the relationship of abiotic factors with the abundance of insects in Sungai Chukai mangrove. The sampling activities were done in three times and four zones of the study area along Sungai Chukai were determined according to environmental factors and accessibility to the forest floor. A Malaise trap and three yellow pan traps were installed for three days and the samples were collected on the fourth day. As a result, 7772 of individuals insects comprising of 16 orders and 123 families were identified and the most abundance was recorded from the order of Diptera with 4072 of individuals (52.39%). While, the lowest individuals were recorded in three orders, namely; Dermaptera (0.01%), Microcoryphia (0.01%) and Neuroptera (0.01%), with one individual respectively. The number of individuals between the order of insects was significantly different (P<0.05) where the order of Diptera had shown the differences between the order of Dermaptera, Microcoryphia, Neuroptera, Mantodea, Odonata and Isoptera. The dominant of Diptera in Sungai Chukai was due to the type of traps applied which focused on flying insect and mangrove as the habitat preferences of flies itself. Furthermore, according to zonation, the insects were most abundant in Zone 3 (37.16%), and the lowest was recorded in Zone 2 (18.99%). The abundance of insect according to zonation also had showed sigificantly different between Zone 1 and Zone 3 (P<0.05). The differences occured due to the compact distribution of the vegetation and high diversity of flora provides sufficient food for the insects in Zone 3 compared with the othe zones. Besides, the diversity of insects along the riverine of Sungai Chukai mangrove was quite diverse with the H' value was 3.41 and 0.71 for the evenness. For the similarity, Zone 1 was very dissimilar with the other zones due to the forest structure and also high level of disturbance which caused the difference of insect composition. However, the abiotic

factors such as temperature, humidity and rainfall are not showing strong relationship with the abundance of insects. In conclusion, the composition of insect in Sungai Chukai are quite diverse since 16 orders from overall orders were recorded within the forest. Besides, due to forest disturbances, the diversity of insects was decreased during the study periods. Therefore, further action must be taken to conserve the insects and other flora and fauna before we lost the precious biodiversity in Sungai Chukai.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains

### KOMPOSISI SERANGGA HUTAN PAYA BAKAU SUNGAI CHUKAI DI TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA BERDASARKAN KAEDAH PERSAMPELAN TERPILIH

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Serangga adalah salah satu daripada organisma yang paling banyak di dunia dan boleh didapati hampir semua jenis ekosistem. Walau bagaimanapun, serangga yang terdapat di dalam hutan paya bakau tidak banyak dilaporkan. Di Malaysia, kajian mengenai serangga di habitat bakau adalah tidak banyak dan kebanyakkan pangkalan data telah direkodkan di kawasan hutan yang lain. Oleh itu, hutan bakau di Sungai Chukai, Kemaman, Terengganu telah dipilih sebagai kawasan kajian dan kawasan ini juga dianggap terancam akibat pembangunan yang pesat. Berikutan hal ini, terdapat empat objektif telah dicadangkan untuk kajian jaitu untuk membandingkan kelimpahan serangga di dalam zon yang berbeza, untuk menentukan kumpulan fungsi makanan serangga, untuk membandingkan kepelbagaian serangga dan akhir sekali untuk menyiasat hubungan antara faktor-faktor abiotik dengan kelimpahan serangga dalam hutan bakau Sungai Chukai. Aktiviti persampelan ini telah dijalankan sebanyak tiga kali dan 4 kawasan penzonan di sepanjang Sungai Chukai sebagai kawasan kajian telah ditentukan berdasarkan faktor persekitaran iaitu jenis tumbuhan dan tahap kemasinan air sungai dengan tiga plot bagi setiap zon. Pada setiap plot, satu perangkap Malaise dan tiga perangkap besen kuning telah dipasang selama tiga hari. Sebanyak 7772 individu serangga yang terdiri daripada 16 order dan 123 keluarga telah dikenal pasti dan yang paling banyak direkodkan adalah terdiri daripada order Diptera dengan 4072 individu (52.39%). Walaubagaimanapun, terdapat serangga yang dilaporkan paling rendah, iaitu; Dermaptera (0.01%), Microcoryphia (0.01%) dan Neuroptera (0.01%), dengan diwakili satu individu sahaja bagi setiap order. Bilangan individu mengikut order adalah jauh berbeza (P<0.05) di mana order Diptera telah menunjukkan perbezaan diantara order Dermaptera, Microcoryphia, Neuroptera, Mantodea, Odonata dan Isoptera. Perbezaan Diptera dengan order yang lain adalah disebabkan penggunaan perangkap yang lebih tertumpu kepada serangga bersayap dan hutan bakau merupakan habitat pilihan bagi serangga tersebut. Tambahan pula, berdasarkan zon, bilangan serangga yang paling banyak direkodkan adalah dalam Zon 3 (37.16%), dan yang paling rendah dari Zon 2 (18.99%). Terdapat perbezaan kelimpahan serangga antara Zon 3 dan juga Zon 1. Perbezaan yang berlaku adalah disebabkan kerana taburan tumbuhan yang lebih padat dan kepelbagain flora yang tinggi yang dapat menyediakan sumber makanan yang mencukupi untuk serangga di Zon 3 daripada zon lain. Kepelbagaian serangga di sepanjang sungai Sungai Chukai agak tinggi dengan nilai H' adalah 3.41 dan 0.71 untuk keserataan spesis. Selain itu, Zon 1 dikenalpasti berbeza dengan zon-zon lain atas faktor lokasi, struktur hutan dan juga tahap gangguan yang telah menyebabkan perbezaan komposisi serangga. Walau bagaimanapun, faktor-faktor abiotik seperti suhu, kelembapan relatif dan hujan tidak menunjukkan hubungan yang kuat dengan bilangan serangga. Kesimpulannya, komposisi serangga di Sungai Chukai adalah pelbagai memandangkan 16 order daripada 32 keseluruhan order dicatatkan daripada hutan ini. Selain itu, disebabkan oleh pencerobohan hutan, kepelbagaian serangga telah menurun semasa tempoh kajian dijalankan. Oleh itu, tindakan lanjut perlu diambil untuk memulihara serangga serta flora dan fauna yang lain.



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This is to confirm that:

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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AHC Agglomerative Hierarchical Clustering
- FAO Food and Agriculture Organization
- GPS Global Positioning System
- MT Malaise Trap
- RH Relative Humidity
- TS Time of Samplings
- YPT Yellow Pan Trap

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### CHAPTER 1

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Mangrove forest is a group of trees and shrubs that capable of growing in marine, estuarine and to a limited degree of fresh water (Stewart and Fairfull 2008). It also has been classified as a taxonomically diverse group of tropical trees which can be found in the tropical and subtropical areas and they are very important in protected the coastline against shoreline erosion, provide the source of firewood or charcoal and building materials (Latiff 2012). Not forgotten, mangroves also important for the activity of aquaculture such as shrimp and fish farming.

Ecologically, various species of organisms depend on the existence of mangrove. Even though mangrove has been neglected and classified as a less diverse ecosystem (Stewart and Fairfull 2008), the occurrences of mangrove are remarkable as its provided important breeding spot for some mammals, reptiles, crustaceans, birds and also the insects (Wan Jusoh et al. 2010, Nagelkerken et al. 2008). The saltwater surface and mudflats on mangrove forest is beneficial to supply an essential habitat for aquatic and semiaquatic insects, including species representing several families of Diptera, Hemiptera, Odonata, and Coleoptera (Gallagher 2010). Besides, the canopy of mangroves also provides a shaded area suitable with the temperature and humidity to support numerous subratidal habitats for insect herbivores (McKeon and Feller 2004).

Nowadays, there are numerous studies on insect have been conducted worldwide in many types of habitats or ecosystems. Studies in the rain forests of the tropics are rapidly conducted and has triggered interest amongst entomologists worldwide. Unfortunately, mangrove entomology has remained as a neglected field of study. The study of the insect fauna of mangroves somehow has failed to evoke sufficient interest of some entomologist and ecologist (Veenakumari et al. 1997).

Mangrove ecosystem also has been identified as one of the most threatened ecosystem in the world which suffered from deforestation and human impact (Schimtz et al. 2010). The area of mangrove forest has been decreased and the area has been tranformed into development and industrial area. Besides, many organisms also have lost their natural habitat and the quality of the surrounding environment has been altered and reduced due to the forest destruction and pollution.

In Malaysia, the total of mangrove areas are around 642,000 hectares, which only 17% cover in Peninsular Malaysia, while the remaining 57% are found in Sabah and another 26% in Sarawak (Loo et al. 2003). However, the area of mangrove has been depleted and Malaysia had lost about 12% of its mangrove forest (Macintosh & Ashton 2002). Even though it is located within the tropical climate and also has been listed as one of the 12<sup>th</sup> mega diverse country in the world, the data on insects composition in the mangrove forest especially in the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia are very crucial.

Most of the data of insects in mangroves are recorded outside Malaysia. Despite of the gap to fulfill the data on insect community in mangrove habitats, the studies of these invertebrates are needed.

Hence, for the purpose of this study, a mangrove habitat in the riverine of Sungai Chukai which located in Kemaman mangrove forest has been favored as the study area. The surrounding area of Kemaman district, which are quickly getting into industrial and farming activity has been seen as unitary of the threats to the mangrove forests and its community (Jusoff 2008). A complete documentation on insect composition in this mangrove ecosystem is urgent before it loses. Therefore, it is also vital for future study on insect diversity and as a baseline for bioindicator approaches. As to complete the information and database on insects composition in Kemamman mangroves forest, there are four main objectives have been proposed for this study which are:

- 1. To compare the abundance of insects in different zones in Sungai Chukai mangrove forest.
- 2. To determine the functional feeding group of insects in Sungai Chukai mangrove forest.
- 3. To compare the diversity of insects in Sungai Chukai mangrove forest.
- 4. To investigate the relationship of abiotic factors with the insects abundance in Sungai Chukai mangrove forest.

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