

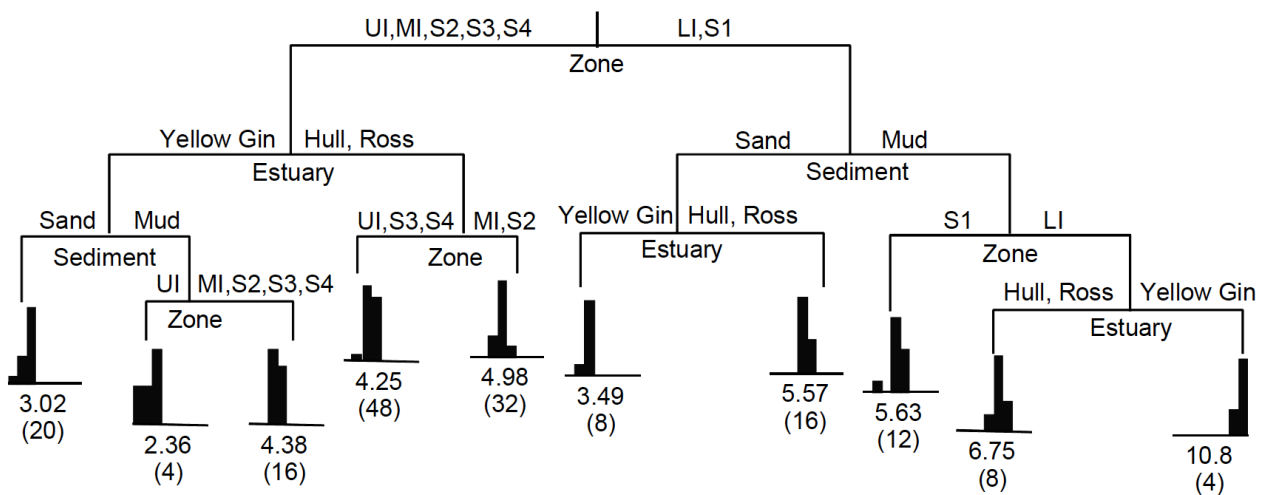
Biotic hotspots in mangrove-dominated estuaries: macro-invertebrate aggregation in unvegetated lower intertidal flats

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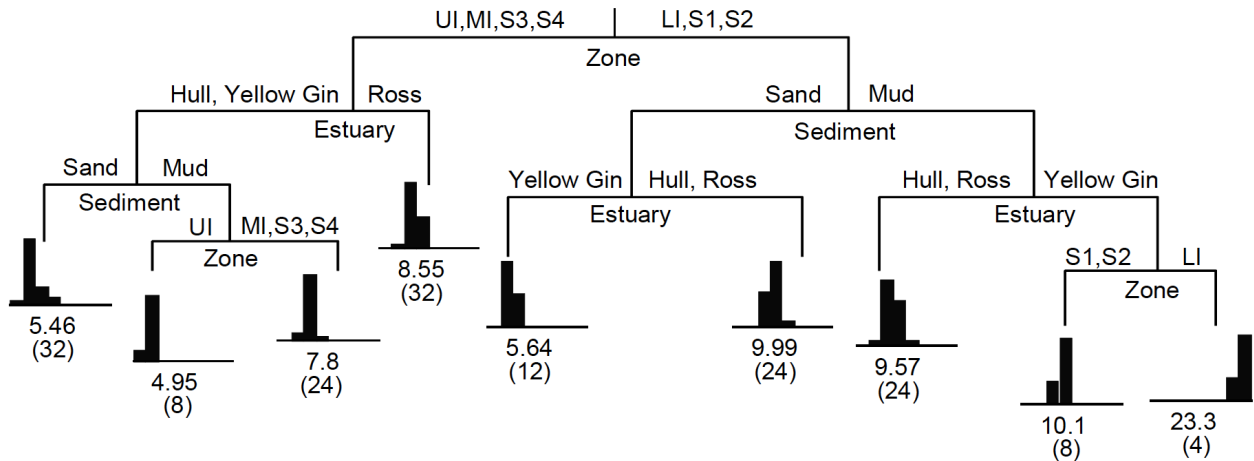
Marine Ecology Progress Series 556: 31–43 (2016)

Total Density



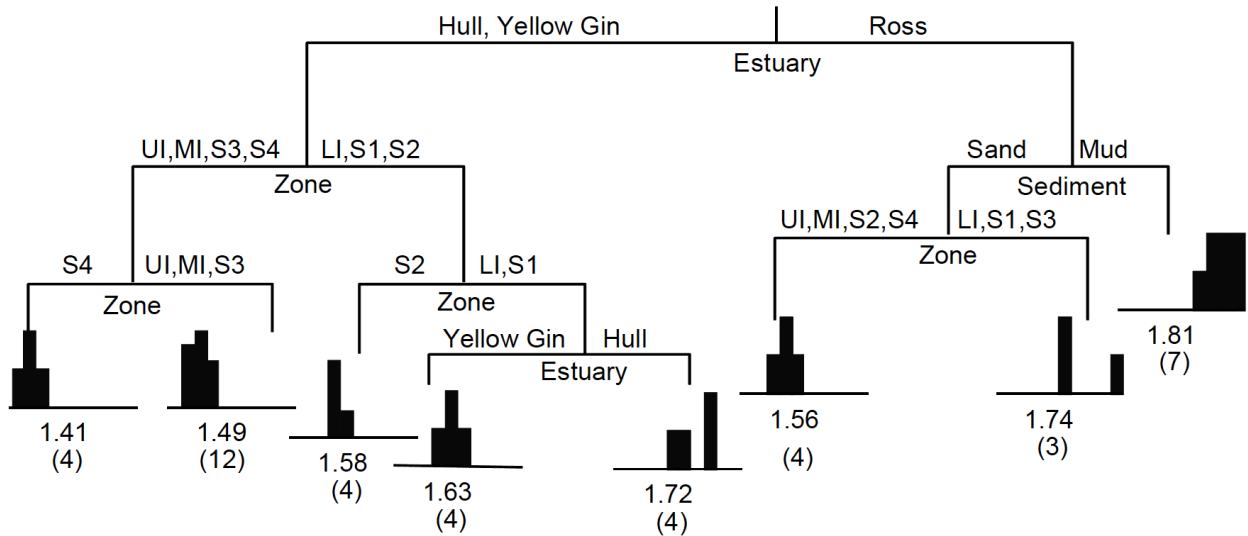
The total density at the three test estuaries has the first Node determined by the tidal zones, with the lower low-intertidal (LI) and the subtidal 1 (S1) having the highest density. Consequently, further division is determined by the sediment type and the estuary. The other pattern arising is that the Hull River and the Ross River have very similar density distribution as opposed to Yellow Gin Creek.

Total Biomass



The total biomass at the three test estuaries has the first split determined by the tidal zones, with the lower low-intertidal, subtidal 1 and subtidal 2 having the highest total biomass. Further differentiation is determined by the sediment type, especially for Yellow Gin Creek, where there is a much lower biomass at sandy sites than at muddy ones. In contrast, the Ross River and the Hull River have only slightly higher biomass at the sandy sites.

Taxonomic Richness



The species richness at the three test estuaries is firstly split by the estuaries, with the Ross River strongly differing from the Hull River and Yellow Gin Creek. The Ross River has about the same taxonomic richness across the entire tidal gradient at muddy sites, whereas at sandy sites, the lower low-Intertidal and the first subtidal have the higher number of species. The other two estuaries have no obvious differentiation based on sediment type, with highest species richness at the lower low-Intertidal and subtidal 1.