

# Particulate Th data from samples collected on 5 cruises at Station ALOHA off Hawaii and Station M off California from 2019 to 2020

**Website:** <https://www.bco-dmo.org/dataset/922922>

**Data Type:** Cruise Results

**Version:** 1

**Version Date:** 2024-03-20

## Project

» [Collaborative Research: Assessing the relative importance of small vs large particles as sources of nutrition to abyssal communities](#) (Abyssal food web)

Contributors	Affiliation	Role
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## Abstract

The abyssal plains of the oceans cover roughly half of the earth's surface, host enormous reservoirs of biodiversity and mineral resources, and play important roles in nutrient regeneration and carbon sequestration. The most important process controlling the structure and function of these ecosystems is the quantity and quality of food (mostly sinking organic particles) that reaches the deep-sea floor. The goals of this research were to evaluate the relative importance of small and large particles that sink to the deep-sea using the naturally occurring short-lived radionuclide,  $^{234}\text{Th}$ . Particulate and dissolved samples were collected throughout the water column (12-17 depths) during 5 cruises in the productive waters off of California (Station M, May and October 2019) within the nutrient-poor central Pacific, north of Hawaii (Station ALOHA, July 2019 and January and July 2020). Total water column (2 L) and particulate  $^{234}\text{Th}$  activities collected using in situ pumps (53  $\mu\text{m}$ , 1  $\mu\text{m}$ , and 0.3  $\mu\text{m}$ ) have been measured in all of the samples collected from the 5 cruises: April 2019, July 2019, October 2019, January 2020, and July 2020. This dataset includes the particulate Th measurements. Total Th is available in a separate, related dataset.

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## Coverage

**Location:** Eastern North Pacific (Station M) and North Pacific Subtropical Gyre (Station ALOHA)

**Spatial Extent:** N:35.14 E:-123 S:22.65 W:-157.9

**Temporal Extent:** 2019-04 - 2020-08

## Methods & Sampling

Particulate sample collection methods are similar to those described by Roca-Martí et al. (2021). Briefly, 142 mm diameter, 0.3 micron ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) pore-size GF75 filters, 1  $\mu\text{m}$  pore-size QMA filters, and 53  $\mu\text{m}$  pore-size Nitex filters were cleaned according to trace metal clean protocols. Filters were mounted sequentially by size on metal-free mini-MLVFS filter holders attached to the in situ pumps and deployed at depths between 10 and 4000 depending on the cruise. Between  $\sim$ 500-2000 L of water were filtered per deployment at a rate of 8 L/minute. High flow rates of  $\sim$ 20 L/minute were used to filter large volumes of water ( $\sim$ 5000-7000 L) required for capturing sufficient  $>$  53  $\mu\text{m}$  particles for isotopic and compound specific analyses.

Small particles collected using QMA and GF75 filters were subsampled using a  $\sim$ 22 mm Delrin punch for particulate  $^{234}\text{Th}$ , total carbon (C), and bulk C and nitrogen (N) isotopic analyses under trace metal clean conditions. Large particle ( $>$  53  $\mu\text{m}$ ) samples for  $^{234}\text{Th}$ , C, and bulk N were rinsed onto 25 mm QMA filters using 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  filtered seawater and visible swimmers were removed. Samples were then dried, mounted onto RISO discs, and stored at 4°C prior to and immediately following counting. All samples were counted on a low level RISO beta counter using a helium/1%butane gas mixture.

## Data Processing Description

All data are decay corrected to the mid-point of sample collection.

## BCO-DMO Processing Description

- Imported original file "Particulate Th data BCO-DMO.xlsx" into the BCO-DMO system.
- Converted the "Date" column to YYYY-MM format.
- Renamed fields to comply with BCO-DMO naming conventions.
- Saved the final file as "922922\_v1\_particulate\_th.csv"

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## Data Files

File
<b>922922_v1_particulate_th.csv</b> (Comma Separated Values (.csv), 10.56 KB) MD5:8356c521d76eff0e3ae5cd92446ad570
Primary data file for dataset ID 922922, version 1

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## Related Publications

Buesseler, K. O., Benitez-Nelson, C. R., Roca-Martí, M., Wyatt, A. M., Resplandy, L., Clevenger, S. J., Drysdale, J. A., Estapa, M. L., Pike, S., & Umhau, B. P. (2020). High-resolution spatial and temporal measurements of particulate organic carbon flux using thorium-234 in the northeast Pacific Ocean during the EXport Processes in the Ocean from RemoTe Sensing field campaign. *Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene*, 8(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.1525/elementa.2020.030> <https://doi.org/10.1525/elementa.030>

*Methods*

Roca-Martí, M., Benitez-Nelson, C. R., Umhau, B. P., Wyatt, A. M., Clevenger, S. J., Pike, S., Horner, T. J., Estapa, M. L., Resplandy, L., & Buesseler, K. O. (2021). Concentrations, ratios, and sinking fluxes of major bioelements at Ocean Station Papa. *Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene*, 9(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.1525/elementa.2020.00166>

*Methods*

Umhau, B. P., Benitez-Nelson, C. R., Close, H. G., Hannides, C. C. S., Motta, L., Popp, B. N., ... Drazen, J. C. (2019). Seasonal and spatial changes in carbon and nitrogen fluxes estimated using  $^{234}\text{Th}$ : $^{238}\text{U}$  disequilibria in

the North Pacific tropical and subtropical gyre. *Marine Chemistry*, 217, 103705.

doi:[10.1016/j.marchem.2019.103705](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marchem.2019.103705)

*Methods*

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## Related Datasets

### IsRelatedTo

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Drazen, J. C., Benitez-Nelson, C. R. (2024) **Total Th data from samples collected on 5 cruises at Station ALOHA off Hawaii and Station M off California from 2019 to 2020.** Biological and Chemical Oceanography Data Management Office (BCO-DMO). (Version 1) Version Date 2024-03-20  
doi:10.26008/1912/bco-dmo.923028.1 [[view at BCO-DMO](#)]

Drazen, J. C., Popp, B. N., Romero, S. (2021) **Amino acid compound specific isotope analyses of abyssal deposit feeders, gut contents, and surrounding surface sediments collected on R/V Atlantis cruise AT42-10 and R/V Western Flyer Pulse 72 in the eastern North Pacific in 2019.** Biological and Chemical Oceanography Data Management Office (BCO-DMO). (Version 1) Version Date 2021-03-30 doi:10.26008/1912/bco-dmo.840749.1 [[view at BCO-DMO](#)]

Drazen, J. C., Popp, B. N., Smith, C. R. (2022) **Bulk isotopic composition (d15N and d13C) of abyssal megafauna and macrofauna from Stations M and Aloha.** Biological and Chemical Oceanography Data Management Office (BCO-DMO). (Version 1) Version Date 2022-01-12 doi:10.26008/1912/bco-dmo.866774.1 [[view at BCO-DMO](#)]

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## Parameters

Parameter	Description	Units
Cruise_ID	Station ID number	unitless
Station	Station M or ALOHA	unitless
lat	Station latitude, south is negative	decimal degrees
lon	Station longitude, west is negative	decimal degrees
Date	Year and month	unitless
Size_fraction	Filter size used: either 0.3 um, 1 um, or 53 um pore-size	micrometers (um)
Depth	Depth in water column	meters (m)
Th234	Total 234Th	disintegrations per minute per liter (dpm/L)
Th234_err	+/- error based on counting statistics and efficiency correction	disintegrations per minute per liter (dpm/L)

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## Instruments

<b>Dataset-specific Instrument Name</b>	Standard CTD Rosette
<b>Generic Instrument Name</b>	CTD - profiler
<b>Generic Instrument Description</b>	The Conductivity, Temperature, Depth (CTD) unit is an integrated instrument package designed to measure the conductivity, temperature, and pressure (depth) of the water column. The instrument is lowered via cable through the water column. It permits scientists to observe the physical properties in real-time via a conducting cable, which is typically connected to a CTD to a deck unit and computer on a ship. The CTD is often configured with additional optional sensors including fluorometers, transmissometers and/or radiometers. It is often combined with a Rosette of water sampling bottles (e.g. Niskin, GO-FLO) for collecting discrete water samples during the cast. This term applies to profiling CTDs. For fixed CTDs, see <a href="https://www.bco-dmo.org/instrument/869934">https://www.bco-dmo.org/instrument/869934</a> .

<b>Dataset-specific Instrument Name</b>	ICP-MS
<b>Generic Instrument Name</b>	Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometer
<b>Generic Instrument Description</b>	An ICP Mass Spec is an instrument that passes nebulized samples into an inductively-coupled gas plasma (8-10000 K) where they are atomized and ionized. Ions of specific mass-to-charge ratios are quantified in a quadrupole mass spectrometer.

<b>Dataset-specific Instrument Name</b>	McLane WTS-LV Pump
<b>Generic Instrument Name</b>	McLane Large Volume Pumping System WTS-LV
<b>Dataset-specific Description</b>	McLane WTS-LV Pump fitted with three stage mini-MLVFS filter holders and bubbler to remove air pockets
<b>Generic Instrument Description</b>	The WTS-LV is a Water Transfer System (WTS) Large Volume (LV) pumping instrument designed and manufactured by McLane Research Labs (Falmouth, MA, USA). It is a large-volume, single-event sampler that collects suspended and dissolved particulate samples in situ. Ambient water is drawn through a modular filter holder onto a 142-millimeter (mm) membrane without passing through the pump. The standard two-tier filter holder provides prefiltering and size fractioning. Collection targets include chlorophyll maximum, particulate trace metals, and phytoplankton. It features different flow rates and filter porosity to support a range of specimen collection. Sampling can be programmed to start at a scheduled time or begin with a countdown delay. It also features a dynamic pump speed algorithm that adjusts flow to protect the sample as material accumulates on the filter. Several pump options range from 0.5 to 30 liters per minute, with a max volume of 2,500 to 36,000 liters depending on the pump and battery pack used. The standard model is depth rated to 5,500 meters, with a deeper 7,000-meter option available. The operating temperature is -4 to 35 degrees Celsius. The WTS-LV is available in four different configurations: Standard, Upright, Bore Hole, and Dual Filter Sampler. The high-capacity upright WTS-LV model provides three times the battery life of the standard model. The Bore-Hole WTS-LV is designed to fit through a narrow opening such as a 30-centimeter borehole. The dual filter WTS-LV features two vertical intake 142 mm filter holders to allow simultaneous filtering using two different porosities.

<b>Dataset-specific Instrument Name</b>	low level RISO Beta Counter
<b>Generic Instrument Name</b>	Riso Laboratory Anti-coincidence Beta Counters
<b>Generic Instrument Description</b>	Low-level beta detectors manufactured by Riso (now Nutech) in Denmark. These instruments accept samples that can be mounted on a 25mm filter holder. These detectors have very low backgrounds, 0.17 counts per minute, and can have counting efficiencies as high as 55%.

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## Deployments

### AT42-10

<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/840850">https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/840850</a>
<b>Platform</b>	R/V Atlantis
<b>Start Date</b>	2019-04-28
<b>End Date</b>	2019-05-09
<b>Description</b>	Collaborative Research: Assessing the relative importance of small vs large particles as sources of nutrition to abyssal communities AT42-10; Alvin Dive numbers: D5027-D5030

### Pulse 72

<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/840845">https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/840845</a>
<b>Platform</b>	R/V Western Flyer
<b>Start Date</b>	2019-10-16
<b>End Date</b>	2019-10-25
<b>Description</b>	Collaborative Research: Assessing the relative importance of small vs large particles as sources of nutrition to abyssal communities Dive numbers: D1196, D1197, D1201

### KM1914

<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/866828">https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/866828</a>
<b>Platform</b>	R/V Kilo Moana
<b>Start Date</b>	2019-07-18
<b>End Date</b>	2019-07-28
<b>Description</b>	See additional cruise information from Rolling Deck to Repository (R2R): <a href="https://www.rvdata.us/search/cruise/KM1914">https://www.rvdata.us/search/cruise/KM1914</a>

### KM2002

<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/866784">https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/866784</a>
<b>Platform</b>	R/V Kilo Moana
<b>Start Date</b>	2020-01-17
<b>End Date</b>	2020-01-26
<b>Description</b>	See additional cruise information from Rolling Deck to Repository (R2R): <a href="https://www.rvdata.us/search/cruise/KM2002">https://www.rvdata.us/search/cruise/KM2002</a>

## KM2008

<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/866879">https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/866879</a>
<b>Platform</b>	R/V Kilo Moana
<b>Start Date</b>	2020-07-24
<b>End Date</b>	2020-08-03
<b>Description</b>	See additional cruise information from Rolling Deck to Repository (R2R): <a href="https://www.rvdata.us/search/cruise/KM2008">https://www.rvdata.us/search/cruise/KM2008</a>

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## Project Information

### **Collaborative Research: Assessing the relative importance of small vs large particles as sources of nutrition to abyssal communities (Abyssal food web)**

**Coverage:** California current, Station M (34° 50' N, 123° W) and North Pacific Subtropical Gyre, Station Aloha (22° 45' N, 158° W)

#### *NSF Award Abstract:*

The abyssal plains of the oceans cover roughly half of the earth's surface, host enormous reservoirs of biodiversity and mineral resources, and play important roles in nutrient recycling and carbon sequestration. The most important process controlling the structure and function of these ecosystems is the quantity and quality of food (mostly sinking organic particles) that reaches the deep-sea floor. However, we do not fully understand the processes provisioning this vast ecosystem. We propose to evaluate the relative importance of small and larger "marine snow" particles that sink to deep-sea benthic communities by using the stable isotope signature of amino acids within various food sources and trace their consumption by fauna on the seafloor. This project compares ecosystems from the productive waters off California with the nutrient poor central Pacific, north of Hawaii. This project provides novel insights into how surface ocean processes are coupled to food-webs at the deep ocean seafloor and how changes in food sources potentially impact deep-sea communities. This project also provides excellent training opportunities for graduate students, a postdoctoral researcher, and undergraduates at UH and USC, particularly underrepresented minorities who pursue majors in the geosciences. The project will sponsor an annual G6-12 teacher workshop to inform Hawaii educators about the deep sea and broadly disseminate knowledge to the community. All results are communicated broadly to inform the public as concerns regarding abyssal ecosystems are rising due to interests in deep-sea mining.

The most important process controlling the structure and function of abyssal ecosystems is the quantity and quality of organic material that ultimately reaches the deep-sea floor. Despite the strong relationship between euphotic zone export flux and benthic ecology, studies of abyssal ecosystems have observed a deficit between food supply and benthic community demand. Additional work is therefore needed, particularly with regards to understanding the sources of nutrition to the deep-sea benthos. Recent evidence suggests that small particles may be significant contributors to carbon export, increasing in relative importance with depth in the mesopelagic and reaching the abyssal seafloor. This project is to evaluate the relative importance of small and larger "marine snow" particles to deep-sea benthic communities using a combination of particle flux measurements and state of the art compound specific stable isotope analysis of amino acids (AA-CSIA) at two

abyssal locations that contrast in overlying productivity, seasonality, and export magnitude. Time series measurements at these locations (Sta. M off California and Sta. Aloha off Hawaii) provide a rich context for the work. In the mesopelagic central North Pacific larger particles (>53 um) can be resolved from microbially reworked, smaller (0.7-53 um) particles using AA-CSIA. This project is characterizing the isotopic compositions of key individual compounds in a continuum of particle sizes (< 1.0 um suspended particles to large sinking particles >53 um) collected using in situ filtration near the seafloor and bottom-moored sediment traps, thereby defining source-specific isotopic signatures that can be traced into benthic fauna and sediments (that are collected by ROVs and epibenthic sleds). This research to understand pelagic-benthic coupling from particles to megafauna using isotopic measurements at the compound-level will yield novel insights into the importance of small microbially reworked particles to deep-sea benthic food webs. This will more precisely couple surface ocean processes to food-webs at the deep ocean seafloor with implications for understanding climate change effects and the efficiency of energy transfer to higher trophic levels. Furthermore, isotopic measurements can also be used to further parameterize ecosystem models by quantifying trophic position across size classes and thus estimate predator-prey mass ratios in relation to variation in body size spectra, functional type, and ultimately to carbon flux and remineralization. Finally, the results will help refine interpretations of deep-sea paleorecords of past nitrogen dynamics by calibrating potential changes in organic matter isotope values between the surface and seafloor archives.

This award reflects NSF's statutory mission and has been deemed worthy of support through evaluation using the Foundation's intellectual merit and broader impacts review criteria.

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## Funding

Funding Source	Award
<a href="#">NSF Division of Ocean Sciences (NSF OCE)</a>	<a href="#">OCE-1829519</a>

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