

# Occurrence of the Alexandria pompano, *Alectis alexandrinus* (Carangidae) off the coast of Algeria

by

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**RÉSUMÉ.** - Présence du cordonnier bossu, *Alectis alexandrinus* (Carangidae) au large de la côte d'Algérie.

Un spécimen du cordonnier bossu, *Alectis alexandrinus* (E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1817) (Carangidae) est signalé pour la première fois au large de la côte algérienne, près d'Annaba par 50-100 m de fond environ. Une description succincte de l'espèce est présentée ainsi que des caractères biométriques et méristiques. La répartition de *A. alexandrinus* en Méditerranée est commentée.

**Key words.** - Carangidae - *Alectis alexandrinus* - MED - Algeria - First record.

Investigations conducted off the coast of Algeria and observations made at Algiers fish market from 1996 allow to collect fish species from the eastern tropical Atlantic which migrated into the Mediterranean through Strait of Gibraltar: sharks (Hemida *et al.*, 2002) and teleosts (Kara and Bourehail, 2003) and among these latter, an Alexandria pompano, *Alectis alexandrinus* (E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1817) was identified.

The species is recorded for the first time to our knowledge in the area with regard to previous faunistic works (see Lalami, 1971). In this paper, we give a short description of the specimen and we try to comment its distribution in the Mediterranean Sea.

## Description of the Algerian specimen

On 5 November 2003, an Alexandria pompano was found at Algiers fish market. It was captured off Annaba, by trawling at a depth probably between 50 and 100 metres (Fig. 1). This specimen (Fig. 2) is deposited in the Laboratoire halieutique, Institut des sciences de la nature, Université des sciences et techniques Houari Boumédiène at Algiers (catalogue number FSB/HAL 010). Its stomach was empty and its gonads were in a resting phase, so we were unable to sex it.

Morphometric measurements and meristic counts of the specimen are given in table I.

Body rather quadrangular and strongly compressed, superficially naked and sometimes with small scales difficult to see. Snout profile rather high and strait. Eyes rounded. Pelvic and dorsal fins long with first anterior rays developed. Pectoral arcuate and falciforme. Lateral line arcuate anteriorly with some scutellae on its posterior part.

Colour mostly silvery with yellowish and dark brown areas on the head and lower part of body. Anterior rays of dorsal and pelvic fins rather blackish.

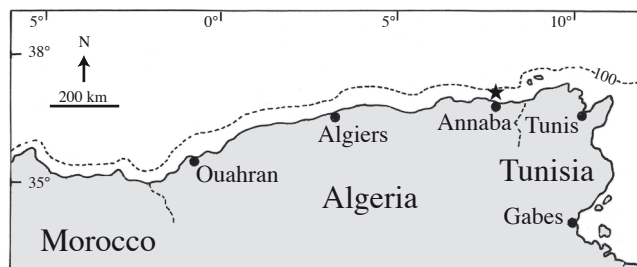


Figure 1. - Map of the Maghreb shore showing the place (★) where the specimen of Alexandria pompano, *Alectis alexandrinus* (FSB/HAL 010), was captured, off Annaba. [Carte du littoral maghrébin montrant l'endroit (★) où le spécimen du cordonnier bossu, *Alectis alexandrinus* (FSB/HAL 010), a été capturé au large d'Annaba (Algérie).]



Figure 2. - Specimen of Alexandria pompano, *Alectis alexandrinus* (FSB/HAL 010), captured off Annaba (Algeria). [Spécimen du cordonnier bossu, *Alectis alexandrinus* (FSB/HAL 010), capturé au large d'Annaba (Algérie).]

## Discussion

Morphometric measurements, meristic counts (see Tab. I), and description, are in agreement with Smith-Vaniz and Berry (1981), Smith-Vaniz (1986), Séret and Opic (1990) and Bauchot (1992). *A. alexandrinus* is rather common south Strait of Gibraltar off the eastern tropical Atlantic shore from Morocco to Angola according

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Table I. - Morphometric measurements (in mm) and meristic counts of the specimen *Alectis alexandrinus* (FSB/HAL 010). [Mesures morphométriques et comptes méristiques (en mm) du spécimen d'*Alectis alexandrinus* (FSB/HAL 010).]

Characteristics	FSD/HAL 010
Total length	335
Fork length	270
Standard length	144
Space between tip of snout and caudal fin origin	233
Head length	84
Interorbital space	16
Body width	26
Space between tip of snout and pectoral fin origin	86
Space between tip of snout and dorsal fin origin	163
Space between tip of snout and pelvic fin origin	71
Space between tip of snout and anal fin origin	131
Space between snout and vent	131
Dorsal fin length	123
Pectoral fin length	150
Pelvic fin length	30
Anal fin length	114
Caudal fin length	86
Caudal fin upper lobe length	82
Caudal fin lower lobe length	86
Caudal fin width	20
Mass (in g)	361
Pelvic fin rays	9
Dorsal fin rays	25
Anal fin rays	18
Pectoral fin rays	17
Caudal fin rays	30
Ctenoid scales on curved lateral line	133
Ctenoid scales on straight lateral line	1
Upper ctenoid scales on tail	40
Lower ctenoid scales on tail	40
Upper gill rakers	8
Lower gill rakers	24

to authors. Smith-Vaniz and Berry (1981) noted that adults live solitary from bottom to at least 50 m deep. The species is voracious and feeds on small fishes, mantis shrimps, squids and other cephalopods (Smith-Vaniz and Berry, 1981; Bauchot, 1992).

In the Mediterranean, *A. alexandrinus* is reported in the Levantine Basin by Golani (1996) and other areas, Malta, southern Spain and Morocco (Smith-Vaniz, 1986). However, it was not reported off Tunisia (Bradaï, 2000) and elsewhere off the Maghreb shore. So, this species must be added to the Algerian ichthyofauna.

This capture confirms the occurrence of species formerly unknown off the Algerian coast (Hemida *et al.*, 2002; Kara and

Bourehail, 2003) originating from the eastern tropical Atlantic, especially.

Quignard and Tomasini (2000) reported 94 species originating from extra-Mediterranean areas, 39 from the eastern Atlantic and 55 from the Red Sea. If the warming of the Mediterranean Sea could explain quasi exclusively the lessepsian migrations, the discovery of Atlantic migrants are also "due to an increase of traditional prospection, or to the use of newer techniques which allow the exploration of otherwise unaccessible habitat" according to Quignard and Tomasini (2000) in agreement with Golani (1996).

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