

NOTE

First record of a pregnant female little sleeper shark *Somniosus rostratus* (Risso, 1826) on the Spanish Mediterranean coast

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ABSTRACT

This present paper records the catch of a pregnant female little sleeper shark *Somniosus rostratus* (Risso, 1826) in the waters of the Catalan continental slope (Spain). Eight embryos were found inside the animal. This is the first record of a pregnant female *S. rostratus* in the western Mediterranean.

Key words: Barcelona, embryos, little sleeper shark, Mediterranean Sea, pregnant, *Somniosus rostratus*.

RESUMEN

Primer registro de una hembra preñada de tiburón dormilón *Somniosus rostratus* (Risso, 1826) en las costas españolas del Mediterráneo

Se señala la captura de una hembra de tiburón dormilón *Somniosus rostratus* (Risso, 1826) frente a las costas de Cataluña (España). Dicho ejemplar estaba grávido y era portador de ocho embriones. Este es el primer registro de una hembra preñada de esta especie en el Mediterráneo occidental.

Palabras clave: Barcelona, embriones, grávida, mar Mediterráneo, *Somniosus rostratus*, tiburón dormilón.

The little sleeper shark *Somniosus rostratus* (Risso, 1826) is a benthic deepwater species (Cadenat and Blache, 1981). It has been reported in the Mediterranean Sea, eastern Atlantic, and western Pacific (Tortonese, 1956; Compagno, 1984; McEachran and Branstetter, 1984; Moreno, 1995). According to Capapé (1989), *S. rostratus* is rare in the Mediterranean; in any case, knowledge of its

range there has advanced in recent years (Cigala-Fulgosi and Gandolfi, 1983; Golani, 1986-1987; Barrull and Mate, 1995). The present paper records the catch of a pregnant female of this species in the waters of the Catalan continental slope (northeastern Spain).

A pregnant female *S. rostratus* (figure 1) measuring 1 000 mm total length (TL) was caught in the wa-

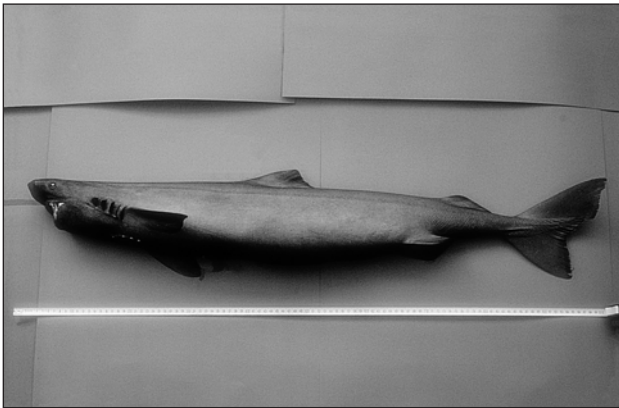


Figure 1. Pregnant female *Somniosus rostratus*

ters of the continental slope off Catalonia on 20 December 1999 by the fishing vessel *Maireta II* based at the port of Barcelona (Spain). Eight embryos (figure 2), six males and two females (95-105 mm TL), were found inside the animal.

The specimen was caught in a trawler net, at a depth of 534 m, on the fishing ground know as La Serola, at 41° 01' N, 2° 16' E. Biometric data for the pregnant female (deposited in the Museu Cau del Tauró de l'Arboç, catalogue number MCTA-00243) are presented in table I. Two embryos were deposited in the Museu de Zoologia de Barcelona, one male (100 mm TL) with catalogue number MZB-2000-0058 and one female (105 mm TL), MZB-2000-0059. Six embryos were deposited in the Museu Cau del Tauró de l'Arboç: male (103 mm TL), MCTA-00244; male (99 mm TL), MCTA-00245; male (101 mm TL), MCTA-00247; male (95 mm TL), MCTA-00248); male (98 mm TL), MCTA-00249; female (100 mm TL), MCTA-00250.



Figure 2. Embryos, with yolk sac

Table I. Biometric data (in mm) of a pregnant female *Somniosus rostratus*

Total length	1 000
Standard length	825
Snout to first dorsal	370
Snout to first dorsal inner edge	495
Snout to second dorsal	710
Snout to second dorsal inner edge	805
First to second dorsal	340
Second dorsal to upper caudal	115
Upper caudal	175
Lower caudal	140
Base of notch to tip	75
First dorsal length	135
First dorsal base	75
First dorsal inner edge	60
First dorsal height	55
Second dorsal length	100
Second dorsal base	50
Second dorsal inner edge	50
Second dorsal height	70
Snout to spiracle	115
Snout to eye	60
Eye diameter	15
First to fifth gill slits	60
Pectoral length	120
Pectoral height	80
Pectoral base	55
Pectoral inner edge	25
Pelvic length	55
Pelvic height	65
Pelvic base	50
Pelvic inner edge	35

In the Mediterranean to date, only a few pregnant female *S. rostratus* have been caught, in Italian waters (Cigala-Fulgosi and Gandolfi, 1983); the fact that this is the first record of a pregnant female on the Spanish Mediterranean coast should warrant special interest.

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