

STATUS OF THE RISSO'S DOLPHIN, GRAMPUS GRISEUS (G.CUVIER) IN THE
CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN SEA °

by

Antonio DI NATALE

Istituto di Zoologia e di Anatomia Comparata
Università di Messina - 98100 Messina - Italia

SUMMARY

Grampus griseus, Risso's dolphin, seems to be well distributed in the central Mediterranean Sea. The present paper reports the new data concerning the biology, abundance and habits of that species. A sighting of an albino specimen is also reported.

RESUME

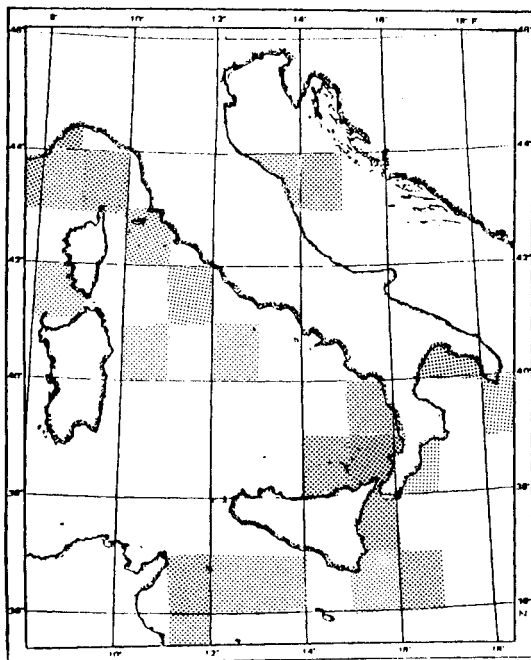
Le grampus ou dauphin de Risso (Grampus griseus) est une espèce distribuée en grande part des mers italiennes. Sur elle, on a collectionné 64 signalements, concernant 82 individus, repérés, échoués ou capturés. De ces signalements naissent quelques indications sur la biologie du grampus et sur la composition numérique des écoles. On rapporte, en outre, la présence d'un exemplaire albinos, repéré plusieurs fois dans la mer Tyrrhénienne et dans la mer Ligurienne.

The research carried out between July 1978 and September 1982 within Project Cetacea, collected 64 records on the Risso's dolphin, Grampus griseus (G.Cuvier, 1812), for a total amount of 393 specimens. That fact make me able to determine a reliable map of the distribution of such species in the Italian seas; as shown on the figure, Grampus griseus is actually well distributed in a large part of the central Mediterranean sea, contrary to the preceding literature (TOSCHI, 1965; DUGUY & ROBINEAU, 1973), so it is possible to hypothesize that such species could be more common than the ancient literature believes.

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46 sightings, concerning 384 specimens, were used to obtain data about the numerical composition of the schools, as shown on table below.

specimens per school													
1	2	3	4	5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-100	101-500	> 500
18	10	5	4	-	18	3	4	1	1	-	-	-	-
amount of records													



4 strandings, involving 5 specimens, have been recorded during the period of this research; 4 specimens were reported to be casually killed by man: one by a drifting net, one by a drifting long line and two by gill nets.

The breeding season seems to take place in autumn: coupling specimens have been recorded in September and October.

Calves have been reported in February, July, September, October and November.

An albino specimen (fully white), 3,5 mt. long, was sighted during 1981 in the Tyrrhenian sea and in the Ligurian sea; the first aerial

observation is confirmed by two successive sightings at sea, one of which was done when the specimen was riding the bow wave of a tuna fishery boat. This is, probably, the first record of an albino Grampus griseus in the Mediterranean sea.

REFERENCES

- DUGUY R., ROBINEAU D., 1973 - Cétacés et Phoques des côtes de France. Ann.Soc.Sc.Nat.Charente-Maritime, suppl., juin, 93 pp.
- TOSCHI A., 1965 - Fauna d'Italia - VII) Mammalia. Ed. Calderini, Bologna, 647 pp.