

# THE OCCURRENCE OF *OCTOPUS VULGARIS* CUVIER, 1797 ON THE BATHIAL GROUNDS OF THE EASTERN IONIAN SEA

Francesco Mastrototaro<sup>1\*</sup> and Eugenia Lefkaditou<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Zoology, University of Bari, Italy - f.mastrototaro@biologia.uniba.it

<sup>2</sup> National Centre for Marine Research, Aghios, Helliniko, Athens, Greece

## Abstract

The finding of *Octopus vulgaris* on the bathyal zone of the Ionian Sea is reported in this poster. The octopod was a male, sized 9.0 cm ML. It was collected during daylight hours at a depth of 560 m, during an experimental deep-water trawl survey carried out in September 2000 in the North-eastern Ionian Sea. This is the deepest record of the species so far.

*Keywords* : *Cephalopods, Ionian Sea, Mediterranean Sea.*

*Octopus vulgaris* Cuvier, 1797 is a cosmopolitan species, common in different habits of the neritic coast. The species is generally distributed up to 200 m in depth, although it has been occasionally caught on deeper grounds in the Mediterranean Sea and in the Atlantic Ocean. In this note is reported the deepest catch of the species so far.

The specimen was collected during an experimental deep-water trawl survey carried out in September 2000 in the North-eastern Ionian Sea. A professional trawler of 159 tons gross tonnage was used equipped with a bottom trawl-net with stretched mesh of 20 mm in the cod end. A total of 29 hauls was performed during day-light, between 300 and 1200 m of depth. The species was identified and the main morphometric data were recorded.

The specimen of *Octopus vulgaris* was caught in the Eastern Ionian Sea at a distance of 10.5 nautical miles off the NW coasts of Lefkas Island (38° 52' N; 20° 25' E) and at a depth of 560 m. It was a maturing male, sized 9.0 cm DML and its weigh was 350 g. This specimen was alive and appeared stone-blind.

Previous findings of *O. vulgaris* on the slope have been reported for Mediterranean areas 3,4 where the sea bed drops abruptly. This could explain the present record in the Ionian deep-water basin.

## References

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Figure 1. *Octopus vulgaris* collected during deep-water trawl survey (560 m) carried out in September 2000. This specimen was alive and appeared stone-blind.

Figure 2. Octopus collected together with other deep species (red shrimps and other species).

