

FIRST RECORD OF THE CANARY DRUM *UMBRINA CANARIENSIS* VALENCIENNES, 1843 (PISCES, SCIAENIDAE) IN THE SICILIAN CHANNEL (CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN)

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Abstract

A juvenile of the Canary drum *Umbrina canariensis* was caught in the Sicilian Channel extending the area of occurrence of the species. The specimen was found between 140 and 171 m depth on the eastern side of the Malta Bank. This finding represents the easternmost record of the species in the Mediterranean, confirming the role of the Sicilian Channel as the biogeographic boundary between the western and eastern Mediterranean.

Keywords: *Fishes, Biogeography, Sicilian Channel*

The Canary drum *Umbrina canariensis* Valenciennes, 1843 occurs on the shelf and upper slope at 50 to 300 m depth on muddy and sandy bottoms in the eastern Atlantic Ocean and western Mediterranean Sea [1]. In the Mediterranean it has been recorded from the Alboran Sea, the Catalan Sea and off Maiorca [2], along the Algerian coast [3], and in north-western Tunisia [4]. Following [5], the presence of the Canary drum in Sicily was also reported [6], but a more careful reading of the Doderlein's paper allows us to interpret this finding as the specimen of *U. ronchus* Valenciennes, 1843, found off Messina by Giglioli [7]. Our fish was a juvenile male of 177 mm total length caught on June 19th 2004 (MEDITS trawl survey) between 140 and 171 m depth on the eastern side of the Malta Bank (approximate position 36 03.26 N; 15 16.63 E). Table 1 shows the main biometrics and meristics of the collected specimen.

Tab. 1. Main biometrics and meristics of the examined specimen (L=length and D= depth)

Total L	Standard L	Head L	Body D	Eye diameter
177	145	42.2	49.5	12.5
Caudal peduncle D	Inferior orbital width	Lower orbital eye	1' dorsal fin	2' dorsal fin
15	17	17.9	3	HS
Anal fin	Pectoral fin	Pelvic fin	Caudal fin	Gill rakers on 1' gill arch
HS	16	6	18	16

This finding is the first documented occurrence of *U. canariensis* in the Sicilian Channel and the easternmost record in the Mediterranean, confirming the role of the Sicilian Channel as the biogeographic boundary between the western and eastern Mediterranean [8].

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