

SILLAGINIDAE

sillagos

Sillago suezensis

Golani, Fricke and Tikochinski, 2014



Photo : David Darom

Relevant synonyms: None
 Misidentification: Sillago sihama
 Meristic formula: D1, X-XII; D2, I + 20-23; A, II + 18-22;
 P, 14-16; V, I + 5; LL, 63-74; GR, 12-14

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Body elongated, cylindrical tapering from midpoint toward head and tail. Two dorsal fins, the second with one spine, origin very short distance from first dorsal termination. Second dorsal fin opposite anal fin. Pelvic fin beneath pectoral fin. Caudal fin emarginate to truncate. Head conical with pointed snout. Mouth small, upper jaw slightly larger than lower jaw. Bands of villiform teeth in jaws and vomer, none on palatine. A single spine on the operculum at the level of upper point of pectoral fin base. Small ctenoid scales. A row of 8-12 scales extending onto caudal fin.

color: yellowish to silvery beige.

common size: 15-20 cm (max. 30 cm).

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Synodontidae: presence of adipose fin; large mouth extending beyond vertical of eye.

Sphyraenidae: large mouth with sharp teeth. Two dorsal fins widely separated.

Mugilidae: two dorsal fins widely separated, the first with four spines.

BIOLOGY / ECOLOGY

Feeds on benthic invertebrates, mainly polychaetes and, to a lesser extent, crustaceans. Spawning season lasts from April to September.

habitat: benthic. Sandy substrates to depths of 40 m.

DISTRIBUTION

Worldwide: Red Sea endemic.

Mediterranean: recorded first in Lebanon (Mouneimne, 1977) ; successively recorded in Israel (Ben-Tuvia, 1985), Turkey (Gücü *et al.*, 1994) and Egypt (El Sayed, 1994). Recorded in SE Aegean Sea and Cyprus (Katsanevakis *et al.*, 2009).

MODE OF INTRODUCTION

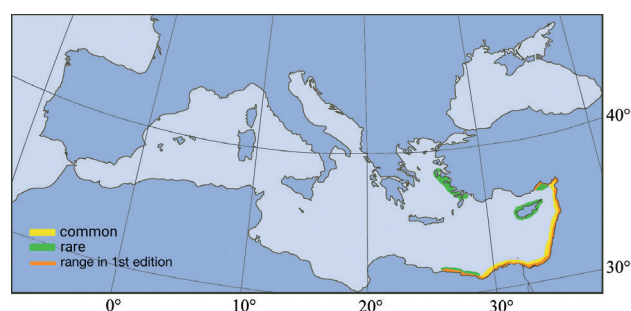
Via the Suez Canal.

ESTABLISHMENT SUCCESS

Very common in Eastern Levant.

IMPORTANCE TO HUMANS

This species experienced a population explosion in the Mediterranean immediately following its first record. Taken in large quantities with purse seine. This species was the subject of mariculture experiments in the Far East and India to test its suitability for commercial farming.



1st Med. record
Lebanon, 1977.

KEY REFERENCES

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- Katsanevakis S., Tsiamis K., Ioannou G., Michailidis N. and Zenetos A. 2009. Inventory of alien marine species of Cyprus. *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 10(2): 109-133.
- Mouneimne N. 1977. Liste des poissons de la côte du Liban (Méditerranée orientale). *Cybium*, 1: 37-66.
- Tikochinski Y., Shainin I., Hyams Y., Motro U. and Golani D. 2012. Genetic evidence for an undescribed species previously considered as *Sillago sihama* from the northern Red Sea. *Marine Biology Research*, 9(3): 240-246.