

First record of *Seriola fasciata* (Carangidae) in the Azores. A northernmost occurrence in the NE Atlantic

by

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RÉSUMÉ. - Première capture de *Seriola fasciata* (Carangidae) aux Açores. Il s'agit de l'occurrence la plus septentrionale en Atlantique nord-est.

Un spécimen de *Seriola* sp., inconnu de l'archipel des Açores, a été capturé par un chasseur sous-marin près de l'île Terceira. Après comparaison des caractères morphologiques, le spécimen a été identifié comme *Seriola fasciata*, espèce non encore enregistrée pour le nord-est de l'océan Atlantique au nord de Madère.

Key words. - Carangidae - *Seriola fasciata* - Lesser amberjack - ANE - Azores - Record.

The lesser amberjack *Seriola fasciata* (Bloch, 1793) is a common benthopelagic jack that usually occurs between depths of 55 to 130 m and grows to 67.5 cm LF and 4.6 kg (Smith-Vaniz, 1986). It mainly occurs in the Western Atlantic, namely off the coasts of Massachusetts (USA) to Brazil, including the Gulf of Mexico, Cuba and Bermuda. Its occurrence in the eastern Atlantic is probably very rare due to past confusions with similar congeneric *S. carpenteri* Mather, 1971 (see Smith-Vaniz, 1986, 2002; Smith-Vaniz *et al.*, 1990). The species has been reliably recorded in St. Helena (Edwards, 1993) and the Mediterranean (Massuti and Stefanescu, 1993).

The species is certainly known from Madeira (Smith-Vaniz, 1986) but, until now, this was its northernmost record for the eastern Atlantic.

On the 12th of September 2000, a spear fisherman caught a specimen of *Seriola* and brought it to the Ichthyology Laboratory of the Azores University in Terceira, mentioning that he had never seen a "pinkish jack".

The specimen (Fig. 1) was caught at a depth of 22 m near the small islet "Ilhéu do Norte", off the main NE coast of Terceira Island (Azores). Its main diagnostic measurements (in cm) and characteristics (in agreement with Smith-Vaniz, 1986) are as follows:

Total length: 53.7; fork length: 46.3; standard length: 43.7; body depth: 15.6; head length: 11.3; anal base: 11.7; height of anal fin lobe: 4.1; 2nd dorsal base: 19.0; 2nd dorsal fin lobe: 5.9 (corresponding to 12.7% of LF - comprised 7.8 times in LF). Pectoral fin lobe: 6.5 (9.2% greater than 2nd dorsal fin lobe); Caudal-peduncle grooves present; relatively slender supramaxilla; meristic data are the following: D VIII + I, 31; A II + I, 19; gill-rakers on first gill arch: 8 (upper), 18 (lower) with no rudiments.

The specimen is deposited in the DCA-UA collection, under the ID code: CarSF01DCA2000.

The occurrence of *S. fasciata* in the Azores is not totally unexpected, since the species may have an erratic distribution in the

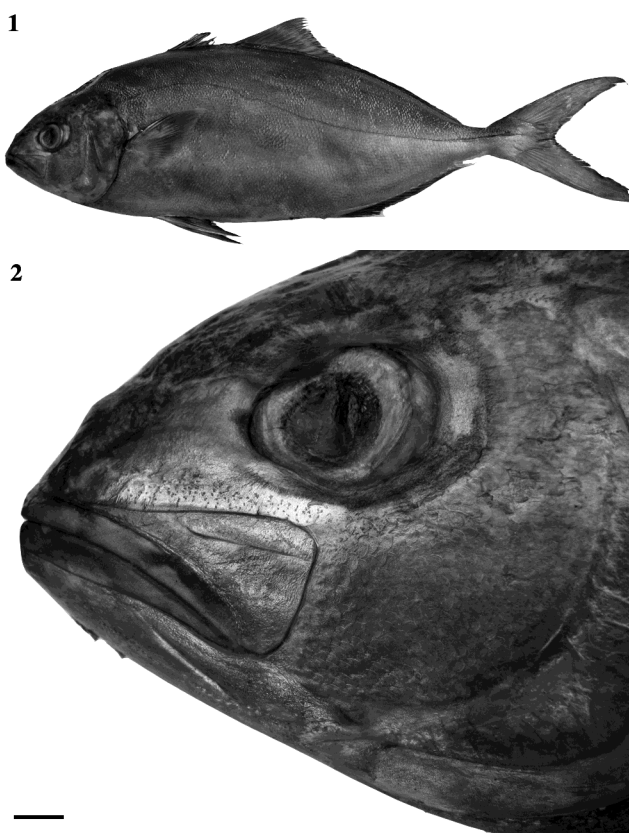


Figure 1. - *Seriola fasciata* (DCA-UA - CarSF01DCA2000 - 43.7 cm SL), Ilhéu do Norte, Terceira island, Azores, NE Atlantic.

Figure 2. - Detail of the head of *Seriola fasciata*: maxilla and supramaxilla are well visible. Scale bar = 1 cm. [Détail de la tête de *Seriola fasciata*: le maxillaire et le supramaxillaire sont bien visibles.]

eastern Atlantic. This increases to 3 the number of *Seriola* species so far known to occur in the Azores Archipelago, the others being *S. dumerili* (Risso, 1810) and *S. rivoliana* Valenciennes, 1833 (Santos *et al.*, 1997).

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