

Mediterranean Marine Science

Vol 19, No 2 (2018)



An updated Checklist of the Marine fishes from Syria with emphasis on alien species

MALEK FARES ALI

doi: [10.12681/mms.15850](https://doi.org/10.12681/mms.15850)

To cite this article:

ALI, M. F. (2018). An updated Checklist of the Marine fishes from Syria with emphasis on alien species. *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 19(2), 388–393. <https://doi.org/10.12681/mms.15850>

An updated Checklist of Marine fishes from Syria with an emphasis on alien species

MALEK ALI

Marine Sciences Laboratory, Faculty of Agriculture, Tishreen University, Lattakia, Syria

Corresponding author: malekfaresali@gmail.com

Handling Editor: Argyro Zenetos

Received: 26 January 2018; Accepted: 13 March 2018; Published on line: 31 July 2018

Abstract

An updated checklist of marine ichthyofauna recorded to date from Syrian marine waters, including 298 species (belonging to 220 genera, 111 families, 36 orders, and 3 classes) is presented. Sparidae is the dominant family (28 species), followed by Blenniidae (15 species), while 55 families are represented by 1 species. The Chondrichthyes present in Syria were cross-checked for the first time. The status, frequency, main fishing gear targeting common species, in addition to the fishing method by which the rare species were caught, are also provided. *Four species are recorded herein for the first time: Stomias boa boa* (Risso, 1810), *Hymenocephalus italicus* Giglioli, 1884, *Scarus ghobban* Forsskal, 1775, and *Nettastoma melanurum* Rafinesque, 1810. This inventory includes 56 Lessepsian migrant species, with 16 of them being considered very common and of positive economic importance. *Alien species have been grouped into three categories, namely, established (49 species), casual (2 species) and single records (5 species)*. Twenty-eight species were excluded from this list, due to lack of reliable documentation on their presence

Keywords: Marine fishes; checklist; Syria; Eastern Levant; Mediterranean.

Introduction

The Syrian coast lies at the edge of the eastern Mediterranean, between Turkey to the north and Lebanon to the south, facing the island of Cyprus. The Eastern Mediterranean Sea is characterized by high salinities and high temperature. In the Mediterranean, salinity exhibits an eastward increase, from approximately 37.5‰ in the west to 39.5‰ in the east; temperature increases from west to east, ranging from 15 to 26°C (Skliris, 2014; EEA, 2006).

The Mediterranean Sea has a long history of bioinvasions. During the last few decades, many new species have been discovered in the Mediterranean Sea. The upward trend in new arrivals since 1950, which culminated during the 2001-2010 period (Zenetos *et al.*, 2017), appears to be decreasing (Zenetos, 2017). The main reasons for new arrivals are associated with Lessepsian migration, Atlantic influx, intentional or unintentional introduction as well as climate change. By 2016, the total number of reported multicellular alien species reached 821 (Zenetos *et al.*, 2017). Lessepsian migration encompasses almost all marine taxa, including more than six hundred species (Zenetos *et al.*, 2010). By 2017, the number of alien fish species reached 102 (Fricke *et al.*, 2017).

Gruvel (1931) was the first specialist to report on the marine ichthyofauna of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Forty years later, a local study was carried out on the marine ichthyofauna from the Syrian coast (Anonymous, 1976). Unfortunately, there are no preserved specimens of the species pertaining to these studies. During the last three decades, several studies have been carried out sporadically, and all recorded species have been documented with voucher specimens, photographs, and scientific publications.

Two major comprehensive field studies were carried out within the framework of a master's degree. The first one was on Osteichthyes (Sbaihi, 1994) and the second on Chondrichthyes (Ali, 2003). Several other studies have been carried out in the area in recent years (Saad, 2005; Ghanem *et al.*, 2012; Hallom *et al.*, 2014; Sabour *et al.*, 2014; Galiya *et al.*, 2015; Capape & Ali, 2017; Ali *et al.*, 2017a, b), with some published in Arabic (with abstracts in English or French).

Most of the fish species that entered Syrian waters in the last decades are Lessepsian migrants. Scientific research carried out along the Syrian coast, combined with reports by fishers, within the context of local ecological knowledge, confirm that several alien species are

successfully established in the area, with some of them becoming invasive alien species (Ali *et al.*, 2017a; Ali *et al.*, 2017b). Saad (2005) recorded 37 lessepsian fish species, while Ibrahim *et al.* (2010) reported 42 alien species.

The current work provides a validated updated checklist of Syrian ichthyofauna that could serve as a baseline for future monitoring and assessment of potential biodiversity changes in this area.

Materials and Methods

The current updated checklist is based on information collected from taxonomic studies, which were carried out in Syrian marine waters, using various types of fishing gear (183km), between latitudes 34.63333333° & 35.96666667° N; and longitudes 35.50000000 ° & 35.95000000° E (Fig. 1).

Only documented records that have been confirmed by preserved samples, photographs, and scientific publications, are included on this list. The presence of each species has been validated by checking at least one published scientific paper. The main sources used were University theses, articles, conference proceedings, and reports of scientific missions. The preserved specimens were deposited in the Ichthyological Collection of the Marine Sciences Laboratory (M.S.L.), Faculty of Agriculture at Tishreen University, Syria, under catalogue numbers, or in other laboratories at the same University. Records based only on human observation, without actual evidence of their presence, were excluded and considered incomplete records, as further verification is required.

The previous checklist published by Saad (2005) was used as a baseline for the Osteichthyes. However, the taxonomical categories have been updated, new records were added, and synonymized taxa were re-assessed in the light of recently published studies. The Chondrichthyes species were checked for the first time.

The orders and families are arranged in accordance with Weigmann, 2016; Last *et al.*, 2016; Nelson *et al.*, 2016; Van Der Laan *et al.*, 2014, and the version of Catalog of Fishes database [Catalog of fishes classification, 2018. [https:// www.calacademy.org/ scientists/catalog-of-fishes-classification](https://www.calacademy.org/scientists/catalog-of-fishes-classification), (accessed 10 January 2018)]. Within each family, species were classified in alphabetical order.

Single records are reported with the date of first detection and location. Abundance categorization for the Syrian coasts as follows: in Chondrichthyes, “rare” corresponds to 1-30 annual findings, “frequent” corresponds to 31- 350 annual findings and “common” corresponds to more than 350 annual findings. In Osteichthyes, “rare” corresponds to 1- 700 annual findings, “frequent” corresponds to 701- 3000 annual findings and “common” corresponds to more than 3000 annual findings. This scale is used for both the native and alien species. Alien species were grouped into three categories, namely, established (at least two records in the area spread over time and space), casual (only one record, but older than two years) and single records (recent records < two years).

Results and Discussion

The results of all documented records of ichthyofauna species from Syrian marine waters are listed in Table 2. Further details on alien species are provided in Table 3.

A total of 298 documented species have been recorded from Syrian waters (40 Elasmobranchii; 2 Holocephali and 256 Actinopterygii), belonging to 36 orders, 111 families (Table 1). Among the families of Elasmobranchii, Dasyatidae was the most diverse (5 species), followed by Rajidae (4 species). Among the families of Actinopterygii, Sparidae and Blenniidae (28 and 15 species, respectively) were the most diverse, while 17 families were represented by two species and 55 families by only one species.

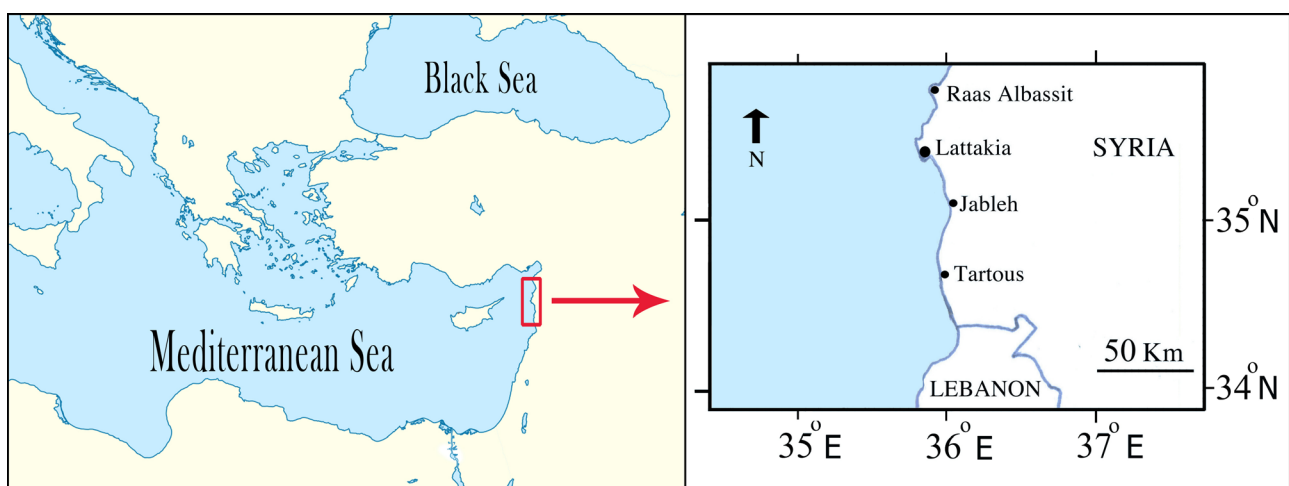


Fig. 1: Map of the Mediterranean showing the study area (Syrian coast).

Fifty-six species are Lessepsian migrants (have entered the Levantine Sea via the Suez Canal).

The number of species recorded along the Syrian coast is lower than the number of species recorded in the waters of neighbouring countries. Golani (2005) reported 402 fish species from Israel, while 441 species were recorded along the Levant coasts of Turkey (Bilecenoğlu *et al.*, 2014) and 364 along the Mediterranean coast of Egypt (Akel & Karachle, 2017). This could be attributed to the limited number of taxonomic studies that have been carried out in Syria, as well as the lack of sampling efficiency of the fishing gear used. Moreover, the deep-sea species of this region have not been studied sufficiently. This leads us to the hypothesis that many species are yet unreported in Syrian waters.

While compiling the checklist, some taxonomical corrections were made. For example, *Saurida lessepsianus* Russell *et al.* (2015), was previously misidentified as *Saurida undosquamis* (Richardson, 1848) (Russell *et al.*, 2015). *Pteragogus trispilus* Randall, 2013 was primarily identified as *Pteragogus pelycus* Randall, 1981. Also, *Etrumeus golanii* DiBattista, Randall & Bowen, 2012, *Atherinomorus forskalii* (Rüppell, 1838), and *Pempheris rhomboidea* Kossmann & Räuber, 1877, were previously misidentified as *Etrumeus sadina* (Mitchill, 1814), *Atherinomorus pinguis* (Lacepède, 1803) and *Pempheris vanicolensis* Cuvier, 1831, respectively.

The classification of many species was updated and revised; previous literature reported that Rhinopristiformes are represented in Syrian marine waters by one family (Rhinobatidae), which was represented by one genus (*Rhinobatos*) and two species, namely, *Rhinobatos rhinobatos* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *R. cemiculus* (Ali, 2003; Saad *et al.*, 2004; Saad *et al.*, 2006). In this work, Rhinopristiformes are represented by two families, Rhinobatidae and Glau-

costegidae, each being represented by one genus and one species (Table 2); *Rhinobatos cemiculus* had been moved to Glaucostegidae as *Glaucostegus cemiculus*, according to Last *et al.* (2016) and Weigmann (2016). *Centrophorus acus* Garman, 1906, and *Centrophorus machiquensis* Maul, 1955, which were recorded by Ali (2003), are not included on this list, because these two species were considered as synonyms of *Centrophorus granulatus* (Bloch & Schneider, 1801) by Weigmann (Weigmann, 2016).

Four species from Syrian waters are reported for the first time in this work. These are: *Hymenocephalus italicus* Giglioli, 1884, *Nettastoma melanurum* Rafinesque, 1810, *Scarus ghobban* Forsskal, 1775, and *Stomias boa boa* (Risso, 1810) (Fig. 2). All specimen measurements for these records were carried out using a digital calliper to the nearest 0.1 mm; weights were measured to the nearest 0.1 g, and the specimens were preserved in 10% buffered formalin at the Ichthyological collection of the M.S.L.

***Hymenocephalus italicus*:** three specimens were captured (only one specimen was deposited, 123.8 mm TL; 2323 M.S.L.) during a trawling expedition, on 11 December 2017; the depth ranged between 470 and 610 m; capture location from 35.46666667 N, 35.65000000 E to 35.38333333 N, 35.68333333 E.

***Nettastoma melanurum*:** two specimens were captured (only one specimen was deposited, 398.1 mm TL; 2324 M.S.L.) during a trawling expedition, on 11 December 2017; the depth ranged between 470 and 610 m; capture location from 35.46666667 N, 35.65000000 E to 35.38333333 N, 35.68333333 E.

***Scarus ghobban*:** On 1 October 2013, the first specimen was captured (34.86666667 N, 35.80000000 E) on sandy bottom, at a depth of 35 m, using a bottom cage, and deposited (193.0 mm, TL; 2275 M.S.L.) (Ahmad Soliman, personal communication). Another specimen was

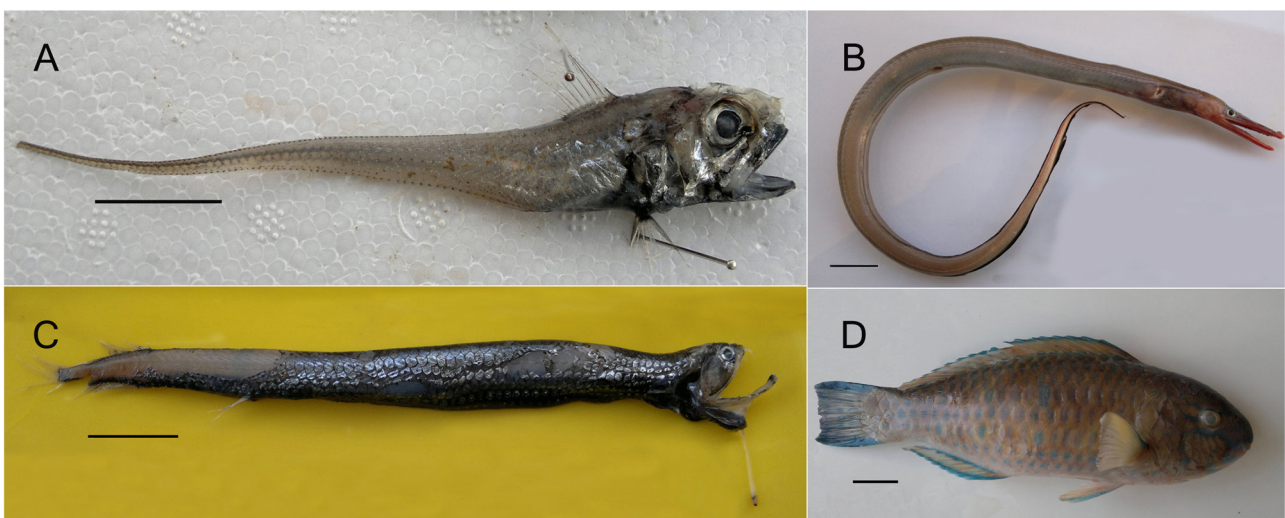


Fig. 2: The specimens of the new records from the Syrian coast, A: *Hymenocephalus italicus*; B: *Nettastoma melanurum*; C: *Stomias boa boa*; D: *Scarus ghobban*. Scale bar = 20 mm.

captured on 2 June 2015 (35.1000000 N, 35.8166667 E), using a bottom trawl net at a depth of 40 m. Since 2016, this species occurs frequently in fishery production.

Stomias boa boa: two specimens (185.3 mm, 176.7 mm, TL; 2319 and 2320 M.S.L., respectively) were captured on 2 November 2017, during a trawling expedition that started from Latakia city and ended opposite Baniyas city (between 35.5166667 N, 35.6500000 E and 35.2500000 N, 35.7500000 E) at depth of about 550 m, on a bottom ranging from sandy to muddy.

Twenty eight species were excluded from this work as they were not substantially documented. These include 24 species (table 4) whose record by Foulquie & Dupuy de la Grandrive (2003) was based only on information provided by fishermen, with no further documentation, while another four species, namely, *Phycis blennoides* (Brünnich, 1768), *Blennius ocellaris* Linnaeus, 1758, *Campogramma glaycos* (Lacepède, 1801) and *Epinephelus caninus* (Valenciennes, 1843), reported in previous studies, are not included in this updated checklist, because there are no preserved specimens of these species, and subsequent studies have not confirmed their presence in Syrian waters.

Fourteen species of Atlantic origin, which were reported as alien (Saad, 2005), were removed from the alien species list because their presence can be explained by natural range expansion via Gibraltar rather than human-mediated introductions according to Zenetos *et al.* (2012).

In this work only two species [*T. sinuspersici* Olfers, 1831, and *Hydrolagus mirabilis* (Collett, 1904)] were considered as casual records. *Squalus megalops* (Macleay, 1881), *Torpedo sinuspersici* Olfers, 1831, and *Siganus javus* (Linnaeus, 1766) have been discussed in the previous literature and considered as casual or questionable records for various reasons (Zenetos *et al.*, 2005; 2010; 2011). *Squalus megalops* is distributed throughout the Mediterranean Sea (Ebert & Stehmann, 2013); it has been recorded in the Mediterranean Sea (Muñoz-Chápoli & Ramos, 1989), in the Eastern Mediterranean (Ali, 2003), and along the Tunisian coast (Marouani *et al.*, 2012). According to the literature, there are unresolved taxonomic problems associated with these species. Marouani *et al.* (2012) reported that Duffy & Last (2007) and Last & Stevens (1994) suggested that it may belong to a species complex, and stated that records of *Squalus megalops* outside Australia need to be confirmed. *Torpedo sinuspersici*: a single record (Ali, 2003), the discovery was made on 19 May 2002; one specimen was captured at a depth of about 260 m, 700 m opposite the Jableh city coast, and preserved at the M.S.L. (395 mm T.L, 1270 g. T.W., 236 M.S.L.). No additional records since 2002. Thus, continued monitoring of this species is necessary to confirm its presence or absence. Unlike the situation of *Himantura uarnak* (Gmelin 1789), which was found in 2008 (Ali *et al.*, 2010), additional occurrences were reported on 15 April 2012 (Ali *et al.*, 2013c) and 20 April 2015.

Sixteen of the alien fish species are considered very common and of positive economic importance: *Alepes djedaba*, *Atherinomorus forskalii*, *Dussumieria elopsoides*, *Fistularia commersonii*, *Hemiramphus far*, *Herklotsichthys punctatus*, *Liza carinata*, *Parupeneus forskali*, *Sargocentron rubrum*, *Saurida lessepsianus*, *Scomberomorus commerson*, *Siganus luridus*, *Siganus rivulatus*, *Sphyræna chrysotaenia*, *Upeneus moluccensis*, *Upeneus pori*.

On the other hand, *Callionymus filamentosus*, *Lagocephalus sceleratus*, *Lagocephalus spadiceus*, *Lagocephalus suezensis*, *Silhouettea aegyptia*, *Plotosus lineatus*, *Pterois miles* and *Stephanolepis diaspros* are of no economic importance. Some of them are considered pests; by-catch that is discarded. For example, *Lagocephalus sceleratus*, *Plotosus lineatus* and *Pterois miles*, despite being relatively new invaders (first records from the Syrian coast 2014, 2015, 2016, respectively), have become abundant and well-established. They have dramatic effects on native fish species, including the destruction of ecosystems and negative economic impacts on fisheries and tourism, as they present a potential risk to humans. Fishermen have to avoid these species, because they contain tetrodotoxin. Since the arrival of *L. sceleratus* along the Syrian coast, it has caused several fatalities, as well as damage to fishing gear.

To conclude, a total of 298 species have been recorded until November 2017, 56 of which have been classified as alien species (19.1%). The true number of fish is likely to be much higher considering that 28 are reported but undocumented (Foulquie & Dupuy de la Grandrive, 2003) and many more are already present in neighbouring countries (Bilecenoğlu *et al.*, 2014).

References

- Akel, E.H.Kh., Karachle, P.K., 2017. The Marine Ichthyofauna of Egypt. *Egyptian Journal of Aquatic Biology & Fisheries*, 21 (3), 81-116.
- Ali, M., 2003. *Taxonomic economic study of the Chondrichthyes fish in Syrian marine water*. MSc Thesis. Faculty of Agriculture, Tishreen University. Syria, Latakia. 184 pp. (published in Arabic, with abstract in English).
- Ali, M. Saad, A., 2003. Sharks and Rays in Syrian Sea waters. *Al-Assad Journal for Engineering Science*, 17, 45-76 (published in Arabic, with abstract in English).
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Ben Amor, M., Capape, C., 2010. First records of the Honeycomb Stingray, *Himantura uarnak* (Forsk., 1775), off the Syrian coast (Eastern Mediterranean), (Chondrichthyes: Dasyatidae). *Zoology in the Middle East*, 49, 104-106.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Reynaud, C. Capape, C., 2012. Occurrence of basking shark, *Cetorhinus maximus* (Elasmobranchii: Lamniformes: Cetorhinidae), off the Syrian coast (eastern Mediterranean) with first description of egg case. *Acta Ichthyologica et Piscatoria*, 42 (4), 335-339.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Reynaud, C. Capape, C., 2013a. First records of Randall's Threadfin Bream *Nemipterus randalli* (Osteichthyes: Nemipteridae) off the Syrian coast (Eastern Mediterranean) off the Syrian coast. *Annals for Istrian and Medi-*

- terranean Studies, Series Historia Naturalis*, (2), 119 -124.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Christian, R. Capape, C., 2013b. First records of round fantail stingray *Taeniura grabata* (Chondrichthyes: Dasyatidae) off the Syrian coast (Eastern Mediterranean). *Zoology in the Middle East*, 59 (2), 176-178.
- Ali, M.; Saad, A.; Reynaud, C., Capape, C., 2013c. Additional records of honeycomb stingray *Himantura uarnak* (Chondrichthyes: Dasyatidae) off the Syrian coast (Eastern Mediterranean). *Tishreen University Journal for Research and Scientific Studies - Biological Sciences Series*, 35 (4), 216-22.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Reynaud, C. Capape, C., 2014. First records of Barracudina *Sudis hyalina* (Osteichthyes: Paralepididae) off the Syrian coast (eastern Mediterranean). *Journal of Ichthyology*, 54 (10), 786-789.
- Ali, M., Saad A., Reynaud C., Capapé C., 2015a. First record of wedge sole, *Dicologlossa cuneata* (Actinopterygii: Pleuronectiformes: Soleidae), from the Levant Basin (eastern Mediterranean). *Acta Ichthyologica et Piscatoria*, 45 (4), 417-421.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Fadel M., Issa I., Reynaud, C. Capape, C., 2015b. First record of Klein's Sole *Synapturichthys kleinii* (Osteichthyes: Soleidae) off the Syrian Coast (Eastern Mediterranean). *Journal of Ichthyology*, 55 (6), 918-921.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Soliman, A., 2015c. Expansion confirmation of the Indo-Pacific catfish, *Plotosus lineatus* (Thunberg, 1787), (Siluriformes: Plotosidae) into Syrian marine waters. *American Journal of Biology and Life Sciences*, 3 (1), 7-11.
- Ali, M., Alkusaary, H., Saad, A., Reynaud, C., Capapé C., 2016a. Confirmed occurrence of common lionfish, *Pterois miles* (Osteichthyes: Scorpaenidae) in the eastern Mediterranean, with first record off the Syrian coast. *Tishreen University Journal for Research and Scientific Studies - Biological Sciences Series*, 38(4), 307 -313.
- Ali M., Saad A., Alkhateeb, M., Rafrafi-Nouira, S., Capapé, C., 2016b. First record of hollowsnout grenadier *Coelorinchus caelorhincus* (Osteichthyes: Macrouridae) from the Syrian coast (eastern Mediterranean). *Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies, Series Historia Naturalis*, 26 (2), 203-206.
- Ali M., Diatta, Y., Alkusaary, H., Saad, A., Capapé, C., 2016c. First Record of Red Sea goatfish *Parupeneus forsskali* (Osteichthyes: Mullidae) from the Syrian Coast (Eastern Mediterranean). *Journal of Ichthyology*, 56 (4), 616-619.
- Ali, M., Reynaud, C., Capape, C., 2017a. Has a viable population of common Lionfish, *Pterois miles* (Scorpaenidae), Eastablished off the Syrian coast (Eastern Mediterranean)? *Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies, Series Historia Naturalis*, 27 (2), 157-162.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Ali, A., Capape, C., 2017b. Additional records of striped eel catfish *Plotosus lineatus* (Osteichthyes: Plotosidae) from the Syrian coast (Eastern mediterranean). *Thalassia Salentina*, 39, 3-8.
- Ali, M., Saad, A., Solimn, A. Rafrafi-Nouira, S., Capape, C., 2017c. Confirmed occurrence in the Mediterranean Sea of Red Sea orange face butterflyfish *Chaetodon larvatus* (Osteichthyes: Chaetodontida) and first record from the Syrian coast. *Cahiers de Biologie marine*, 58, 367-369.
- Ali, M., Saad A., Jabour R., Rafrafi-Nouira S., Capapé C., 2017d. First record of nakedband gaper *Champsodon nudivittis* (Osteichthyes: Champsodontidae) off the Syrian Coast (Eastern Mediterranean). *Journal of Ichthyology*, 57, 1, 161-163.
- Ali, M., Ben Amor K. O., Khalil S., Saad A., Capape, C. 2018. First record of Adriatic sole *Pegusa impar* (Osteichthyes: Soleidae) from the Syrian coast (Eastern Mediterranean Sea). *Journal Black Sea/Mediterranean Environment*, 24, 2, 169-174.
- Ali, M., Khaddour, M., Capape, C., in press. Confirmed occurrence of Indian Ocean twospots Cardinalfish *Cheilodipterus novemstriatus* (Osteichthyes: Apogonidae) in the Levantine Sea with first record from the Syrian coast. 59 (1), *Acta Ichthyologica et Piscatoria*.
- Alshawy, F., Lahlah, M., Hussein, C., 2016. First record of the Berber ponyfish *Leiognathus berbis* Valenciennes, 1835 (Osteichthyes: Leiognathidae) from Syrian marine waters (Eastern Mediterranean). *Journal of Marine Biodiversity Records*, 9, 98, 2-4.
- Alshawy, F., Lahlah, M., Hussein, C., 2017. First record of the Lessepsian migrant Smith's cardinalfish *Jaydia smithi* Kottaus, 1970 (Pisces: Apogonidae) from Syrian marine waters. *Basrah Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, 30 (2), 45-49.
- Anonymous, 1976. *Commercial fish species collected by the Korean mission for scientific cooperation in Syria*, local report, Ministry of Agriculture, 76 pp.
- Bauchot, M.L., 1987. Poissons osseux, in Fiches FAO d'Identification pour les Besoins de la Pêche (Rev. 1). Méditerranée et Mer Noire, Zone de Pêche 37, Fischer, W., et al., Eds., Rome: Comm. Commun. Eur. FAO, vol. 2, pp. 891-1421.
- Bilecenoğlu, M., Kaya, M., Cihangir, B., Çiçek, E., 2014. An updated checklist of the Marine Fishes of Turkey. *Turkish Journal of Zoology*, 38, 901-929.
- Capape, C., Ali, M., 2017. First records of Velvet Belly Lantern shark *Etmopterus spinax* Chondrichthyes: Etmopteridae) from the Syrian coast (Eastern Mediterranean). *Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies, Series Historia Naturalis*, 27 (2), 145-150.
- Capape, C., Ali, M., Ali, A., Esmail, A. 2018. Second Mediterranean record of Emperor angelfish, *Pomacanthus imperator* (Osteichthyes: Pomacanthidae), and first record from the Syrian coast. *Cahiers de Biologie marine*, (2018) 59, 395-397.
- EEA, 2006. *Priority issues in the Mediterranean environment*. European Environment Agency Report. No. 4/2006.
- Eschmeyer, W. N., Fricke, R., van der Laan, R., 2018. *Catalog of Fishes classification*. <https://www.calacademy.org/scientists/catalog-of-fishes-classification> (accessed 10 January 2018).
- Foulquie, M., Dupuy de la Grandrive, R., 2003. *First assignment concerning the development of Marine Protected Area on the Syrian coast, from 8-15 November 2002*, RAC/SPA, 33 pp.
- Fricke, R., Golani, D., Appelbaum-Golani B., 2017. *Arnoglossus nigrofilamentosus* n. sp., a new species of flounder (Teleostei: Bothidae) from off the Mediterranean coast of Israel, probably a new case of Lessepsian migration. *Scientia Marina*, 81(4), 457-465.
- Galiya, M., Kara Ali, A. Abdul Rahman W., 2015. Contribution to the study of the qualitative composition and biology of Puffer Fishes (Tetraodontidae) in the marine water of Lattakia. *Tishreen University Journal for Research and Scientific Studies - Biological Sciences Series*, 37 (5), 283- 301. (published in Arabic, with abstract in English).
- Ghanem, W., Ibrahim, A., Baker, M., Lahlah, M., 2012. Preliminary evaluation of marine fisheries in relation to water quality & fish stocks in the Syrian coast of Almontar –Tartus. *Damascus University Journal for sciences basic*, 28 (2), 533-549. (Published in Arabic, with abstract in English).
- Golani, D., 2005. Checklist of the Mediterranean Fishes of Israel. *Zootaxa*, 947, 1-90.
- Golani, D, Orsi-Relini, L., Massuti, E., Quignard, JP., Dulčić, J. et al., 2013. *CIESM Atlas of Exotic Fishes in the Mediterranean*.

- <http://www.ciesm.org/atlas/> (accessed on 5 January 2018).
- Gruvel, A., 1931. Les états de Syrie, richesses marines et fluviales. Exploitation actuelle et avenir. *Société des éditions Géographiques, Maritimes et coloniales, Paris*, 453 pp.
- Hallom, N., Ibrahim, A., Galiya, M., 2014. First record of the hen-like blenny *Aidablennius sphynx* (Blenniidae) from Syrian marine waters (Eastern Mediterranean). *Marine Biodiversity Records*, 7 (73), 1-2.
- Hassan, M., 2013. Occurrence of large-eyed rabbitfish *Hydrolagus mirabilis*, Chimaeridae, in Syrian waters (eastern Mediterranean). *Marine Biodiversity Records*, (6), e7.
- Ibrahim, A., Lahlah, M., Kassab, M.K., Ghanem, W., Ogaily, S., 2010. *Signatus javus*, a new record from the Syrian waters, with a reference to growth and feeding of two Lessepsian fish. *Rapport Commission internationale Mer Méditerranée*, 39, 544.
- Jawad, L., Matawej, A., Ibrahim A., Hassan M., 2015. First record of the lesser amberjack *Seriola fasciata* (Teleostei: Carangidae) in Syrian coasts. *Cahiers de Biologie Marine*, 56, 81-84.
- Khalaf, G. Saad, A., Gemaa, S., Sabour, W., Lteif, M. et al., 2014. Population structure and sexual maturity of the pufferfish *Lagocephalus sceleratus* (Osteichthyes, Tetraodontidae) in the Lebanese and Syrian marine Waters (Eastern Mediterranean). *Journal of Earth Science and Engineering*, 7 (4) 56 pp.
- Last, P.R., Seret, B., Naylor, G.J.P., 2016. A new species of guitarfish, *Rhinobatos borneensis* sp. nov. With a redefinition of the family-level classification in the order Rhinopristiformes (Chondrichthyes: Batoidea). *Zootaxa*, 4117 (4), 451-475.
- Marouani, S., Chaâba, R., Kadri, H., Saidi, B., Bouain, A. et al., 2012. Taxonomic research on *Squalus megalops* (Macleay, 1881) and *Squalus blainvillei* (Risso, 1827) (Chondrichthyes: Squalidae) in Tunisian waters (central Mediterranean Sea). *Scientia Marina*, 76 (1), 97-109.
- Muñoz-Chápuli, R., Ramos, F., 1989. Morphological comparison of *Squalus blainvillei* and *S. megalops* in the eastern Atlantic, with notes on the genus. *Journal of Ichthyology*, 36, 6-21.
- Nelson, J., Grande, T. C., Wilson, M.V.H., 2016. *Fishes of the world*. Fifth edition. Wiley, United States of America, 707 pp.
- Rahman W., Galiya M., Ali A., 2014. First record of the blunt-head puffer *Sphoeroides pachygaster* (Osteichthyes: Tetraodontidae) in Syrian marine waters (eastern Mediterranean). *Journal of Marine Biodiversity Records*, 7 (31), 3, 1-4.
- Saad, A., 2002. Characterization of Lessepsian migrant fish at Syrian sea waters, In: "Mediterranean Vermid Terrace and Migratory/ Invasive Organisms" *INOC and SNRSL, Beirut/Lebanon, 19th-21th December 2002*.
- Saad, A., 2005. Check-list of Bony fish collected from the Coast of Syria. *Turkish Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*, 5, 99-106.
- Saad, A., Hureau, J.C., Hammoud, V., Ali, M., 2002. Fish biodiversity and the impact of environmental factors and human activities in Syrian marine waters. *Proceeding of 9th conference of Arab Union Biologists Aleppo* (1-6 Sep. 2002).
- Saad, A., Seret, B., Ali, M., 2004. Liste commentée des Chondrichthyens de Syrie (Méditerranée orientale). *Rapport Commission internationale Mer Méditerranée*, 37, 430 pp.
- Saad, A., Ali, M., Seret, B., 2006. Shark exploitation and conservation in Syria. *The proceedings of the international workshop on Mediterranean cartilaginous fish with emphasis on southern and eastern Mediterranean*. 14th-16th October 2006, Istanbul-Turkey, p. 202-208.
- Sabour, W., Saad, A., Jawad, L., 2014. First record of yellow-spotted puffer *Torquigener flavimaculosus* Hardy & Randall, 1983 (Osteichthys: Tetraodontidae) from Mediterranean Sea coasts of Syria, *Thalassia Salentina*, 36, 29-34.
- Sbaihi, M., 1994. *Biosystematic Study of teleostien fishes in Marine water of Syria (Eastern Mediterranean)*. MSc. Thesis. Latakia: Faculty of Sciences, Tishreen University. 264 pp. (Published in Arabic, with abstract in English).
- Soliman, A., Ali M., Saad, A., Renaud, C., Capape, C., 2014. First records of sideburn wrasse *Pteragogus pelycus* (Osteichthyes: Labridae) off the Syrian coast (eastern Mediterranean). *Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies, Series Historia Naturalis*, 24 (1), 23-28.
- Skliris, N., 2014. Past, present and future patterns of the thermohaline circulation and characteristic water masses of the Mediterranean Sea. In: "The Mediterranean Sea. Its history and present challenges." Goffredo, S. & Dubinsky, Z. (Eds.), *Springer Science*, Heidelberg, pp. 29-48.
- Van Der Laan, Eschmeyer, N., Fricke, R., 2014. Family-group names of recent fishes, *Zootaxa*, 3882 (2), 001-230.
- Weigmann, S., 2016. Annotated checklist of the living sharks, batoids and chimaeras (Chondrichthyes) of the world, with a focus on biogeographical diversity. *Journal of Fish Biology*, 88, 837-1037.
- Zenetos, A., 2017. Progress in Mediterranean bioinvasions two years after the Suez Canal enlargement. *Acta Adriatica*, 58 (2), 347-358.
- Zenetos, A., Çinar, M. E., Pancucci-Papadopoulou, M. A., Harmelin, J. G., Furnari, G. et al., 2005. Annotated List of marine alien species in the Mediterranean with records of the worst invasive species. *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 6, 63-118.
- Zenetos, A., Gofas, S., Verlaque, M., Çinar, M.E., García Raso, J.E. et al., 2010. Alien species in the Mediterranean Sea by 2010. A contribution to the application of European Union's Marine strategy framework directive (MSFD). Part I. Spatial distribution. *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 11 (2), 381-493.
- Zenetos, A., Gofas, S., Verlaque, M., Çinar, M.E., García Raso, J.E. et al., 2011. Errata to the Review Article (Medit. Mar. Sci. 11/2, 2010, 381-493): Alien species in the Mediterranean Sea by 2010. A contribution to the application of European Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). Part I. Spatial distribution. *Mediterranean Marine Science* 12 (2), 509-514.
- Zenetos, A., Gofas, S., Morri, C., Rosso, A., Violanti, D. et al., 2012. Alien species in the Mediterranean Sea by 2012. A contribution to the application of European Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). Part 2. Introduction trends and pathways. *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 13, 328-352.
- Zenetos, A., Çinar, M.E., Crocetta, F., Golani, D., Rosso, A. et al., 2017. Uncertainties and validation of alien species catalogues: The Mediterranean as an example. *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*, 191, 171-187.