
First record of the scalloped ribbonfish *Zu cristatus* (Bonelli, 1819) (Lampriformes: Trachipteridae) from N.W. European waters

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On the 8th of September 2001, the MFV Audacious II (BF83) captured a single specimen of the scalloped ribbonfish *Zu cristatus* (Bonelli), east of the Rockall Bank (56°20'N, 14°00'W), while trawling at a depth of 380 metres. This specimen was identified from a photograph supplied by the skipper of the vessel (Fig. 1). Although most of the tail section was missing due to net damage, based on the photograph and the known dimensions of the tray on which the specimen was laid out (500 x 250 mm), the estimated length from the tip of the snout to the vent (SV) was c. 550 mm. The following diagnostic features were visible in the photograph: ventral profile scalloped and sharply constricted behind the vent; mouth small and terminal; no anal fin; paired pectoral and pelvic fins present (Palmer, 1986).

Although the scalloped ribbonfish is rarely recorded, particularly in commercial trawls, it is generally considered to be mesopelagic (0 – 800 m) with a circumglobal distribution in tropical and temperate waters, including: Madeira, Azores and Mediterranean Sea (N.E. Atlantic); Gulf of Mexico, Cuba, Florida, Bermuda and Canada (N.W. Atlantic); South Africa (S.E. Atlantic); Kenya (Indian Ocean); Japan, Philippines and New Zealand (Indo-Pacific); California, Peru and Galapagos Islands (E. Pacific) (Palmer, 1961; Heemstra & Kannemeyer, 1984; Robins *et al.*, 1986; Bianco *et al.*, 2006; www.fishbase.org). Despite being previously recorded on several occasions in the N.W. Atlantic from the Gulf of Mexico northwards to Sable Island, Canada (44° N, 63° W), it has rarely been recorded from the N.E. Atlantic and only as far north as the Azores (38.98° N, 31.37° W) (www.fishbase.org).

In the Mediterranean Sea adult and juvenile specimens (< 1219 mm total length L_T), as well as larvae and ova, have previously been recorded, albeit sporadically. Large specimens (> 800 mm L_T) have been caught mainly during summer months at depths ranging from 150 to 800 m, while juveniles have occasionally been observed free swimming in shallow coastal waters. The species is thought to spawn between May and August in the Strait of Messina (Bianco *et al.*, 2006; Psomadakis *et al.*, 2007; Bradai & El Ouaer, 2012).



Fig. 1. Scalloped ribbonfish *Zu cristatus* captured east of the Rockall Bank on 8 September 2001.

The specimen described here represents the first record of the scalloped ribbonfish from N.W. European waters, and extends the species range by c. 2311 km in the N.E. Atlantic. Although possible that this specimen was carried across from the N.W. Atlantic *via* the North Atlantic Drift, it is also possible the species may occur more widely in the N.E. Atlantic yet remains undetected. Tortonese (1958) suggested that the species was rarely captured because mesopelagic habitats are poorly sampled.

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