

SHORT COMMUNICATION

A new record of imperial blackfish, *Schedophilus ovalis* (Cuvier, 1833) from the Bay of Izmir (Aegean Sea, Turkey)

Okan Akyol*, **Aytaç Özgül**

Faculty of Fisheries, Ege University, 35440, Urla, Izmir, TURKEY

*Corresponding author: okan.akyol@ege.edu.tr

Abstract

A specimen of imperial blackfish *Schedophilus ovalis* was caught on 15 April 2018 from the Gülbahçe coasts, Izmir Bay at a depth of 8 m. This ichthyologic note presents the first confirmed record of imperial blackfish from the shallow waters of Izmir Bay, NE Aegean Sea and the third for the Turkish waters.

Keywords: Imperial blackfish, *Schedophilus ovalis*, new record, Izmir Bay, NE Aegean Sea

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The family Centrolophidae including 27 species in all tropical and temperate seas (Froese and Pauly 2018) is represented by four species in the Mediterranean Sea (*Centrolophus niger*, *Hyperoglyphe perciformis*, *Schedophilus medusophagus* and *S. ovalis*), two of which (*C. niger* and *S. ovalis*) inhabit the eastern basin (Haedrich 1986; Golani *et al.* 2006).

Schedophilus ovalis is benthopelagic at the edge continental shelves and around oceanic islands; larger specimens are near the bottom, while youngs are associated with floating jellyfish, including *Physalia* (Haedrich 1986). Spawning season is spring, and juveniles grow rapidly (Golani *et al.* 2006). It distributes in the eastern Atlantic from Spain to South Africa and throughout most of the Mediterranean; also, around the Azores, Canaries and Madeira (Haedrich 1986).

On 15 April 2018, a specimen of *Scheophilus ovalis*, 302 mm SL (Figure 1), was caught by trammel net used for catching cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*) off Gülbahçe coast, Izmir Bay (38°20'22'' N, 26°41'00'' E) at a depth of 8 m on sandy/muddy bottom (Figure 2). In fact, four individuals of *S. ovalis* with a range of about 500-780 g were caught. However, only the largest fish was brought by the fisherman. The species was identified according to Haedrich (1986) and Froese and Pauly

(2018). Morphometric measurements were carried out on the fresh specimen to the nearest 0.1 mm by a calliper, and meristic counts were made under a magnifying glass with LED light. The sample, fixed in 6% formalin, has been added to the fish collection of the Fisheries Faculty, Ege University (ESFM-PIS/2018-04).



Figure 1. *Schedophilus ovalis* with 302 mm SL, (ref. ESFM-PIS/2018-04), captured from Izmir Bay (Photo: Okan Akyol)

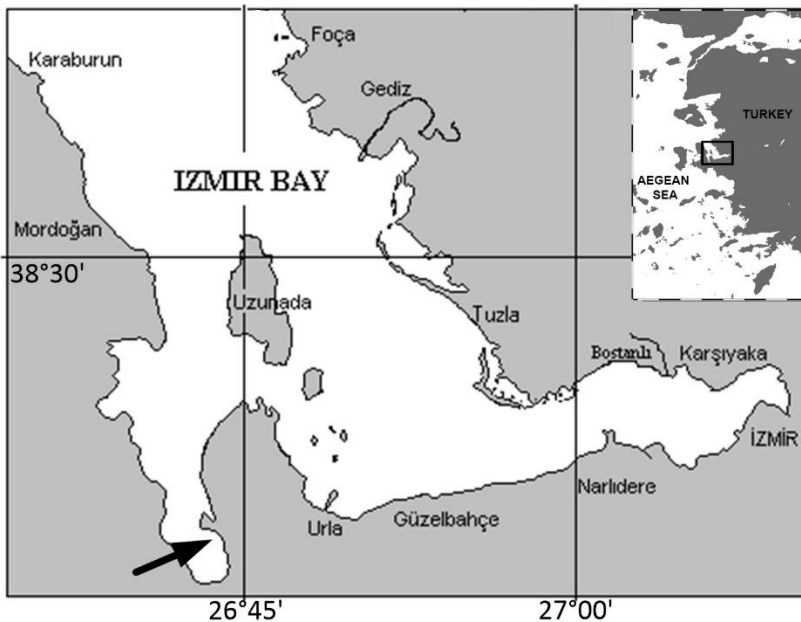


Figure 2. Sampling location (arrow) of *Schedophilus ovalis*

The specimen, 362 mm in total length and 780 g in weight, presented the following meristic characters: dorsal fin rays VII + 30, anal fin rays III + 20, pectoral fin rays 21, ventral fin rays I + 5. The morphometric data are shown in the following ratios of standard length (SL) or head length (HL): maximum body depth 40.1%, head length 29.8%, predorsal length 24.2%, preanal length 58.9%, prepectoral length 26.8% all in SL; eye diameter 21.1%, preorbital distance 22.2%, interorbital 35.6%, all in HL.

Although, *Centrolophus niger* is well-known in the Turkish waters, *S. ovalis* has only been recorded from Iskenderun Bay (6 young specimens with 57-146 mm TL, Erguden *et al.* 2013) and Gulf of Antalya (4 specimens with 300-340 mm TL, Filiz and Güzelaydın 2014) up to now. On the other hand, Bilecenoğlu *et al.* (2002) mentioned the presence of *S. ovalis* in Izmir Bay (NE Aegean Sea) only by name; however, it is still unpublished data and no further records were made so far.

In the Aegean Sea, the first record of a specimen of *S. ovalis* (397 mm TL) was documented from the area between islands of Chios and Ikeria, Greece, on 15 May 2008 (Corsini-Foka and Frantzis 2009). These islands are close to Izmir Bay, however, as the sampling coordinates of that specimen in Hellenic waters is in about 50 knots south of Izmir Bay. Thus, the occurrence of *S. ovalis* in Izmir Bay is not unexpected, due to the recent record of the species from the south of Chios Island. Finally, this record confirms the presence of *S. ovalis* in Izmir Bay and it is the third record of the species for the Turkish waters and the second for the Aegean Sea.

Acknowledgements

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İzmir Körfezi'nden (Ege Denizi, Türkiye) imparator karabalığın, *Schedophilus ovalis* (Cuvier, 1833) yeni bir kaydı

Öz

İmparator karabalığın (*Schedophilus ovalis*) bir bireyi 15 Nisan 2018 tarihinde İzmir Körfezi'nin Gülbahçe kıyılarında 8 m derinlikten yakalanmıştır. Bu ihtiyolojik not İzmir Körfezi'nin (Ege Denizi) sığ sularından imparator karabalığın ilk onaylanmış kaydını ve Türkiye suları için üçüncü kaydını sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: İmparator karabalık, *Schedophilus ovalis*, yeni kayıt, İzmir Körfezi, Ege Denizi

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