Saurida undosquamis

Taxon	Family / Order / Class / Phylum
Saurida undosquamis (Richardsn, 1848)	Synodontidae / Aulopiformes / Actinopterygii / Chordata

COMMON NAMES (English only)
Brushtooth lizardfish

SYNONYMS
Saurida argyophanes Jordan and Evermann, 1902
Saurida tumbil (nec Bloch) Regan, 1908
Saurida macrolepis Tanaka, 1916

SHORT DESCRIPTION
A marine, mainly piscivorous fish, commonly 15 - 35 cm long (max. 40 cm). The body is brown-beige on the back with a silvery white belly, and a series of 7-10 dark spots along the lateral line. The body is slender and cylindrical; the head is slightly depressed with a large mouth and long jaws terminating behind the eye. Numerous needle-like teeth are visible when the mouth is closed. An adipose fin is present above the anal fin.

Saurida undosquamis

Photo: Baki Yokes

BIOLOGY/ECOLOGY

Dispersal mechanisms
Planktonic eggs and larvae.

Reproduction
Fertilization is external, scatters eggs. Spawns from April to May off Japan,while spawning off the Turkish coast occurs in May-July and September-November. A mature female can produce up to 400,000 eggs.

Known predators/herbivores
Sharks, rays and bony fishes.

Resistant stages (seeds, spores etc.)
None.

HABITAT

Native (EUNIS code)
A2: Littoral sediments, A4: Sublittoral sediments, marine sublittoral soft, generally to 100 m depth, records to 350 m.

Habitat occupied in invaded range(EUNIS code)
A2: Littoral sediments, A4: Sublittoral sediments, marine sublittoral sand and mud bottoms, to 100 m.

Habitat requirements
The abrupt rise in catch of the lizardfish in the 1950s was attributed to a rise of 1-1.5ºC in sea temperature during the winter months of 1955.

DISTRIBUTION

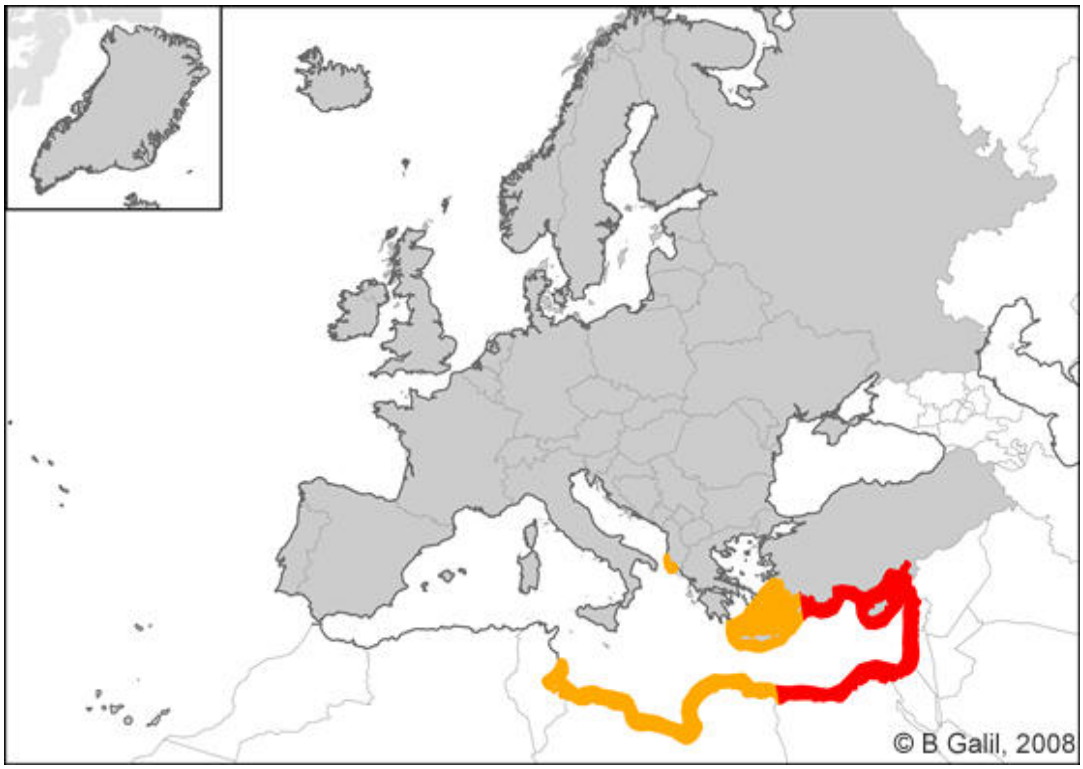
Native range
Indo-West Pacific: Red Sea, Persian Gulf and East Africa to Japan, Arafura Sea, and the Great Barrier Reef, Australia.

Known Introduced Range
Eastern Mediterranean, from Libya to Albania.

Trend

First collected in the Mediterranean in 1952 (Israel, Turkey), then Cyprus (1960), Lebanon (1962), Egypt (1966), subsequently collected off Greece, Albania and Syria. Everywhere it formed thriving populations in an amazingly short space of time.

MAP (European distribution)



Legend

	Known in country		Known in CGRS square		Known in sea
	Key distribution area		Infrequent		Unestablished

INTRODUCTION PATHWAY

Entered the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal, and spread with the prevailing currents.

IMPACT

Ecosystem Impact

The sudden increase of the lizardfish came at the expense of the native hake, *Merluccius merluccius*, which was displaced into deeper waters.

Health and Social Impact

Unknown.

Economic Impact

In 1955-56 the lizardfish became commercially important, constituting for a few years over half of the total catch on the shallow shelf opposite El-Arish, up to one fifth of the total annual trawl catch along the Mediterranean coast of Israel, and an important staple of the coastal fishery in the area stretching from Damietta eastward to Port Said. By the mid 1960s it formed the main catch of trawlers off Mersin, Turkey, and accounted for 2/3 of the fish landing biomass in the autumn months of the 1980s. Since the mid 1980s the lizardfish's share in catches has declined.

MANAGEMENT

Prevention

Erect a salinity barrier in the Suez Canal in order to reduce the number of Red Sea aliens arriving in the Mediterranean.

Mechanical

Unknown.

Chemical
Unknown.
Biological
Unknown.

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Author: B. S. Galil

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