

MEGALOPIDAE

by L. Saldanha & P.J. Whitehead

G:1

Sp:1

TARPON Jordan & Evermann, 1896

Bull. U.S. natn. Mus., 47(1):409 (type: Megalops atlanticus Valenciennes, 1847, by orig. design.).

Tarpon atlanticus (Valenciennes, 1846)

Megalops atlanticus Valenciennes, 1846, in Cuv. & Val., Hist. nat. Poiss., 18:398-399 (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint-Domingue, Porto-Rico); 3 syntypes: MNHN A.8839, A.8840, 3177.Clupea cyprinoides Bloch, 1795, part., Naturgesch ausl Fische, 9: pl. 403 (only: the description p. 32-34 corresponds to megalops cyprinoides (Broussonet, 1782)). No type material.Clupea cyprinoides: Bloch, 1797, part.: pl. 403 (only; description p. 24-26 corresponds to Megalops cyprinoides).Clupea thrissoides Schneider, 1801, part., in Bl. & Schn., Blochii Syst. Ichth.:424 (sensu Bloch, 1795; 1797).non Clupea cyprinoides: Lacepède, 1803:424 (description of Megalops cyprinoides).Clupea cyprinoides: Lacepède, 1803, part.:458-459, 461 (sensu Broussonet, 1782, which gave the description and figure of Megalops cyprinoides, but as existing in both Atlantic and Pacific).Clupea gigantea Shaw, 1804, part., Genl. Zool., 5(1):173 (sensu Bloch, 1795, 1797).Megalopus cyprinoides: Schinz, 1822, part.:296 (sensu Bloch, 1795, 1797).Clupea gigantea: Cuvier, 1829, part.:323-324 (sensu Bloch, 1795, 1797); 1842 (ed. Disciples), part.:280 (as before).Megalops giganteus: Voigt, 1832, part.:423 (sensu Bloch, 1795, 1797).Megalops elongatus Girard, 1859, Proc. Acad. nat. sci. Philad. (1858):224 (Long Island, New York). No type material.Megalops thrissoides: Günther, 1868:472 / Rochebrune, 1883:146 / Pellegrin, 1913:155.Megalops atlanticus: Gill, 1905:35-39, pl. 17 (anatomy) / Regan, 1910:354-358 (anatomy, caudal fin) / Pellegrin, 1914:11; 1922:635; 1923:44-45 / Monod, 1927:654 / Fowler, 1936:154, fig. 61 / Cadenat, 1937:426, 441-443, fig. 5-6 / Bertin, 1940:260 / Barnard, 1947:39 / Cadenat, 1947:12 / Norman & Irvine in Irvine, 1947:106-107, fig. 34 / Cadenat, 1951:123-124, fig. 40 / Poll, 1953:8, pl. 5 (fig. 1-4) / Roux, 1957:154-155, 309 / Cadenat, 196 1370-1371 / Roux, 1960:314-319 / Monod, 1962:1246-1247 / Blache, 1961:23 / Herald, 1961:72 / Daget & Iltis, 1965:17 / Monod, 1968:53-54, fig. 94-95, 210, 593, fig. 846, tabl. 3 (anatomy) / Blache et al., 1970:136, fig. 360 / Aldrin et al., 1972:14.Tarpon atlanticus: Gregory, 1933:137-142, fig. 31-33 (skull) / Gudger, 1937:1, fig. 2 (albino) / Hollister, 1939:449-475, fig. 1-21 (anatomy) / Herald, 1961:73 / Hildebrand, 1963:113-123, fig. 19 / Nybelin, 1963:494-497 (anatomy) / Greenwood, 1970:121-135, fig. 1-2, pl. 1-3 (anatomy) / Nybelin, 1971:9-10, 17, 22-23, 37-39, 42 (anatomy) / Forey, 1973:362, fig. 3 / Fowler, 1973:98 / Whitehead, 1981, (FAO sheets), fig. / Hureau, 1984:226-227, fig.Megalops atlantica: Richards, 1969:517 / Jones et al., 1978:53, fig. 22.

Habitat and distribution: littoral, marine and brackish waters (estuaries and lagoons), but found sometimes far from land. Both sides of the tropical Atlantic, common. In the area: regular distribution ranging from Senegal to Angola (Moçamedes region or even to the mouth of the Cunene river). Outside: from North Carolina (U.S.A.) to Bahia (Brazil). Occasional captures off the American coast northwards to Nova Scotia and southwards to Cananeia (Brazil) and even to Argentina. Had crossed the Panama canal and was caught at Coiba island (Panama) in the Pacific. Exceptional occurrences in the tagus estuary (Lisbon, Portugal - one specimen caught by fishermen), at the islets of Formigas (Azores - one specimen caught by skin divers), and in the atlantic coast of southern France.

Size: large. Maximum observed 2,489 m TL.

Developmental stages: Harrington, 1958:1-10, fig. 1-5, pl. 1-2 (morphometry and ecology) / Harrington & Harrington, 1960:311-319 (food) / Wade, 1962:553-567, 574-598, fig. 3,4 / Richards, 1969:517, fig. 2 / Jones et al., 1978:53-62, fig. 22-29 / Smith, D.G. 1980:136-141 (spawning, larvae) / Fahay, 1983:42, 43, fig. A-I (spawning, larvae).