

First record of the European catfish *Silurus glanis* Linnaeus, 1758 (Siluriformes, Siluridae) in the Alcántara reservoir (Tagus basin, Spain)

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Resumen

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Primera cita del siluro Silurus glanis Linnaeus, 1758 (Siluriformes, Siluridae) en el embalse de Alcántara (cuenca del Tajo, España)

Por primera vez se hace referencia a la captura del siluro *Silurus glanis* (Siluridae) en embalse de Alcántara (cuenca del Tajo). En junio de 2008 se capturó un ejemplar (LT = 331mm) en un trasmallo.

Palabras clave: siluro, *Silurus glanis*, Península Ibérica, cuenca del Tajo, embalse de Alcántara, peces introducidos.

Abstract

The first record of European catfish *Silurus glanis* (Siluridae) in the Alcántara reservoir (Tagus basin) is reported. A specimen (TL = 331 mm) was caught in a trammel net on June 2008.

Key words: European catfish, *Silurus glanis*, Iberian Peninsula, Tagus basin, Alcántara reservoir, introduced fish.

The escape or release of non-native fishes into rivers, or still waters connected to water courses, is of increasing concern (e.g., Copp et al. 2006), in particular those species for which little or no local data exists on the environmental biology and potential impacts. For Iberian Peninsula catchments 35 non-native fish species and translocations have been recorded (Ribeiro et al. 2008). The European catfish *Silurus glanis* Linnaeus, 1758 is the largest European freshwater fish, being native to North, Baltic, Black, Caspian and Aral sea basins; Aegean sea basin, in Maritza and Stuma to Sperchios drainages, Turkey (Kottelat & Freyhof 2007). Catfish is nowadays popular among European anglers and has been introduced in many European countries, including France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK (Elvira 2001, Keith & Allardi 2001).

On June 2008 a specimen (total length: 331 mm; weight: 200 g) was captured in a trammel net in the west border of the National Park of Monfragüe, in the mouth of the Arroyo de la Vid (39° 49' N, 6° 3' W) at 5 m of depth. Meristic data are

as follows: dorsal rays: I, 4; pectoral rays: I, 14; pelvic rays: I, 10; anal rays: I, 93; caudal rays: 93. In fresh the specimen was grayish blue-black dorsally and grayish white ventrally with irregular black spots distributed all over the body. The specimen is preserved in ethanol and deposited in the collections of the Área de Zoología at the University of Extremadura (Badajoz, Spain).

The first record of *Silurus glanis* in the Tagus basin was collected in 2001 in the Cedillo reservoir (Doadrio 2001), approximately 70 km downstream of Alcántara reservoir. The European catfish was introduced in the Iberian Peninsula around 1974 in the River Segre (NE Spain). Later, catfish were also introduced at Mequinenza and Ribaraja reservoirs (Ebro river basins, Doadrio 2001). In Catalan waters it was recorded in Susqueda reservoir (2003, Ter river basin, Carol et al. 2004) and in La Baells reservoir (2006, Llobregat river basin, Benejam et al. 2007). The presence of the European catfish in Alcántara reservoir is a probable consequence of propagule releases done by local individual fisherman, as

has occurred in other invasive Iberian species (Ribeiro et al. 2009).

The European catfish is a well-adapted species for widespread dispersal and rapid colonization of new areas. Not surprisingly, therefore, it has been successfully expanded outside its native range and it is classified as a species causing biological impacts (Doadrio 2001). It is important to verify and document the spread of this invasive species, since it might have spread undetected. Therefore, higher effort must be paid to either the faunistical monitoring such an important tool to prevent the pathways of introduction and dispersal on non-native species.

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