

## TAGGING OF THUNNUS THYNNUS JUVENILES IN THE LIGURIAN SEA, AUTUMN 1994

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Relini, M., G. Palandri, G. Torchia

Laboratori di Biologia Marina ed Ecologia Animale, Istituto di Zoologia, Università di Genova,  
Via Balbi 5, 16126 Genova, Italia

## SUMMARY

In autumn, 1994, the Marine Biology Laboratory of the Institute of Zoology of the University of Genoa carried out a tagging cruise for juvenile *Thunnus thynnus*. A total of 543 individuals were measured and tagged. By the end of 1994, nine tags had been recovered.

## RESUME

En automne 1994, le Laboratoire de Biologie Marine de l'Institut de Zoologie de l'Université de Gênes a effectué une campagne de marquage sur des juvéniles de *Thunnus thynnus*. 543 spécimens ont été mesurés et marqués. A la fin de l'année 1994, neuf marques avaient été récupérées.

## RESUMEN

En el otoño de 1994, el Laboratorio de Biología Marina del Instituto de Zoología de la Universidad de Génova, llevó a cabo una campaña de marcado de juveniles de *Thunnus thynnus*. Se midieron y marcaron 543 ejemplares. A finales de 1994 se habían recuperado nueve marcas.

## Introduction

Juvenile bluefin tagging is a useful tool in gathering information about growth rates and movement inside population area. The easy handling of the fish also means that tagging leads to less mortality.

Within the framework of the EC project on the "Characterization of large pelagic stocks" tagging in the Ligurian Sea had been planned since 1992. However, favourable conditions, i.e. the presence of schools of young fish in inshore waters, did not occur until 1994. Fishermen recall a similar abundance of young bluefins ten years ago.

## Methods

Tagging was carried out off the coast of Portofino (Eastern Ligurian Riviera) (Fig. 1) from the end of September to November. Both sports and professional fishing boats were used and, with regard to information about the concentration of schools, a significant contribution was provided by purse-seine fishermen.

All bluefins were fished by hand-line, with 0.50 mm monofilament and Mustad tinned n.9 hooks (qual. 2339). Anchovies and sardines were used as bait. Sometimes some small pelagics pursued by tunas were collected and used as live bait. All the fish caught were measured and quickly dehooked with the aid of a wet black cloth in order to minimize the panic of the fish. They were then released a few seconds later. Yellow spaghetti ICCAT tags were used.

## Results

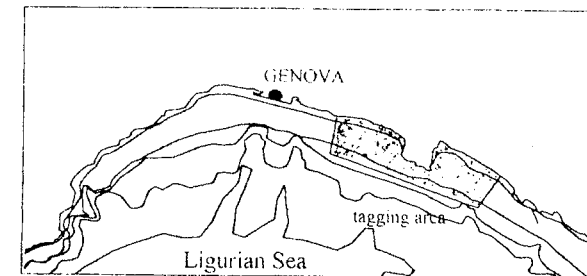
543 *Thunnus thynnus* juveniles were tagged. The length distribution of the tagged specimens is shown in Fig. 2. The sizes ranged between 23 and 47 cm fork length.

By the end of 1994 nine tags, all in the Gulf of Genoa, had been recovered at periods ranging from 1 to 56 days after tagging. Six of these came from professional fishermen.

## Acknowledgments

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Fig. 1 - Tagging area

Fig. 2 - Juvenile bluefin tagging  
Ligurian Sea 26.09.94 - 21.11.94