

## THE ITALIAN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ALBACORE (*THUNNUS ALALUNGA*, BONNATERRE, 1788)

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### SUMMARY

*The Italian scientists have a long tradition of studies and research on albacore (Thunnus alalunga). This species is one of the most important for the Italian fishery since many centuries, even if it was often neglected. This is the first attempt to list together the many papers published so far by Italian scientists, concerning the biology of this species, the fisheries and many other scientific and cultural issues. The aim of this paper is to provide a sort of annotated bibliography, with specific key words, even if it is surely incomplete, because of the many papers published over the years. So far, we found 164 papers on albacore. This updated bibliography was set together to serve the scientists and to help them in finding some rare references that might be useful for their work.*

### RÉSUMÉ

*Les scientifiques italiens ont une longue tradition d'études et de recherches sur le germon (Thunnus alalunga). Cette espèce est l'une des plus importantes pour la pêche italienne depuis de nombreux siècles, même si elle a été souvent négligée. Il s'agit de la première tentative de répertorier les nombreux articles publiés à ce jour par des scientifiques italiens concernant la biologie de cette espèce, les pêcheries et de nombreuses autres questions scientifiques et culturelles. Le but de ce document est de fournir une sorte de bibliographie annotée, avec des mots clés spécifiques, même si elle est sûrement incomplète, en raison des nombreux articles publiés au cours des années. Jusqu'à présent, nous avons trouvé 164 documents sur le germon. Cette bibliographie a été établie pour les scientifiques afin de les aider à trouver des références rares qui pourraient leur être utiles dans leurs travaux.*

### RESUMEN

*Los científicos italianos tienen una larga tradición de estudios e investigaciones sobre atún blanco (Thunnus alalunga). Esta especie es una de las más importantes para las pesquerías italianas desde hace muchos siglos, aunque a menudo fue desatendida. Este es el primer intento de reunir los muchos documentos publicados hasta ahora por científicos italianos sobre la biología de la especie, las pesquerías y muchos otros temas científicos y culturales. El objetivo de este documento es proporcionar una especie de bibliografía anotada, con palabras clave específicas, incluso aunque la lista sea incompleta a causa de los muchos documentos publicados a lo largo de los años. Hasta ahora hemos hallado 164 documentos sobre atún blanco. Esta bibliografía actualizada se reunió para servir a los científicos y ayudarles a hallar algunas raras referencias que podrían resultarles útiles para su trabajo.*

### KEYWORDS

*Albacore, Thunnus alalunga, bibliography, biology, reproduction, feeding, migrations, economy, history, fishery, catches, techniques, technology, systematics, nomenclature.*

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## 1. Foreword

This paper was prepared for providing an annotated overview of the Italian literature on albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*, Bonnaterre, 1788). As concerns the Mediterranean stock, which is considered different from the two Atlantic ones, many papers were written in Italian, a language which is now not on the list of the three used in ICCAT (English, French and Spanish), and possibly some scientists may have problems in understanding the contents. Many papers on albacore were written also by Spanish, French, Greek and Turkish colleagues.

Another reason for setting-up this annotated bibliography is because many papers are not available in electronic format and therefore some young colleagues, who are not used to study and mine in traditional libraries anymore, seem not able to detect the many studies that have been carried out so far on this species.

Therefore, it is a sort of national proudness to try to set-up the list of papers on the albacore *Thunnus alalunga*, Bonnaterre, 1788) that we have been able to find so far, annotating them with keywords for improving the opportunities to detect them with an electronic searching engine.

Furthermore, a similar work is not already available at all for this species, even if some papers were included in the fundamental work on tuna species provided by Corwin (1929) and then updated by Van Campen and Hoven (1956).

## 2. Criteria

The bibliography on albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) included in this work was selected when an Italian scientist was the only author of a paper or when one or more Italian scientists were among the authors of collective papers.

This was the only criterium we used for selecting the many papers, independently if they were peer-review papers, books, not-peer-review papers, papers present to conferences or meetings or congresses, reports to public administrations or project reports.

Of course, each paper included in our list shall be directly related to albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*, Bonnaterre, 1788), even if, in some cases, the albacore is concerned by just a part of the text.

For the very ancient papers, we reported the first edition that it was possibly to find, independently from the date of the original work.

When vernacular names or old scientific names were used in the original paper, they were possibly listed in the annotation. The annotations required each paper to be checked in detail and this implied a huge workload.

The annotations show the main subjects in the content, and we mostly used the descriptors proposed by ASFIS (Fagetti, Privett and Sears, 2009), adding additional descriptors when necessary. As concerns the main species included in each reference, we used both the international common name(s) and the Latin name(s).

## 3. Discussion

One of the major problem for the current paper was the need to homogenise the style of all citations, which were reported under many different styles. Apparently, this fact can appear as a minor problem, but it required a very important amount of work and time.

Another problem, which is possibly limiting this list, is that several papers are including references on albacore tuna which are not mentioned in the title or in the abstract or even in the index, making difficult to detect when this species is mentioned in a paper or book. Furthermore, in old times this species was possibly confused with the bluefin tuna and, consequently, quite often reported as “tuna”; therefore, in those cases, it was impossible to discriminate if any albacore was included in the paper.

The large number of titles which are now available surely constitutes a very useful reference list for all the colleagues working on the Mediterranean stock of albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*, Bonnaterre, 1788), and our list includes also extremely rare papers on various subjects. The opportunity provided in recent times by the web is improving the number of available articles on this species and its fisheries.

This annotated bibliography required an incredible amount of work and a lot of attention, due to the fact that several documents were published not only by marine scientists, but by historians, archaeologists, economists, sociologists, literates or journalists, making the search very wide and difficult, certainly very multidisciplinary. An additional problem was caused by the different synonyms used by various authors over the time. Even limiting the bibliography to the works where an Italian scientist was among the authors, the number of citations we discovered so far is important, being anyway conscious that the list is certainly incomplete. In many cases, when checking a document, it was possible to discover additional literature which was previously not available, transforming a part of this work as a continuous journey following an Ariadne's thread.

At the same time, during this heavy work, it was amazing to learn so many details about this species, which was exploited since historical times, even if sometimes it was confused with bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in the commercial documents. Going through the various titles (and the text behind) in the bibliography it is possible to find important amounts of catch data, of fishery and biological information, historical environmental information, social and economic aspects, while in many papers there are various aspects related to the ancient culture linked to this species and its fisheries, mirroring its extremely ancient historical roots.

In total, we are listing 164 papers (**Figure 1**), most edited in the very last century, with very few contributions in previous centuries. Between 1920 and 1939 there was a limited production of scientific papers on albacore (5 in the '20s and 7 in the '30s), mostly due to the many field activities carried out by the Institute of Zoology of the University of Messina.

A remarkable increasing of the Italian scientific production on bluefin tuna initiated in the '80s, when the first national research triennial plan was adopted by the Ministry of Merchant Marine, followed by a series of triennial plans, with a coordinated activity on large pelagic species, till the year 2002, jumping from 14 papers in the '70s to 28 papers in the '80s and the peak of 47 papers in the '90s. Then, most of the research activities were again enhanced by the EC Data Collection Programme, followed by the EC Data Collection Framework, which is still active; 23 papers were published in the years 2000-2009, while 12 papers have been published so far in the last decade and this number would possibly increase.

Due to the high number of references, the full annotated bibliography is provided in **Annex 1** to this paper.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The list of books and scientific papers on albacore here provided is still certainly incomplete and we hope that this work may further stimulate scientists to provide additional titles, with the purpose to create a complete reference literature list to be used by all the colleagues working on this subject or on related subjects, for helping them in their work.

Many documents are certainly still kept in ancient archives, either public or private, sometimes in churches, ancient libraries, old company's archives, and in other places. Indeed, this is a never-ending work and we should be conscious that this work will be never completed

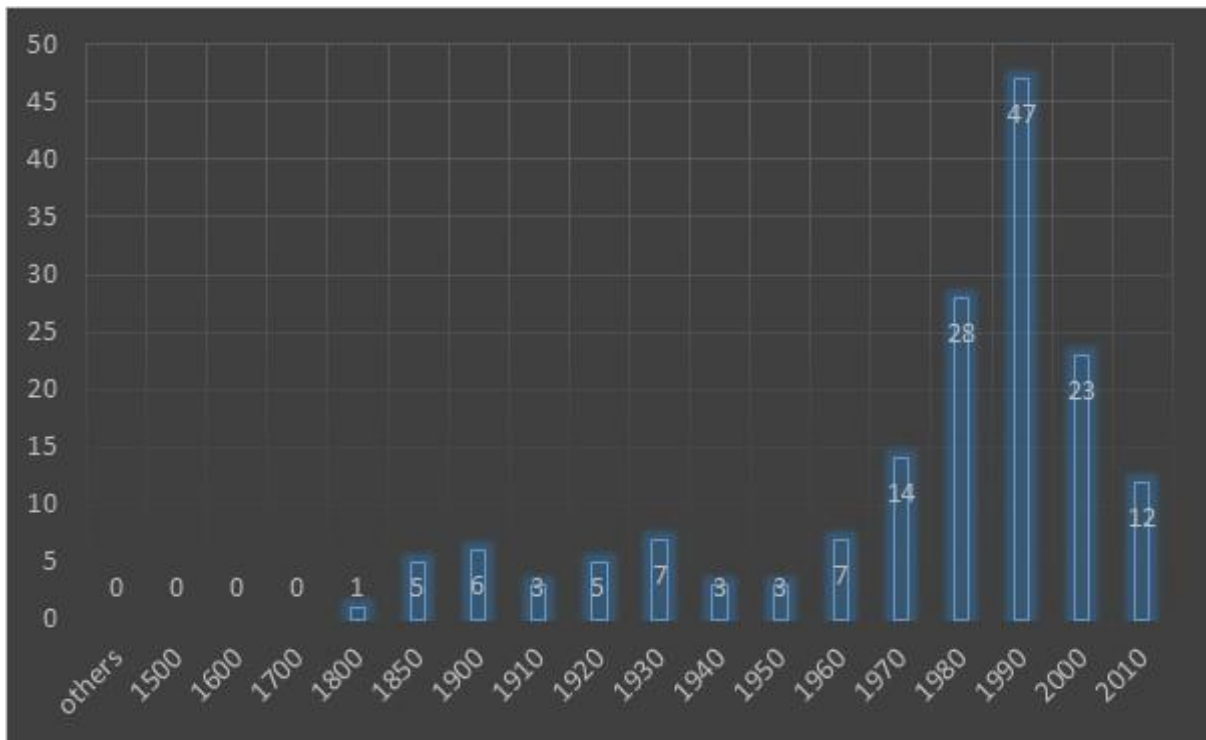
The many biological studies, particularly on the reproductive biology of this species, are also very evident by the review here included, even if several other papers were published by foreign scientists.

As it was mentioned in a previous paper (Di Natale, 2018), in recent years many scientists and particularly (but not only) young colleagues are adopting a sort of selective attitude when they prepare their papers, avoiding even to mention papers which were not published in peer-review journals or by scientists who are competing with them. This attitude is clearly causing a sort of scientific disaster, because there are several very recent papers which are not at all using the knowledge available till the '70s, which sometimes means forgetting the largest part of the scientific knowledge we already have.

Clearly, there is the need to improve the knowledge on previous available studies on albacore and this annotated review was made exactly for providing a helping hand to all the colleagues working on this species.

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**Figure 1.** Number of the papers published on albacore by Italian authors over the years (since 1500 to 2019).

## Annotated Bibliography

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