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## FIRST SUBSTANTIATED RECORD OF COTTON MOUTH JACK *URASPIS SECUNDA* (CARANGIDAE) FROM THE COAST OF SENEGAL (E-ATLANTIC)

### SUMMARY

A specimen of Cottonmouth jack *Uraspis secunda* (POEY, 1860) was recorded for the first time from the coast of Senegal. The specimen was immature measuring 118 mm for total length and 19.2 g for total body weight. In this note, the authors present a short description of one specimen and its main morphometric measurements and meristic characters. The distribution of *U. secunda* in its new area of capture is commented and discussed, together with its close relative species *U. helvola* (FORSTER, 1801).

### INTRODUCTION

Cottonmouth jack *Uraspis secunda* (POEY, 1860) is known from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, but poorly documented from the Indian Ocean. The species occurs in the western Atlantic at scattered localities from off New Jersey, USA, to Sao Paulo, Brazil, and also in the eastern Atlantic from Mauritania to Angola (SMITH-VANIZ, 2002).

However, despite its occurrence in the eastern tropical Atlantic, no substantiated record of the species was reported off the coast of Senegal and no specimen is available to date for confirmation (CADENAT, 1951; SÉRET and OPIC, 1991; DIATTA *et al.*, 2016). A routine monitoring conducted in the Senegal waters in the wake of a collaboration with experienced fishermen al-

lowed to collect one specimen of *Uraspis secunda*, which is described in the present paper with some comments concerning the species distribution in the new area.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

On 24 April 2019, a specimen of *Uraspis secunda*, was collected at the fishing site of Hann (Fig. 1), a city close to the touristic zone of Dakar. The specimen (see Fig. 2) was captured by monofilament commercial gill net of 18 mm stretched mesh at 150 m depth approximately, on soft bottom, sandy substrate partially covered by seagrass, together with sparid, lutjanid, and two specimens of oilfish *Ruvettus pretiosus* COCCO, 1829 (see CAPAPÉ *et al.*, 2019) by 14°32'45.63"N and 17°27'45.67" W.

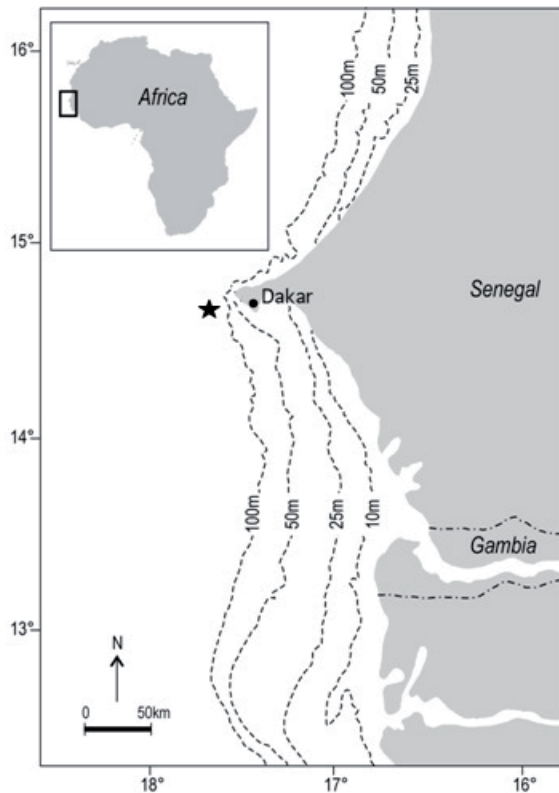


Figure 1. Map of Africa showing Senegal (rectangle) and map of the coast of Senegal indicating the capture site of the specimen of *Uraspis secunda* (black star), redrawn from DIATTA *et al.* (2013).



Figure 2. Specimen of *Uraspis secunda* collected off the Senegalese coast (ref. ISPAB-Ura-Sec-01), scale bar = 30 mm.

The description of the specimens in the present paper, follows BELLO *et al.* (2014)'s protocol recommended for first records. Measurements were recorded to the nearest mm and total body weight to the nearest g, together with meristic counts, such as number of rays for each fin and number of gill rakers (Table 1). The specimen was fixed in 10% buffered formaldehyde, preserved in 75% ethanol and deposited in the Ichthyological Collection of the Institut Supérieur d'Acquaculture et de Pêche of Bizerte (ISPAB), Tunisia, and received the catalogue number ISPAB-Ura-Sec-01.

<b>Reference</b>	<b>ISPAB-Ura-Sec-01</b>	
<b>Morphometric measurements</b>	<b>mm</b>	<b>%SL</b>
Total length	118.0	134.9
Fork length	106.7	121.9
Standard length	87.5	100.0
Pre-dorsal fin length	25.9	29.6
Pre-pectoral fin length	27.7	31.6
Pre-anal fin length	42.0	48.0
Snout length	8.8	10.0
head length	25.8	29.5
Eye diameter	7.6	8.7
Dorsal fin length	60.1	68.7
Pectoral fin length	7.1	8.2
Anal fin length	45.4	51.9
Caudal fin length	7.5	8.6
<b>Meristic counts</b>		
Dorsal fin rays	VIII + I + 32	
Pectoral fin rays	I + 22	
Anal fin rays	II + I + 23	
Ventral fin rays	I + 5	
Caudal fin rays	8+8	
Upper gill rakers	6	
Lower gill rakers	15	
<b>Total body weight in gram</b>	19.2	

Table 1. Morphometric measurements, in mm, and as % of standard length (SL), meristic counts and total body weight (g) recorded in the specimen of *Uraspis secunda* from the Senegalese coast (ref. ISPAB-Ura-Sec-01).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Senegalese specimen of *Uraspis secunda* was identified following the combination of main morphological characters: body elongate oval, compressed; dorsal profile slightly more convex than ventral profile; snout short and blunt; eye small with a weak adipose eyelid; mouth moderate to oblique; tongue and inside walls of mouth brilliant white with dark blue to black border; naked area on breast extending approximately half way up to pectoral base; scales small and cycloid; scutes moderate to strong; curved lateral line shorter than straight; pectoral fins falcate; pelvic fins elongate. Colour of body silvery blue to black above, darkest on top of head; black to silvery white below; with eight dark vertical bars; spinous and soft dorsal, soft anal and caudal fins black to dark blue.

Description, morphometric measurements, meristic counts and colour are in total agreement with JOHNSON (1978), ACERO and CARRASCO (1989), SMITH-VANIZ (2002), MCEACHRAN and FECHHELM (2005), SIMON *et al.* (2013), who noted that dark vertical bars are observed in juvenile *U. secunda*, therefore the case of the present specimen.

A close relative congeneric species, *Uraspis helvola* (FORSTER, 1801) is rather difficult to distinguish from *U. secunda* exhibiting pelvic fins longer in juvenile specimens according to SMITH-VANIZ (2002). Additionally, *U. helvola* is found in the waters surrounding Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan Da unha Islands where *U. secunda* is totally unknown (SMITH-VANIZ, 2002).

*Uraspis secunda* could be at present included in the Senegalese ichthyofauna, where captures of the species are not reported to date. However, due to the fact that the species is known off the western coast of Africa (BLACHE *et al.*, 1970), it is possible that large specimens were captured probably included among other close relative carangid species, generally caught in trawls, purse seines, dipnets and anglers; and therefore no separate statistics are provided for this species (SMITH-VANIZ (2002).

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