

Meristic characteristics of the
Labrus bergylta Ascanius 1767
in Sea of Marmara

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Abstract:

The northwest Sea of Marmara population of Ballan wrasse (*Labrus bergylta*) ranges along the Barbaros, Uçmakdere, to Ince Burun. Although *L. bergylta* is abundant in this region, very little is known about important aspects of its biology, such as the meristic characteristics. This study investigated the meristic characteristics of the northwest Sea of Marmara *L. bergylta* population through analysis morphometric peculiarity.

Key words: *Labrus bergylta*, meristic characteristics, Sea of Marmara, Ballan wrasse.

Özet:

Kikla balığının (*Labrus bergylta*) bol olarak dağılım gösterdiği kuzey-batı Marmara denizinde, Barbaros, Uçmakdere ve İnce Burun bölgesini içine alan alandaki fertler üzerine morfolojik bir çalışma yapılmıştır. Kikla balığının biyolojisi hakkında, özellikle de meristik karakteristiği hakkında elimizde sınırlı bilgi bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışma söz konusu bölgedeki kikla popülasyonundaki fertlerin özellikle meristik karakteristiklerinin tespiti amaçlı olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Labrus bergylta*, meristik özellikler, Marmara Denizi, Kikla.

Material-method:

Sampling surveys were conducted in the north-west part of Sea of Marmara, Hora Lighthouse to Dogan Aslan Bank. The area is a major living area for *Labrus bergylta* Ascanius 1767 stock that distributes in whole Sea of Marmara (Artuz, L. 2004). The samples of adult forms are collected during ABC diving with harpoon and from the local fishermen.

During the present project period was 100 *L. bergylta* samples of adult forms are collected and the meristic characteristics are observed and tabulated.

Description: *Labrus bergylta* Ascanius 1767 is the largest of the European wrasse species reaching a maximum length of 60cm. It is a heavily built fish with a deep-sided body, large head, fleshy lips and pointed snout. Coloration of *Labrus bergylta* is extremely variable. *Labrus bergylta* come in many shades of brown, green, grey and red. Often they exhibit a mottled pattern such as the one pictured above while others may have a single light stripe or others more of a barred pattern. The coloration is very variable and depends on the age and reproductive state. Young fishes which inhabit vegetated areas on the low shore and they are often emerald green whilst adults are usually mottled greenish-brown or occasionally reddish with paler spots. The scales of this species are often conspicuous as each has a dark rim and a pale centre, giving the fish an overall spotty appearance (Artüz, 2005).

Labrus bergylta is slow growing and long lived species (up to 20 years). Their longevity is also helped by being considered inedible or not mostly edible by the area. (Artüz, 2005).

The meristic characters are tabulated in Table 1.

Key Identification Features:

- Large size and deep body
- Thick, fleshy lips
- Scales with darker outer edge and pale centre

Meristic characteristics of <i>Labrus bergylta</i>

Head

Coloration	Coloration very variable, brownish and greenish predominating.
Shape	Rather massive, more or less straight
Aye	More or less normal
Aye position	Beside, More or less normal
Mouth	Contractile with thick lips.
Mouth position	Terminal
Teethes	Large conical teeth. (13 on upper - 20 on lower jaw.)
Spiracle	-
Gill clefts (sharks/rays only)	4
Gill rakers	143
On lower limb:	18
On upper limb:	6

Body

Coloration	Coloration variable, brownish and greenish predominating.
Shape	Fusiform / Normal
Scales	Cycloid
Lateral Line	Yes, 1
Scales on lateral line	57
Pored lateral line scales	48
Scales in lateral series	57
Scale rows above lateral line	6
Scale rows below lateral line	11
Scales around caudal peduncle	16

Vertebrae

Preanal:	18
Postanal	19
Total:	37

*Single fins***Dorsal fin(s):**

Attributes:	United
Fins number:	D1 + D2
Spines total:	18
Soft-rays total:	12

Caudal fin:

Attributes:	More or less truncate
Rays total:	15

Anal fin(s):

Attributes:	More or less truncate more or less normal
Fins number:	1
Spines total:	3
Soft-rays total:	10

*Paired fins***Pectoral fins**

Attributes:	More or less normal
Spines:	-
Soft-rays:	15

Pelvic fins

Attributes:	More or less normal
Position:	Abdominal
Spines:	6
Soft-rays:	-

Additional characteristics	Times in TL
Head length	3.83
Head height	5.30
Height of body (TH)	3.28

	Position	Percentage to TL %
Position of the beginning of dorsal fin	0-P	10.52
Position of the beginning of anal fin	3D2	5.25
Position of the beginning of pectoral fin	0D1	10.64
Position of the beginning of pelvic fin	4D1	9.7

Diameter of eye	
Times in post-orbital distance	4.16
Times in pre-orbital distance	2.5
Times in TL	28.75



a



b



c



d



e



f



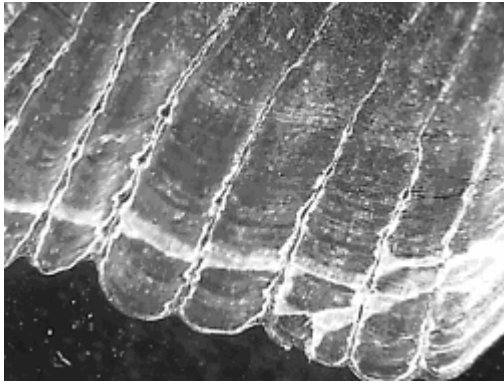
g



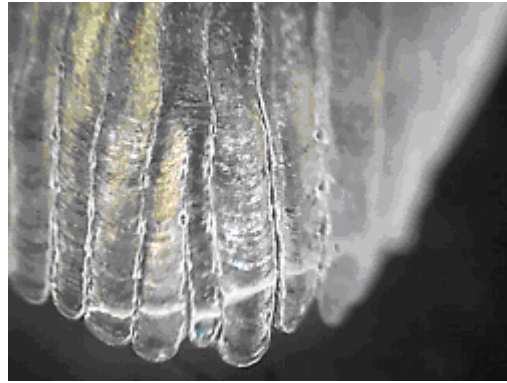
h



i



j



h

Pictures: a. Whole material., b. Colorization of ventral part of head., c. The teeth., d. 2nd Dorsal fin., e. Pectoral fin., f. caudal fin., g. scale structure., h. Gill bow., i. Scale., j., h. Details of cycloid scale.

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