

NOTA

**A MOCKINGBIRD *Mimus polyglottos* (LINNAEUS, 1758) FOUND IN A STOMACH OF A BLUE SHARK *Prionace glauca* (LINNAEUS, 1758)**

**Un cenizote *Mimus polyglottos* (Linnaeus, 1758) encontrado en el estómago de un tiburón azul *Prionace glauca* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

**RESUMEN.** Un cenizote *Mimus polyglottos* fue encontrado en el estómago de un tiburón azul juvenil *Prionace glauca* capturado cerca de la costa de Bahía Magdalena, Baja California Sur, México. Este pájaro continental es un elemento raro como presa de un tiburón. Esta nota contribuye a enfatizar el papel de *Prionace glauca* como un depredador oportunista y/o carroñero.

**Jaime Rivera, Mario<sup>1</sup>, Salvador Hernández Vázquez<sup>2</sup>, Felipe Galván Magaña<sup>3</sup> & Edgar Leonardo Pérez Lezama<sup>3</sup>.** <sup>1</sup>Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste, Mar Bermejo No. 195, Col. Playa Palo de Santa Rita Sur, La Paz, B.C.S. 23096, México. <sup>2</sup>Departamento de Estudios para el Desarrollo Sustentable de Zonas Costeras, Universidad de Guadaluajara. Gómez Farías 82, San Patricio, Melaque, Jalisco. <sup>3</sup>Centro Interdisciplinario de Ciencias Marinas, Av. Instituto Politécnico Nacional s/n Col. Playa Palo de Santa Rita, La Paz, B.C.S. 23096, México.

Jaime Rivera, M., S. Hernández Vázquez<sup>2</sup>, F. Galván Magaña<sup>3</sup> & E. Leonardo Pérez Lezama. 2015. A Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos* (Linnaeus, 1758) found in a stomach of a Blue Shark *Prionace glauca* (Linnaeus, 1758). *CICIMAR Oceánides*, 30(2): 53-54.

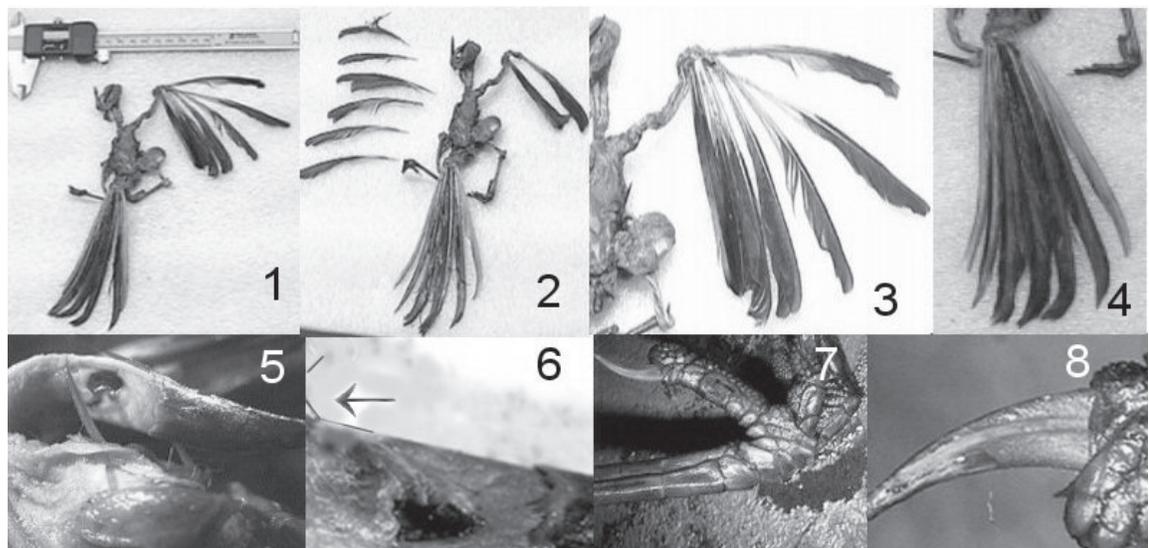
Blue sharks are one of the most abundant and widely distributed shark species (Carey & Scharold, 1990). The diet of blue sharks is mainly of cephalopods and pelagic fish, however, they appear to be

opportunistic predators, feeding on a variety of prey items including occasional sea birds caught resting on the water (Stevens, 1973; Cortés, 1999). Pelagic teleosts (i.e., cyclopterids and gadids) constitute an important component of the diet of immature males but the occurrence of miscellaneous biological materials like feathers and anthropogenic material indicates that blue sharks consume anything of appropriate size that they find in the water column (Meaghen & Campana, 2003).

On March 22, 2001 a blue shark, *Prionace glauca* was caught offshore Bahía Magdalena (50 km from the coast) at the western coast of Baja California Sur, Mexico. It was a juvenile specimen measuring 121 cm of total length. Two items were found in the shark's stomach: a piece of dolphin as bait and a bird's corpse.

This bird was almost complete. Its left wing was missing; its neck and head were in an advanced digestive state and there were few feathers remaining. The identification was based on the form of the beak, the squared blackish tail, the white outer rectrices that appear as clear sides on the spread tail, and the blackish legs.

The bird is included in the family Mimidae, and was identified as a Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*. Measurements fit the species size; total length: 227 mm; size of the wing without feathers: 62.27 mm; tail: 111.81 mm; tarsus: 26.9 mm; upper mandible: 11.41 mm and lower mandible: 9.72 mm (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** 1. Reconstruction of the bird. 2. Remains of bird. 3. Right wing. 4. Tail and rectrices. 5. Lores and beak. 6. Beak whisker. 7. Tarsus. 8. Middle nail.

### OBSERVATIONS

The northern mockingbird is a medium-sized songbird measuring about 23 cm (about 9 in.) and weighting about 50 g, with longish legs and tail and a slightly curved bill (Peterson, 1961). The grayish-brown color, two parallel white wing bars and a broad white wing patch, which is easily seen in flight, distinguish this bird from its cousins, the brown thrasher and the catbird (Derrickson & Breitwisch, 1992). The mockingbird is basically a terrestrial bird, but inhabits locations near the Pacific coast in the Northern Hemisphere. It is a resident in Baja California, Isla Socorro, Pacific slope and Isla Guadalupe (Howell & Webb, 1995). This distribution is near the sites where blue shark is caught in Mexico (Sosa – Nishizaky *et al.*, 2002).

Since the mockingbird is not a marine bird its presence in a pelagic shark stomach is very rare. Possibly the bird got lost by a stormy wind and fell; or it was impelled dead into the sea. Probably the shark was attracted by the floating bird and swallowed it. The occurrence of these items as prey in sharks is infrequent and their ingestion must be accidental. Stomachs contents in other shark species have been found to comprise organic and inorganic items such as stones and plastic wrappings (Joyce *et al.*, 2002; Stillwell & Kohler, 1982). Sharks often swallow small floating objects and regurgitate them if they are not palatable, however organic items could be nutritive to sharks although their provenience is not from a marine habitat as in the case of terrestrial birds. This paper contributes to the knowledge of *Prionace glauca* feeding habits, and its role as an opportunistic predator and or carrion feeder in the pelagic ecosystem.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the Instituto Politécnico Nacional for the support received through COFAA, PIFI and EDI.

### REFERENCES

- Carey, F.G. & J.V. Scharold. 1990. Movements of blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*) in depth and course. *Marine Biology*, 106: 329-342.
- Cortés, E. 1999. Standardized diet compositions and trophic levels of sharks. ICES. *Journal Marine Science*, 56: 707-717.
- Derrickson, K.C. & R. Breitwisch. 1992. Northern Mockingbird. *In: The Birds of North America*, No. 7 (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca, New York.
- Field guide to the birds of North America. 2000. National Geographic. USA. 480 p.
- Gómez, C.G. 1981. Guía para la identificación de las aves. Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur. Manuales Universitarios. Mexico. 60 p.
- Howell, S.N.G & Webb, S. 1995. The birds of Mexico and Northern Central America. Oxford University Press. 851 p.
- Joyce, W., S. E. Campana, L. J. Natanson, N. E. Kohler, H. L. Pratt Jr. & C. F. Jesen. 2002. Analysis of stomach contents of the porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*) in the Northwest Atlantic. *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, 59 (6): 1263 – 1269.
- Meaghen E.M & S. E. Campana. 2003. A quantitative assessment of the diet of the blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) off Nova Scotia, Canada. *Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science*, 32: 57-63.
- Peterson, T.R. 1961. A field guide to Western Birds. National Audubon Society. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston. 304 p.
- Sosa – Nishizaky, O. E. Furlong-Estrada, J.A. Reyes-González, & J.C. Jiménez Pérez., 2002. Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) fishery in Baja California, Mexico: an example of artisanal and middle scale fisheries interaction (Elasmobranch Symposium – Oral) Sci. Counc. Res. Doc. NAFO. 02/140. 6 p.
- Stevens J. D. 1973. Stomach Contents of the Blue Shark (*Prionace Glauca* L.) Off South-West England. *Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom*, 53: 357-361. doi:10.1017/S0025315400022323.
- Stillwell, C.E. & N. H. Kohler. 1982. Food, feeding habits, and estimates of daily ration of the shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) in the northwest Atlantic. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Science*, 39: 407 - 414.