Mediterranean spreading of the bicolor purse oyster, Isognomon bicolor, and the chicken trigger, Malleus sp., vs. the Lessepsian prejudice

MATTEO GARZIA, GIULIA FURFARO, WALTER RENDA, ALESSANDRA-MARIA ROSATI, PAOLO MARIOTTINI, SALVATORE GIACOBBE

doi: 10.12681/mms.29218

To cite this article:

GARZIA, M., FURFARO, G., RENDA, W., ROSATI, A.-M., MARIOTTINI, P., & GIACOBBE, S. (2022). Mediterranean spreading of the bicolor purse oyster, Isognomon bicolor, and the chicken trigger, Malleus sp., vs. the Lessepsian prejudice. Mediterranean Marine Science, 23(4), 777–788. https://doi.org/10.12681/mms.29218
Mediterranean spreading of the bicolor purse oyster, *Isognomon bicolor*, and the chicken trigger, *Malleus* sp., vs. the Lessepsian prejudice

Matteo GARZIA¹, Giulia FURFARO², Walter RENDA³, Alessandra Maria ROSATI¹, Paolo MARIOTTINI⁴ and Salvatore GIACOBBE⁵

¹Department of Health, Life and Environmental Sciences, University of L’Aquila, L’Aquila, Italy
²Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences and Technologies - DiSTEBA, University of Salento, Lecce, Italy
³Via Bologna 18/A, 87032 Amantea (CS), Italy
⁴Department of Science, University of “Roma Tre”, Viale G. Marconi 446, 00146 Rome, Italy
⁵Messina University, ChiBioFarAm Department, Viale Stagno D’Alcontres 31, 98166 Messina, Italy

Corresponding author: Matteo GARZIA; matteo.garzia@graduate.univaq.it

Contributing Editor: Argyro ZENETOS

Received: 13 January 2022; Accepted: 01 June 2022; Published online: 02 September 2022

Abstract

The introduction rate of alien species in the Mediterranean Sea is rapidly growing, and their taxonomical identification is increasingly challenging. This uncertain identification often leads to an incorrect estimation of the number of alien species, their route of introduction, and their potential negative effects. This is particularly true for some bivalves, which are characterized by high variation in their shells, resulting in uncertain morphological identification. This is the case for two alien bivalves, i.e., an *Isognomonidae* and a *Malleidae* species, both characterized by confused historical colonization records in the Mediterranean Sea, misidentifications, and controversial and changing nomenclatures that have insofar negatively affected our knowledge on their geographical distributions. In this respect, molecular approaches provide a strategy that is especially useful when traditional taxonomy fails, and DNA barcoding is a powerful and well-known tool to obtain reliable identifications through efficient molecular markers. In this work, we used the 16S rRNA marker to assess the preliminary identification of *Isognomon* sp. and *Malleus* sp. specimens from different localities in the Southern Mediterranean Sea. Bayesian inference (BI) and maximum likelihood (ML) methods were applied to test the monophyly of the phylogenetic lineages and to clarify their taxonomic positions, allowing a complete overview of the colonization and spreading of these two alien bivalves in the Mediterranean Sea. In particular, the *Isognomon* sp. specimens were identified as the Atlantic *I. bicolor*, highlighting that previously suggested invasive migration patterns, (i.e., the Lessepsian migration), must be reconsidered with stronger critical attention in light of currently occurring global changes.

Keywords: alien species; DNA barcoding; molecular systematic; *Isognomon*; *Malleus*.

Introduction

The first record of the non-indigenous genus *Isognomon* [Lightfoot], 1786 in the Mediterranean Sea is due to Mienis (2004), who reported on an unspecified number of *Isognomon ephippium* (Linnaeus, 1758) specimens collected in Israel. Later, Zenetos et al. (2005) and Galil (2007) questioned the occurrence of this species, as it was recorded only once on an oil platform from the Red Sea. Still in Israel, a single initially undetermined “Hammer or Tree oyster” shell, was found in 2015 and, based on the iconography of Oliver (1992: 67, plt 10, figs. 4a-f) and Huber (2010: 176, text-figure), was identified by Mienis et al. (2016) as *Isognomon legumen* (Gmelin, 1791). Afterwards, the settlement of this latter species along the Israeli coast was confirmed by Marchini et al. (2020) and reported from Turkey by Ovalis & Zenetos in Stamouli et al. (2017) and from Greece by Angelidis in Lipej et al. (2017). The latter group mentioned the previous misidentification of *I. legumen* with the co-occurrence *Malleus regula* (Forsskål in Niebuhr, 1775) (see Angelidis in Lipej, 2017) and traced the establishment of this alien bivalve in the Aegean Sea to 2016. However, specimens reported as *M. regula* from Lybia were subsequently re-identified as *I. legumen* by Crocetta (2018), who suggested that this species might have occurred in the Mediterranean Sea before 1996. Concurrently, its rapid spread westward in the Mediterranean basin was confirmed by reports from the Ionian coast of Sicily (Scuderi & Viola, 2019) and the Strait of Messina (Giacobbe & Renda in Dragičević et al., 2019), whilst Angelidis & Polyzous (2018) reported *I. legumen* and *I. australica* (Reeve, 1858) (first record...
from the Mediterranean Sea) as sympatric in the South Aegean. The occurrence of *I. australicus* in the Eastern Mediterranean was confirmed by Manousis (2021). In this regard, we noted that juveniles *I. legumen* reported from Greece by Miceli et al. (2017), and other specimens reported as *Malleus regula* by Angelidis in Lipej et al. (2017) but re-identified as *I. legumen* by Crocetta et al. (2017), appear very similar to the *I. australica* specimens outlined by Angelidis & Polyzoulis (2018). However, according to Zenetos et al. (2018) “the contemporary presence in Astypalaia of two taxa belonging to *Isognomon* Lightfoot, 1786, one of which apparently absent from the Red Sea, seems unlikely”, so that the same researchers preferred to ascribe both records to the Red Sea taxon *I. legumen* “to avoid the inflation of alien molluscan records and pending molecular confirmations”. Partially in agreement with this latter opinion, Albano et al. (2021) prudentially reported “*I. aff. australica* (sensu Angelidis and Polyzoulis, 2018)” from Cyprus and Kriti. The current literature thus demonstrates how our knowledge on the genus *Isognomon* in the Mediterranean Sea is complicated by a series of misidentifications, conflicting opinions and interpretations. This is unsurprising when we consider that the genus *Isognomon* is characterized by marked habitat-dependent variability in shell shapes (Fischer-Piette 1976; Coan et al., 2000; Wilk & Bieler, 2009) and convergent interspecific morphologies (Benthottage et al., 2020). These features make shell-based discrimination in the species unreliable, as shown by Wilk & Bieler (2009) for *I. alatus* (Gmelin, 1791) vs. the sympatric *I. bicolor* (C.B. Adams, 1845) and the allopatric *I. ephippium* in the Florida Keys. Morphological similarities and shell shape variability may also explain the presumptive record from the Canary Islands of the exclusively Indo-Pacific *I. isognomon* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Gómez Rodríguez & Perez Sanchez, 1998), which should instead be assigned to the West African *I. dunkeri* (P. Fischer 1881), according to Huber (2015), or to the West Atlantic *I. bicolor*, according to Holmes et al. (2015). The entire systematics of the genus *Isognomon*, however, is controversial and requires an update supported by molecular data. For example, according to Huber (2015) the phylogenetic data of Témkin (2010) indicates that the two most common Indo-Pacific Isognomonidae, i.e., *Isognomon (I.) ephippium* (Linnaeus 1758) and *I. (I.) isognomon* (Linnaeus 1758), may be derived from two sibling species. It follows that a resolution of valid names, with the related species distributions and habitat preferences, requires thorough review, necessarily supported by detailed illustrations of the genetically analysed specimens. Similar considerations may concern the above-mentioned *M. regula*, whose putative spread across the Mediterranean remains uncertain, also due to the frequent erroneous attribution of *Isognomon* sp. specimens (Crocetta et al., 2017; Crocetta, 2018). *Malleus regula*, although a precocious Lebanese migrant [the first Mediterranean record from Syria and Lebanon by Moazzo (1931)] has been reported as established in the Levantine Basin only within the last decade (Marchini et al., 2020) and in the Ionian Sea even more recently (Prato & Rubino in Kousteni et al., 2019; Bini & Pina-sco, 2021), with an apparent disjunct distribution which could indicate unequal investigation efforts. In this paper, the first molecular identification of the above-mentioned presumptive species is provided through DNA barcoding and a phylogenetic approach using Bayesian inference (BI) and maximum likelihood (ML) methods. We use these data to clarify the taxonomic position of two controversial taxa, providing insight on the patterns and processes of their introduction and spread in the Mediterranean Sea.

### Materials and Methods

#### Monitoring and sampling

Monitoring of Non-Indigenous Species, NIS, starting in the framework of the PRA 2008/2009 program “Settlement dynamics and colonization of allochthonous assemblages in the Cape Peloro Lagoon” (Strait of Messina, central Mediterranean), was gradually extended to the adjacent Tyrrhenian and Ionian basins and integrated with further investigation in North Ionian, Aegean, and Levantine Sea (PhD school contribution 2016; PON 2014-2020, grant AIM 1848751-2). Two sampling methods have been employed, i.e., by hand collection during snorkelling and SCUBA recognition and scraping of 30x30 cm hard bottom surface. The scraped samples, retained in a fine net (< 100 µm), were fixed in ethanol 70% in the field or, whenever possible, rapidly brought in the laboratory and immediately frozen. Subsequently, an accurate sorting was carried out under a stereomicroscope, and the selected specimens definitively fixed in 70% or 95% ethanol, depending on their destination for analysis. Shell characters are investigated to propose a morphological identification comparing the shells of the new Mediterranean specimens with shells of previous works (Huber, 2010; Miennis et al., 2016; Miceli et al., 2017; Ovalis & Zenetos in Stamouli et al., 2017; Angelidis & Polyzoulis, 2018; Crocetta, 2018; Giacobbe & Renda in Dragičević et al., 2019; Prato & Rubino in Kousteni et al., 2019; Scuderi & Viola, 2019; Marchini et al., 2020; Albano et al., 2021; Bini & Piasco, 2021; Manousis et al., 2021), and pictures of shell specimens of *M. regulus* (AMNH:307896) from Florida Keys (USA) and *M. regula* (AMNH:319335 and AMNH:319339) from Darwin Harbour, Australia stored at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH).

#### Molecular analysis

A piece of adductor muscle was clipped from each sample and total DNA was extracted using a standard high-salt protocol (Sambrook, 1989). Amplification of the 16S fragment gene was performed by PCR using universal primers 16Sar-L and 16Sbr-H (Palumbi et al., 1991). The PCR conditions used were: 3 min denaturation step at 94°C; 35 cycles of 94°C/60 s, 51°C/60 s, 72°C/60 s; 10 min final extension at 72°C. Amplicons
were sequenced by Genewiz GmbH (Germany) (https://www.genewiz.com). Sequences are deposited in GenBank database (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/) with accession numbers OK104096-OK104098 and OK166813. The Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLASTN) search (Altschul et al., 1990, Johnson et al., 2008) was used in a preliminary identification of the sequences, and also to exclude contaminations. In addition, two 16S datasets, one for each family (Isognomonidae and Malleidae), were built including the newly produced sequences and all the GenBank sequences belonging to each of the families. Datasets were aligned with MAFFT v.7 online service (Katoh et al., 2019) using the E-INS-i iterative refinement algorithm. Polymorphic sites of the three dataset alignments were calculated using DnaSP 6 (Rozas et al., 2017). Uncorrected p-distances and Kimura 2-paramer (K2p) distances were calculated using the program Mega X (Kumar et al., 2018). A third dataset, used for downstream phylogenetic analysis, was built by joining together the two previous datasets, and included the addition of *Atrina rigida* ([Lightfoot], 1786) (HQ329397) as an outgroup. The GTR+G model was selected as the best evolutionary model by JModelTest 0.1 (Posada, 2008) according to the Bayesian information criterion (BIC). Phylogenetic analyses were performed using Bayesian inference (BI) and maximum likelihood (ML) methods. BI was carried out using MrBayes 3.2.7 (Ronquist et al., 2012) running two Markov chains of 5 000 000 generations each, sampled every 1000 generations. Consensus trees were calculated on trees sampled after a burn-in of 25%. The ML tree was inferred with W-IQ-TREE web platform (Trifinopoulos et al., 2016) using an ultrafast bootstrap (uBS) analysis with 1000 generations. The obtained phylogenetic trees were visualised and curated using FigTree v.1.4.4 (available at http://http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/software/figtree/).

**Results**

**Sampling localities and ecological notes**

Several *Isognomon* sp. specimens have been collected in the South Tyrrhenian Sea, from the north-eastern coast of Sicily, in Cape Milazzo (38.230303°N, 15.249114°E) in June 2021, as well as from the north-western Calabrian coasts, namely Briatico (38.727822°N, 16.033433°E) in November 2020 and San Lucido (39.305881°N, 16.045556°E) in February 2021 (Fig. 1). Other specimens were collected in the Strait of Messina (38.259819°N, 15.628871°E) in September 2020, from the same Sicilian population reported by Giacobbe & Renda in Dragičević and were sequenced by Genewiz GmbH (Germany) (https://www.genewiz.com). Sequences are deposited in GenBank database (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/) with accession numbers OK104096-OK104098 and OK166813. The Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLASTN) search (Altschul et al., 1990, Johnson et al., 2008) was used in a preliminary identification of the sequences, and also to exclude contaminations. In addition, two 16S datasets, one for each family (Isognomonidae and Malleidae), were built including the newly produced sequences and all the GenBank sequences belonging to each of the families. Datasets were aligned with MAFFT v.7 online service (Katoh et al., 2019) using the E-INS-i iterative refinement algorithm. Polymorphic sites of the three dataset alignments were calculated using DnaSP 6 (Rozas et al., 2017). Uncorrected p-distances and Kimura 2-paramer (K2p) distances were calculated using the program Mega X (Kumar et al., 2018). A third dataset, used for downstream phylogenetic analysis, was built by joining together the two previous datasets, and included the addition of *Atrina rigida* ([Lightfoot], 1786) (HQ329397) as an outgroup. The GTR+G model was selected as the best evolutionary model by JModelTest 0.1 (Posada, 2008) according to the Bayesian information criterion (BIC). Phylogenetic analyses were performed using Bayesian inference (BI) and maximum likelihood (ML) methods. BI was carried out using MrBayes 3.2.7 (Ronquist et al., 2012) running two Markov chains of 5 000 000 generations each, sampled every 1000 generations. Consensus trees were calculated on trees sampled after a burn-in of 25%. The ML tree was inferred with W-IQ-TREE web platform (Trifinopoulos et al., 2016) using an ultrafast bootstrap (uBS) analysis with 1000 generations. The obtained phylogenetic trees were visualised and curated using FigTree v.1.4.4 (available at http://http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/software/figtree/).

**Sampling localities and ecological notes**

Several *Isognomon* sp. specimens have been collected in the South Tyrrhenian Sea, from the north-eastern coast of Sicily, in Cape Milazzo (38.230303°N, 15.249114°E) in June 2021, as well as from the north-western Calabrian coasts, namely Briatico (38.727822°N, 16.033433°E) in November 2020 and San Lucido (39.305881°N, 16.045556°E) in February 2021 (Fig. 1). Other specimens were collected in the Strait of Messina (38.259819°N, 15.628871°E) in September 2020, from the same Sicilian population reported by Giacobbe & Renda in Dragičević and were sequenced by Genewiz GmbH (Germany) (https://www.genewiz.com). Sequences are deposited in GenBank database (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/) with accession numbers OK104096-OK104098 and OK166813. The Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLASTN) search (Altschul et al., 1990, Johnson et al., 2008) was used in a preliminary identification of the sequences, and also to exclude contaminations. In addition, two 16S datasets, one for each family (Isognomonidae and Malleidae), were built including the newly produced sequences and all the GenBank sequences belonging to each of the families. Datasets were aligned with MAFFT v.7 online service (Katoh et al., 2019) using the E-INS-i iterative refinement algorithm. Polymorphic sites of the three dataset alignments were calculated using DnaSP 6 (Rozas et al., 2017). Uncorrected p-distances and Kimura 2-paramer (K2p) distances were calculated using the program Mega X (Kumar et al., 2018). A third dataset, used for downstream phylogenetic analysis, was built by joining together the two previous datasets, and included the addition of *Atrina rigida* ([Lightfoot], 1786) (HQ329397) as an outgroup. The GTR+G model was selected as the best evolutionary model by JModelTest 0.1 (Posada, 2008) according to the Bayesian information criterion (BIC). Phylogenetic analyses were performed using Bayesian inference (BI) and maximum likelihood (ML) methods. BI was carried out using MrBayes 3.2.7 (Ronquist et al., 2012) running two Markov chains of 5 000 000 generations each, sampled every 1000 generations. Consensus trees were calculated on trees sampled after a burn-in of 25%. The ML tree was inferred with W-IQ-TREE web platform (Trifinopoulos et al., 2016) using an ultrafast bootstrap (uBS) analysis with 1000 generations. The obtained phylogenetic trees were visualised and curated using FigTree v.1.4.4 (available at http://http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/software/figtree/).

**Fig. 1:** Mediterranean distribution of Isognomonidae (circles) and Malleidae (squares) records. White circles indicate first reports in this work - A: Milazzo, Sicily, Italy; B: San Lucido, Calabria, Italy. Red circles indicate sequenced specimens in this work - C: Messina, Sicily, Italy; D: Briatico, Calabria, Italy. Green circles indicate reports of bibliography - E: Catania, Sicily, Italy (Scuderi & Viola, 2019); F: Bengasi, Libya, identified as *Malleus regula* (Giannuzzi-Savelli et al., 2001); G: Plakias, Creta, Greece, identified as *I. aff australica* (Albano et al., 2021); H: Astypalaia, Greece, identified as *Malleus regula* (Angelidis in Lipej et al., 2017) and as *I. australica* (Angelidis & Polyzoulis, 2018); I: Karpathos, Greece (Micali et al., 2017); J: Dalyan, Iztuzu, Turkey (Ovalis & Zenetos in Stamouli et al., 2017); K: north of Cyprus, Turkey, identified as *I. aff australica* (Albano et al., 2021); L: Shiqmona, Israel (Mienis et al., 2016); M: Tel Aviv, Israel (Marchini et al., 2020); N: Ashqelon, Israel identified as *I. ephippium* (Mienis, 2004). Red squares indicate sequenced specimens in this work - 1: Mar Piccolo di Taranto, Apulia, Italy; 2: Polis, Cyprus. Green squares indicate reports in bibliography. 3: Mar Piccolo di Taranto, Apulia, Italy (Stamouli et al., 2017); 4: Simi Island, Greece (Giannuzzi-Savelli et al., 2001); 5: Kas, Turkey (Giannuzzi-Savelli et al., 2001); 6: Syria (Moazzo, 1931); 7: Lebanon (Moazzo, 1931).
et al. (2019) as the first report from the Italian coast (Fig. 1). *Isognomon* sp. specimens, (maximum sizes ranging from 4.7 mm to 13.9 mm; Fig. 2), were found deeply wedged between the roughness of vegetated hard substrates, mostly within red algae calcareous concretions (Fig. 3A). Only one specimen (maximum size 22 mm) was found adhering to a *Pinna rudis* Linnaeus, 1758 shell surface, partially masked by crustose poriferans (Fig. 3B).

A juvenile *Malleus* sp. (maximum size 12 mm) was collected at Polis, Cyprus (35.043453°N, 32.416217°E) Levantine Basin, in June 2019, on a rocky bottom substrate at 2 m depth, as an epibiont on *Chama pacifica* Broderip, 1835 and was analysed using molecular methods (Table 1). Additional specimens were sampled in July 2020, in “Mar Piccolo di Taranto” (40.481283°N, 17.268383°E), a sheltered area of the Ionian Apulian coast (Italy) (Fig. 1). The *Malleus* sp. specimens were found as epibionts on rocks (Fig. 4) and anthropic structures at 3 m depth, or as dead shells (maximum sizes ranging from 12 mm to 46 mm; Fig. 5).

### Molecular analyses

It was impossible to unequivocally assign morphological identifications for any new Mediterranean specimens. Therefore, the Mediterranean samples, *Isognomon* sp. specimens from Briatico (OK104096) and from Messina (OK104097) and *Malleus* sp. specimens from Cyprus (OK104098) and from Taranto (OK166813) were analysed using the 16S mitochondrial barcode marker. BLASTN results of OK104096 and OK104097 nucleotide sequences showed 100% of similarity with the GenBank sequence identified as *I. bicolor* (HQ329406; voucher AMNH:307896). BLASTN results of OK104098 and OK166813 sequences showed less than 90% of similarity with any sequences stored in GenBank as *Malleus* spp. (Table 1). Therefore, it was only possible to assign an identification at genus level.

In addition, we built three different 16S sequence datasets. The 16S *Isognomonidae* sequences alignment consisted of 503 positions and a total number of 124 polymorphic sites. The 16S *Malleidae* sequences alignment
Fig. 3: *Isognomon bicolor* specimens in situ. A, *I. bicolor* specimen found deeply wedged between the roughness of vegetated hard substrates, mostly within red algae calcareous concretions. B, *I. bicolor* specimen found adhering to a *Pinna radiata* Linnaeus, 1758 shell surface, partially masked by crustose poriferans (partially removed).

Table 1. Dataset based on 16S sequences of Isognomonidae and Malleidae species analysed. *: indicates the specimens sequenced in this work.

| Species                  | Sample localities          | Vouchers      | Accession numbers 16S | References          |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| **Isognomonidae Woodring, 1925** |                             |               |                       |                     |
| *Isognomon alatus*       | USA: Florida Keys           | AMNH:305129   | HQ329405              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Isognomon alatus*       | Puerto Rico: Phophorescent Bay |               | JN133622              | Unpublished Kappner et al. |
| *Isognomon alatus*       | USA: Florida Keys           | BivAToL-30    | KC429251              | Sharma et al., 2013 |
| *Isognomon bicolor*      | USA: Florida Keys           | AMNH:307896   | HQ329406              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Isognomon bicolor*      | Italy: Briatico             |               | OK104096              | This study          |
| *Isognomon bicolor*      | Italy: Messina              |               | OK104097              | This study          |
| *Isognomon cf. ephippium*| Thailand: Kungkrabaen Bay   | AMNH:319253   | HQ329407              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Isognomon ephippium*    |                             | MIEE2015-6IE1 | KY081325              | Liu et al., 2018    |
| *Isognomon radiatus*     | USA: Florida Keys           | AMNH:305142   | HQ329408              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Isognomon recognitus*   | Mexico: Baja California Sur, Laguna San Ignacio | | KT317424 | Raith et al., 2015 |
| *Isognomon recognitus*   | Mexico: Sonora, Guaymas     |               | KT317425              | Raith et al., 2015  |
| *Isognomon recognitus*   | Mexico: Sonora, Guaymas     |               | KT317426              | Raith et al., 2015  |
| *Isognomon recognitus*   | Mexico: Sonora, Puerto Penasco |             | KT317427              | Raith et al., 2015  |
| *Isognomon sp. A2*       | Clipperton Island           | CASIZ 104281  | HQ329409              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| **Malleidae Lamarck, 1818** |                             |               |                       |                     |
| *Malleus albus*          |                             | BivAToL-79    | KC429252              | Sharma et al., 2013 |
| *Malleus cf. albus*      | Australia: Houtman Abrolhos | AMNH:319298   | HQ329410              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Malleus candeanus*      | USA: Florida Keys           | AMNH:FK-685   | HQ329411              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Malleus malleus*        | Australia: Bohol Is.        | MNHN:42755    | HQ329412              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Malleus regula*         | Australia: Darwin Harbor    | AMNH:319339   | HQ329414              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Malleus regula*         | Australia: Darwin Harbor    | AMNH:319335   | HQ329413              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
| *Malleus sp.1*           | Cyprus                      | RM3-PM-151    | OK104098              | This study          |
| *Malleus sp.1*           | Italy: Taranto              | RM3-PM-147    | OK166813              | This study          |
| **Pinnidae Leach, 1819** |                             |               |                       |                     |
| *Atrina rigida*          |                             | AMNH:305138   | HQ329397              | Tëmkin, 2010        |
consisted of 438 positions and a total number of 85 polymorphic sites. The joined dataset (Isognomonidae+Malleidae+outgroup) consisted of 431 positions and a total number of 177 polymorphic sites. The list of species and relative GenBank accession numbers are reported in Table 1. Genetic distances (p-distance and K2p) were calculated considering any representatives of Isognomonidae and Malleidae families (Table 2). Results of the distance analyses showed no intraspecific divergence between each couple of new sequences (OK104096/OK104097 and OK104098/OK166813). Moreover, the interspecific genetic distance (p-distance/K2p) in Isognomonidae family ranged from 4.6%/4.8% to 23.1%/29%, while in Malleidae the genetic distances ranged from 5.1%/5.3% to 15.9%/18.1%. The phylogenetic results corroborate our preliminary identification attempts (Fig. 6). Bayesian posterior probabilities (BPP) and ultrafast bootstrap (uBS) values, based respectively on BI and ML analyses, are reported at each node of the tree. Each of the new sequenced specimens were placed in two distinct highly supported clades: BPP=1; uBS ≥98%.

**Discussion**

**Taxonomic investigation of Mediterranean *Isognomon* sp. and *Malleus* sp. specimens**

The molecular data generated here provides compelling evidence that our Mediterranean *Isognomon* sp. specimens...

---

**Table 2.** 16S interspecific genetic distance values (p-distance: lower; K2p: upper) between representatives of Isognomonidae (a) and Malleidae (b) families. *:* indicates the specimens sequenced in this work (*I. bicolor*:* OK104096 and OK104097; *Malleus sp.1*:* OK166813 and OK104098).

|               | I. ala | I. bic | I. bic* | I. bic* | I. eph | I. rad | I. rec | I. sp. |
|---------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| *Isognomon alatus* | -      | 17.7%  | 17.7%   | 23.9%   | 21.6%  | 23.9%  | 23.9%  | 29.0% |
| *Isognomon bicolor* | 18.4%  | -      | 1.9%    | 22.6%   | 22.2%  | 23.8%  | 23.8%  | 28.3% |
| *Isognomon bicolor* | 18.4%  | 0.0%   | -       | 22.0%   | 21.3%  | 23.8%  | 23.8%  | 27.6% |
| *Isognomon ephippium* | 16.0%  | 18.4%  | 18.4%   | 18.4%   | -      | 4.8%   | 4.8%   | 23.8% |
| *Isognomon radiatus* | 21.1%  | 22.1%  | 22.1%   | 22.1%   | 22.1%  | -      | 0.0%   | 25.8% |
| *Isognomon recognitus* | 17.7%  | 4.6%   | 4.6%    | 4.6%    | 19.2%  | 23.1%  | -      | 25.8% |
| *Isognomon sp.* | 21.8%  | 20.0%  | 20.0%   | 20.0%   | 22.9%  | 12.3%  | 20.7%  | -     |

|               | M. alb | M. can | M. cf. alb | M. mal | M. reg | M. sp.1* | M. sp.1* |
|---------------|--------|--------|------------|--------|--------|----------|----------|
| *Malleus albus* | -      | 18.1%  | 4.8%       | 6.3%   | 6.0%   | 13.2%    | 13.2%    |
| *Malleus candeanus* | 15.9%  | -      | 16.0%      | 15.7%  | 17.2%  | 14.7%    | 14.7%    |
| *Malleus cf. albus* | 4.8%   | 14.5%  | -          | 5.3%   | 5.8%   | 11.5%    | 11.5%    |
| *Malleus malleus* | 6.1%   | 14.0%  | 5.1%       | -      | 3.5%   | 11.8%    | 11.8%    |
| *Malleus regula* | 6.0%   | 15.2%  | 5.5%       | 3.8%   | -      | 11.5%    | 11.5%    |
| *Malleus sp.1* | 12.3%  | 13.3%  | 10.6%      | 10.7%  | 10.4%  | -        | 0.0%     |
| *Malleus sp.1* | 12.3%  | 13.3%  | 10.6%      | 10.7%  | 10.4%  | 0.0%     | -        |

*Fig. 4: Malleus* sp. specimens *in situ*, inside hard (A) and soft (B) bioconcretions.
specimens represent *Isognomon bicolor*. It is well known that many reference sequences in GenBank are not reliable for barcoding studies and this causes uncertainty in the molecular identification of some molluscan taxa (see Briski et al., 2016). However, our 16S sequences (OK104096 and OK104097) showed a 100% match-rate with a reference sequence from museum specimen (AMNH:307896) sampled in the Florida Keys (present-
ed in Fig. 2A-D). This sampling locality is north of the Caribbean region where the type locality of *I. bicolor* is found (Jamaican coasts) (Adams, 1845). In addition, this determination agrees with the redesription of *I. bicolor* by Domaneschi & Martins (2002), although this similarity cannot be considered by itself definitive proof, due to the well-known morphological variability characterizing *Isognomon* species (Wilk & Bieler, 2009). In this regard, the small number of ligamental resilifer teeth observed in the specimens that were analysed using molecular tools (Fig. 2I-J) can be explained by the high variability in this structure within the *Isognomon* genus, which in fact does not constitute a diagnostic character (Domaneschi & Martins, 2002). The 16S sequences of *Malleus* sp.1 (OK104098 and OK166813) did not match any sequences present in GenBank, leaving such specimens undetermined at the species level. In particular, *Malleus* sp.1 sequences are 10.4% distant from *M. regula* sequences of museum specimens (AMNH:319335 and AMNH:319339 from Australia; Fig. 5A-F). Moreover, *Malleus* sp.1 and *Malleus regula* sequences formed two well-separated and highly supported clades in the Bayesian phylogenetic tree (Fig. 6).

Molecular identification of previously misidentified alien *Isognomon* sp. And *Malleus* sp. Specimens from the Mediterranean Sea (Tyrhenian, Ionian, and Aegean basins) have been provided here for the first time using the 16S rRNA marker. Furthermore, phylogenetic results based on BI and ML analyses confirmed that the analysed Mediterranean specimens belong to *Isognomonidae* and *Malleidae* families, representing two distinct well-supported clades.

**Atlantic introduction**

The molecular identification of *I. bicolor* brings into question all previous morphological identifications of *Isognomonidae* in the Mediterranean, whose shell morphologies always agree with the variability range of *I. bicolor*. It is remarkable that observations on the *I. bicolor* invasiveness and habitat preferences in the west Atlantic also agree with reports from the Mediterranean. As invasive species, for example, the “bicolor purse oyster”, originating from the native Caribbean region (Benthotide et al., 2020), has spread southward, reaching the north-eastern Brazilian coasts in the 1970s (Loebmann et al., 2010; Dias et al., 2013; De Oliveira Gomes & Carvalho Da Silva, 2013), and then rafting to the Uruguayan coast (Breves et al., 2014), representing one of the most
important introductions to the benthic realm (Ferreira et al., 2009). As for the Mediterranean reports, in Brazil this species was initially misidentified, i.e., with the alleged endemic I. alatus (Gmelin, 1791) (Domaneschi & Martins, 2002). In south Brazil, moderate wave exposure and availability of heterogenous steep rocky substrates (Whorff et al., 1995; Domaneschi & Martins, 2002) and rock crevices (Moyes, 2005; Zamprogno et al., 2010), seem to be important for the invasive success of I. bicolor, which preferentially settles inside biogenic secondary substrates (Rocha, 2002). Such observations, as well as suggested associations in invaded environments with native macroalgae (López & Coutinho, 2010) and vermetid reef habitat (Breves & Junqueira, 2017), substantially agrees with our sampling data. This habitat preference suggests that I. bicolor, despite the high invasiveness, cannot be considered a pioneering species in substratum colonization (Rocha, 2002) and does not display a clear opportunistic behaviour (Benthotage et al., 2020). Ballast water and/or fouling of international commercial vessels (Breves-Ramos et al., 2010; Fernandes et al., 2016) and relocation of oil or gas platforms from the Caribbean coast (Oliveira & Creed, 2008; Breves-Ramos et al., 2010) have been considered possible vectors of I. bicolor to Brazilian waters, although others have reported on the role of rafting by floating debris (Breves et al., 2014).

This latter suggestion agrees with the known use of floating macroalgae by I. bicolor as a secondary dispersal pathway (Dias et al., 2013) and also explains its standing in south England as an epibiont on a plastic spool, almost simultaneously with other Caribbean molluscan species (Holmes et al., 2015). Such mechanisms for west to east Atlantic dispersal of southern, warm water taxa (Holmes et al., 2015), cannot be separated from the Mediterranean spreading of tropical neuotun communities, which occasionally even reach the cold Liguro-Provençal basin (Betti et al., 2017). Moreover, the northward shift of the 15°C February isotherm divide, providing a warmer corridor which directly connects the Strait of Gibraltar with the eastern Mediterranean (Bianchi et al., 2012), allows tropical taxa to bypass most of the western Mediterranean Sea (Di Silvestro et al., 2010), rapidly reaching the most favourable Levantine Basin throughout the Mid-Mediterranean Jet Current. Genetic investigations have evidenced that these patterns of invasion have occurred frequently in other taxa; for example, the warm Atlantic Heterobranchia Aplysia dactylomela Rang, 1828, settled in the eastern Mediterranean before spreading westward and northward (Valdés et al., 2013). Similarly, secondary dispersal from Aegean might be responsible for the Ionian colonization by I. bicolor which, according to our data, initially settled in the eastern coasts of Sicily (Scuderi & Viola, 2019, as I. legumen), and subsequently spread northward throughout the Strait of Messina, rapidly colonizing the Southern Tyrrenhian coasts, according to the local sea-surface circulation (Vetrano et al., 2010).

We thus agree with Por (2009), who considered the attention towards the Lessepsian migrants disproportionately greater than the increasing settlement by tropical Atlantic newcomers through the Straits of Gibraltar. Among others, a consequence of this is that when non-native species belonging to tropical genera or families first appear in the Eastern Mediterranean they may be classified according to the most similar Indo-Pacific taxon, implicitly excluding other possibilities. Such Lessepsian prejudice, allowing a cascade of misidentifications, could preclude early warning of potential threatening invaders, such as I. bicolor. This invasive species, which in Brazilian coasts has caused profound changes in the native rocky coast communities reaching densities up to 800 individuals/100 cm² (Magalhães, 1999; Rapagnã, 2004; Breves-Ramos et al., 2010), was locally responsible for reducing 50% of the native barnacle population, Tetracclita stalactifera Lamarck, 1818 (López, 2003), and probably competes with Perna perna (Linnaeus 1758), an edible mussel of commercial interest (Rapagnã 2004; Breves-Ramos et al., 2010). In this respect, the observation that this invasive species does not settle on bare substrate, appearing only at late succession stages (Rocha, 2002), is not reassuring, and thereby represents a potential threat for protected species and habitats, such as the Mediterranean vermetid reefs (Milazzo et al., 2016), whose analogues in Brazilian waters are competing with I. bicolor colonization (Breves & Junqueira, 2017).

The spreading of Malleus sp.1 in the Mediterranean, confirmed by a sample from Cyprus, strongly questions previous records regarding the establishment of M. regula in Greek and Turkish Aegean waters (Giannuzzi-Savelli et al., 2001; Crocetta et al., 2017), in the Ionian Sea (Prato & Rubio in Kousteni et al., 2019), as well as recent records from Sicily (Bini & Pinasco, 2021). In the meantime, these observations cast doubts about both historical and recent reports from the Levantine Basin. Whilst we wait to understand the true identity of this undetermined taxon through molecular and morphological screening of the entire genus, its spread needs to be carefully monitored, since it represents a potential threat for biodiversity conservation in the Mediterranean.

Conclusions

Increasing anthropogenic introductions and climate change have expanded the frequency of alien invasions and the variety of ecoregion sources of potential invaders. Invasive patterns, which were previously taken for granted, such as the Lessepsian migration, must be reconsidered with stronger critical attention. This changing scenario highlights an even stronger need for accurate taxonomic identification, from which more reliable predictions of settlement patterns and potential ecosystem damage can be derived. Despite the occurrence of an increasing number of marine alien species in the Mediterranean Sea, taxonomic identification of these invasive taxa is often still difficult when based on morphological characters alone. This uncertain identification often leads to an incorrect estimation of the number of alien species and their true routes of introduction. This is particularly true for bivalves characterized by a high variation in their shells, leading to uncertainty in morphological identifica-
tion. This is the cases for two alien bivalves assigned to Isognomonidae and Malleidae families characterized by their confused Sea of origin and their controversial and changing nomenclature. The variable phenotype of their shells has historically produced several cases of misidentification, which has negatively affected our knowledge on their geographical distribution to date. In this respect, molecular approaches using DNA barcoding and phylogenetic analyses are fundamental tools to avoid the misidentification and related hasty conclusions, mainly when traditional taxonomy fails. In this work, the 16S rRNA marker was utilized for the first time to assess the identification of Isognomon sp. and Malleus sp. specimens from different localities of the southern Mediterranean Sea. The first taxon is now assigned as the Atlantic species *I. bicolor*, whilst the unassigned second taxon should be referred as *Malleus* sp.1 instead of the Indo-Pacific *M. regula*. Obviously, indispensable tools such as GenBank are still far from offering the full coverage required for our current needs, which is why a greater effort should be devoted to integrating known families or genera suspected to be more involved in invasive processes.

**Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Estefania Rodriguez and Lily Berniker of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH, New York, USA) for sending the photos of *Isognomon bicolor* and *Malleus regula* specimens. We thank Daniele Salvi for the constructive discussion on molecular analyses. We are extremely grateful to Josephine Paris for the English revision of the manuscript. Part of the sampling was carried out during the “Monitoring of Non-Indigenous Species, NIS,” starting in the framework of the PRA 2008/2009 program “Settlement dynamics and colonization of allochthonous assemblages in the Capo Peloro Lagoon” (Strait of Messina, central Mediterranean) (PhD school contribution 2016). GF wish to thank University of Salento and the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (PON 2014-2020, grant AIM 1848751-2, Linea 2) for support.

**References**

Adams, C.B., 1845. *Specierum ovarum conchyliorum, in Jamaica repertorum, synopsis*. *Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History, 2*, 1-17.

Albano, P.G., Steger, J., Bakker, P.A.J., Bogi, C., Bošnjak, M., 2021. Numerous new records of tropical non-indigenous species in the Eastern Mediterranean highlight the challenges of their recognition and identification. *ZooKeys*, 1010, 1-95.

Alitschul, S.F, Gish, W., Miller, W., Myers, E.W., Lipman, D.J., 1990. Basic local alignment search tool. *Journal of Molecular Biology, 215*, 403-410.

Angelidis, A., 2017. New records of two alien molluscan species from Astypalaia Island in the southern Aegean Sea. P. 195. In: Lipej L., Acevedo I., Akel E. H. K., Anastasopoulos, A., Angelidis A. *et al.*, 2017. New Mediterranean Biodiversity Records (March 2017). *Mediterranean Marine Science, 18* (1), 179-201.

Angelidis, A., Polyzoulis, G., 2018. New distributional records of four Indo-Pacific species from Astypalaia Island, South Aegean Sea, Greece. *Xenophora Taxonomy, 21*, 1-12.

Benthohage, C., Cole, V.J., Schulz, K.G., Benzendorff, K., 2020. A review of the biology of the genus *Isognomon* (Bivalvia; Pteriidae) with a discussion on shellfish reef restoration potential of *Isognomon ephippium*. *Molluscan Research, 40* (4), 286-307.

Betti, F., Bavestrello, G., Bo, M., Coppari, M., Enrichetti, F. *et al.*, 2017. Exceptional strandings of the purple snail *Janthina pallida* Thompson, 1840 (Gastropoda: Epitonidae) and first record of an alien goose barnacle along the Ligurian coast (western Mediterranean Sea). *The European Zoological Journal, 84* (1), 488-495.

Bianchi, C.N., Morri, C., Chiantore, M., Montefalcone, M., Parravicini, V. *et al.*, 2012. Mediterranean Sea biodiversity between the legacy from the past and a future of change. In: Stambler, N. (Ed). *Life in the Mediterranean Sea: A look at habitat changes*. P. 1-60. Nova Science Publishers, New York.

Bini, G., Pinasco, L., 2021. Prima segnalazione di *Malleus regula* (Forsskål in Niebuhr, 1775) (Ostreida: Malleidae) per le coste della Sicilia. *Alleryana*, 39 (2), 94-95.

Breves, A., Junqueira, A.O.R., 2017. Intertidal vermetid reef as a shelter for invasive bivalves in a tropical bay. *Aquatic Ecosystem Health & Management, 20* (4), 384-392.

Breves-Ramos, A., Junqueira, A.O.R., Lavrado, H.P., Silva, S.H.G., Ferreira-Silva, M.A.G., 2010. Population structure of the invasive bivalve *Isognomon bicolor* on rocky shores of Rio de Janeiro State (Brazil). *Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom, 90* (3), 453-459.

Breves, A., Scarabino, F., Leoni, V., 2014. First records of the non-native bivalve *Isognomon bicolor* (CB Adams, 1845) rafting to the Uruguayan coast. *Check List, 10* (3), 684-686.

Briski, E., Ghabooli, S., Bailey, S.A., MacIsaac, H.J., 2016. Are genetic databases sufficiently populated to detect non-indigenous species? *Biological Invasions, 18* (7), 1911-1922.

Caan, E.V., Valentich-Scott, P., Bernard, F.R., 2000. Bivalve Seashells of Western North America: Marine Bivalve Mollusks from Artic Alaska to Baja California. Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Monograph no. 2. *Studies in Biodiversity, 2*, 195-197 pp.

Croccetta F., 2018. *Malleus regula* in Libya: Another case of misidentification for *Isognomon legumen* *Triton, 37*, 4-5.

Croccetta, F., Gofas, S., Salas, C., Tringali, L.P., Zenetos, A., 2017. Local ecological knowledge versus published literature: a review of non-indigenous Mollusca in Greek marine waters. *Aquatic Invasions, 12* (4), 415-434.

De Oliveira Gomes, L.E., Carvalho Da Silva, E. 2013. New record of *Isognomon bicolor* (C. B. Adams, 1845) (Bivalvia, Isognomonidae) to Bahia Litoral North. *Pan-American Journal of Aquatic Sciences, 8* (4), 361-363.

Di Silvestro, D., Garzoli, L., Lodola, A., 2010. Colonization status of the Mediterranean Sea by the tropical sea hare *Aplysia dactylomela* (Opisthobranchia, Anaspidea). In *5th International Student Conference Biodiversity and Functioning of Aquatic Ecosystems in Baltic Sea Region. Palan-
Dias, T.L.P., Mota, E., Almeida, S., Gondim, A.I., Rabelo, E. et al. 2013. *Isognomon bicolor* (CB Adams, 1845) (Mollusca: Bivalvia): First record of this invasive species for the States of Paraíba and Alagoas and new records for other localities of Northeastern Brazil. *Check List*, 9, 157.

Domenach, O., Martins, C.M., 2002. *Isognomon bicolor* (CB Adams) (Bivalvia, Isognomonidae): primeiro registro para o Brasil, redescricao da espécie e considerações sobre a ocorrência e distribuição de Isognomon na costa brasileira. *Revista Brasileira de Zoologia*, 19, 611-627.

Fernandes, J.A., Santos, L., Vance, T., Fileman, T., Smith, D. et al., 2016. Costs and benefits to European shipping of ballast-water and hull-fouling treatment: Impacts of native and non-indigenous species. *Marine Policy*, 64, 148-155.

Ferreira, C.E.L., Junqueira, A.D. O.R., Villac, M.C., Lopes, R.M. 2009. Marine bioinvasions in the Brazilian coast: brief report on history of events, vectors, ecology, impacts and management of non-indigenous species. In *Biological invasions in marine ecosystems* (pp. 459-477). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

Fischer-Piette, E., 1976. *Revision des Aviculidees*: 1. Crenatula. Pedalion, Foramelina. *Journal de Conchyliologie*, 113 (1-2), 3-42.

Galil, B.S., 2007. Seeing Red: Alien species along the Mediterranean coast of Israel. *Aquatine Invasions*, 2 (4), 281-312.

Giacobbe, S., Renda, W., 2019. First record of *Isognomon legumen* (Gmelin, 1791) in Italian seas. p. 645. In: Dragičević, B., Anadoli, O., Angel, D., Benabdi, M., Bitar, G., et al., 2019. New Mediterranean Biodiversity Records (December 2019). *Mediterranea Marine Science*, 20 (3), 636-656.

Giannuzzi-Savelli, R., Purateri, F., Palmeri, A., Ebreo, C., 2001. Atlante delle conchiglie marine del Mediterraneo. Vol. 7 (Bivalvia: Protothracchia - Pteriomorpha). *Edizioni Evolver, Rome*.

Gómez Rodriguez, R., Perez Sanchez, J.M., 1998. *Moluscos Bivalvos De Canarias*. Ediciones Del Cabildo Insular De Gran Canaria, Las Palmas, 425 pp.

Holmes, A.M., Oliver, P.G., Trewella, S., Hill, R., Quigley, D.T.G., 2015. Trans-Atlantic rafting of inshore mussels on macro-litter: American molluscs on British and Irish shores, new records. *Journal of Conchology*, 42 (1), 1-11.

Huber, M., 2010. *Compendium of bivalves. A full-color guide to 3,300 of the world's marine bivalves. A status on Bivalvia after 250 years of research*. Hackenheim: ConchBooks. 901 pp.

Huber, M., 2015. *Compendium of Bivalves 2. Harxheim: ConchBooks*. 907 pp.

Johnson, M., Zaretzkya, I., Raytselis, Y., Merezhuk, Y., McGinnis, S. et al., 2008. *NCBI BLAST: a better web interface*. *Nucleic AcidsResearch*, 36 (suppl 2), W5-W9.

Katoh, K., Rozewicki, J., Yamada, K. D., 2019. MAFFT online service: multiple sequence alignment, interactive sequence choice and visualization. *Briefings in bioinformatics*, 20 (4), 1160-1166.

Kumar, S., Stecher, G., Li, M., Knyaz, C., Tamura, K., 2018. MEGA X: molecular evolutionary genetics analysis across computing platforms. *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, 35, 1547-1549.

Liu, J., Liu, H., Zhang, H., 2018. Phylogeny and evolutionary radiation of the marine mussels (Bivalvia: Mytilidae) based on mitochondrial and nuclear genes. *Molecular phylogenetics and evolution*, 126, 233-240.

Loehmann, D., Mai, A.C.G., Lee, J.T., 2010. The invasion of five alien species in the Delta do Parnaiba Environmental Protection Area, Northeastern Brazil. *Revista de Biologia Tropical*, 58 (3), 909-923.

López, M.S., 2003. Efecto de la potencial presa exótica *Isognomon bicolor* (Adams, 1845) sobre la ecología trófica de *Stramonita haemastoma* (Kool, 1987) en el intermareal rocoso de Arraial do Cabo, RJ. Brasil. Jaén: MS thesis, Universidad Internacional de Andalucía Sede Antonio Machado de Baeza.

López, M.S., Coutinho R., 2010. Positive interaction between the native macroalgae *Sargassum* sp. and the exotic bivalve *Isognomon bicolor*? *Brazilian Journal of Oceanography*, 58, 69-72.

Magalhães, C.A., 1999. *Partilha de recursos em guida de gastrópodes predadores em costões de São Sebastião, SP*. Ph.D. Thesis, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil.

Manousis, T., 2021. *Hellenic Conches*. Harxheim: Conchbooks, 607 pp., 559 color plates, hardcover 4 [20 x 25.5 cm]. ISBN 978-3-948603-17-5.

Marchini, A., Galli, B.S., Mienis, H.K., 2020. *Isognomon legumen* seems to be well established along the Mediterranean coast of Israel. *Triton*, 39, 14-15.

Micali, P., Siragusa, F., Agamennone, F., Germana, A., Sbrana, C., 2017. *Karpatoth Island (Greece)* and its Indo-Pacific alien species. *Bollettino Malacologico*, 50, 40-49.

Mienis, H.K., 2004. New data concerning the presence of Lessepsian and other Indo-Pacific migrants among the molluscs in the Mediterranean Sea with emphasis on the situation in Israel. *Turkish Journal of Aquatic Life*, 2 (2), 117-131.

Mienis, H.K., Rittner, O., Shefer, S., Feldstein, T., Yahel, T., 2016. First record of the Indo-Pacific *Isognomon legumen* from the Mediterranean coast of Israel (Mollusca, Bivalvia, Isognomonidae). *Triton*, 33, 9-10.

Milazzo, M., Fine, M., La Marca, E.C., Alessi, C., Chemello, R., 2016. Drawing the line at neglected marine ecosystems: ecology of vermetid reefs in a changing ocean. *Marine animal forests*, 1-23.

Moazzo, G., 1931. Contribution à la faune malacologique marine des côtes Libano-Syriennes. *Les Etats de Syrie; Richesses marines et fluviales. Exploitation actuelle—Avenir*. Société d’Editions Géographiques, Maritimes et Coloniales, 437-453.

Moyses, D.N., 2005. *Influencia da heterogeneidade do substrato no recrutamento de invertebrados bentônicos e sucessão ecológica do médiolitoral do costão rochoso da Ilha do Brandão, Angra dos Reis, RJ*. MSc Thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Oliveira, A.E.S., Creed, J.C., 2008. Mollusca, Bivalvia, *Isognomon bicolor* (CB Adams 1845): Distribution extension. *Check List*, 4 (4), 386-388.

Oliver, P.G., 1992. *Bivalved seashells of the Red Sea*. Verlag Christa Hemmen, Wiesbaden & National Museum of Wales, Cardiff: 330 pp.

Ovalis, P., Zenetos, A., 2017. The ascent of Lessepsian Mol-
lusca continues the establishment of two newcomers in the eastern Mediterranean. p. 547-548. In: Stomouli, C., Akel, E. H. K., Azzurro, E., Bakiu, R., Bas, A. A., et al., 2017. New Mediterranean Biodiversity Records (December 2017). Mediterranean Marine Science, 18 (3), 534-556. Palumbi, S., Martin, A., Romano, S., WO, M., Stice, L. et al., 1991. The simple fool’s guide to PCR. Special Publishing Department, Zoology, University of Hawaii.

Por, F., 2009. Tethys returns to the Mediterranean: success and limits of tropical re-colonization. BioRisk, 3, 5.

Posada, D., 2008. jModelTest: phylogenetic model averaging. Molecular Biology and Evolution 25 (7), 1253-1256.

Prato, E., Rubino, F., 2019. First record of MallFeus regula (Mollusca, Bivalvia) in Italian waters. P.235. In: Kousteni, V., Bakiu, R., Benhimida, A., Crocetta, F., Di Martino, V. et al., 2019. New Mediterranean Biodiversity Records 2019. Mediterranean Marine Science, 20 (1), 230-247.

Raith, M., Zacherl, D.C., Pilgrim, E.M., Eernisse, D.J., 2015. Phylogeny and Species Diversity of Gulf of California Oysters (Ostreidae) Inferred from Mitochondrial DNA. American Malacological Bulletin, 33 (2), 263-283.

Rapagnã, L.C., 2004. Estudo da estrutura das populações dos bivalves Isognomon bicolor (C.B. Adams, 1845), Perna perna (Linnaeus, 1758) e Pinctada imbricata (Röding, 1798) nos costões rochosos de Arraial do Cabo, RJ, Brasil. Niterói, 83p. (Dissertação de Mestrado. Universidade Federal Fluminense).

Rocha, F.M., 2002. Recrutamento e sucessão de uma comunidade bentônica de mesolitoral dominada pela espécie invasora Isognomon bicolor (Bivalvia: Isognomidae). C.B. Adams, 1748 em dois costões rochosos submetidos a diferentes condições de batimento de ondas. MSc. Thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Ronquist, F., Teslenko, M., Van Der Mark, P., Ayres, D.L., Darling, A. et al., 2012. MrBayes 3.2: efficient Bayesian phylogenetic inference and model choice across a large model space. Systematic biology, 61 (3), 539-542.

Rozas, J., Ferrer-Mata, A., Sánchez-DelBarrio, J.C., Guirao-Rico, S., Librado, P. et al., 2017. DnaSP 6: DNA sequence polymorphism analysis of large data sets. Molecular biology and evolution, 34 (12), 3299-3302.

Sambrook, H., 1989. Molecular cloning: a laboratory manual. Cold Spring Harbor, NY.

Scuderi, D., Viola, A., 2019. The last alien reaching Sicily: Mollusca Bivalvia Isognomonidae: Isognomon legumen (Gmelin, 1791). Biodiversity Journal, 10 (4), 337-342.

Sharma, P.P., Zardus, J.D., Boyle, E.E., Gonzalez, V.L., Jennings, R.M. et al., 2013. Into the deep: a phylogenetic approach to the bivalve subclass Protobranchia. Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution, 69 (1), 188-204.

Témkin, I., 2010. Molecular phylogeny of pearl oysters and their relatives (Mollusca, Bivalvia, Pterioidea). BMC Evolutionary Biology, 10 (1), 1-28.

Trifinopoulos, J., Nguyen, L.T., von Haeseler, A., Minh, B.Q., 2016. W-IQ-TREE: a fast online phylogenetic tool for maximum likelihood analysis. Nucleic acids research, 44 (W1), W232-W235.

Valdés, A., Alexander, J., Crocetta, F., Yokes, M.B., Giacobbe, S., 2013. The origin and dispersal pathway of the spotted sea hare Aplysia dactylomela (Mollusca: Opisthobranchia) in the Mediterranean Sea. Aquatic Invasions, 8 (4), 427-436.

Vetrano, A., Napolitano, E., Iacono, R., Schroeder, K., Gasparini, G.P., 2010. Tyrrenian Sea circulation and water mass fluxes in spring 2004: Observations and model results. Journal of Geophysical Research: Oceans, 115 (C6).

Whoriff, J.S., Whoriff, L.L., Sweet, M.H., 1995. Spatial variation in an algal turf community with respect to substratum slope and wave height. Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom, 75 (2), 429-444.

Wilk, J., Bieler, R., 2009. Ecophenotypic variation in the Flat Tree Oyster, Isognomon alatus (Bivalvia: Isognomidae), across a tidal microhabitat gradient. Marine Biology Research, 5 (2), 155-163.

Zamprogno, G.C., Loureiro Fernandes, L., da Costa Fernandes, F., 2010. Spatial variability in the population of Isognomon bicolor (C.B. Adams, 1845) (Mollusca, Bivalvia) on rocky shores in Espirito Santo, Brazil. Brazilian Journal of Oceanography, 58 (1), 23-29.

Zenetos, A., Cinar, M., Pancucci-Papadopoulou, M., Harmelin, J., Furnari, G. et al., 2005. Annotated list of marine alien species in the Mediterranean with records of the worst invasive species. Mediterranean Marine Science, 6 (2), 63-118.

Zenetos, A., Corsini-Foka, M., Crocetta, F., Gerovasileiou, V., Karachle, P.K. et al., 2018. Deep cleaning of alien and cryptogenic species records in the Greek Seas (2018 update). Management of Biological Invasions, 9 (3), 209-226.