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Sound production by the Lusitanian Toadfish *Halobatrachus didactylus*

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Abstract:

Several batrachoidids have been known to produce sounds associated with courtship and agonistic interactions, and their repertoire has been studied acoustically and behaviourally. In contrast, sound production of the Lusitanian toadfish *Halobatrachus didactylus*, often noted, has not been acoustically studied. This sedentary predator of Northeastern Atlantic coastal waters is usually found in muddy substrates, under rocks or crevices. Sound recordings were made in Ria Formosa, a lagoon complex in southern Portugal. The sound producing apparatus was studied in adult individuals of both sexes captured by local fishermen. It is shown that this species produces acoustic emissions similar to other batrachoidids. It produces a long, rhythmical, tonal sound, often in choruses, which is comparable to boatwhistle or hum signals of *Opsanus* and *Porichthys*, and a complex of signals that were classified as grunts, croaks, double croaks, and mixed calls ('grunt-croak'). As in other toadfishes, *H. didactylus* presents sonic muscles connected to a bi-lobed swimbladder. As contractions of the sonic muscles were detected when massaging the ventral surface of the fish.

Keywords: toadfish, *Halobatrachus didactylus*, Batrachoididae, acoustic repertoire, sonic muscles

Categories: [fish](#) [sound production](#) [underwater](#)

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