



A record of abortion in the school shark *Galeorhinus galeus* (Carcharhiniformes, Triakidae) captured on the continental shelf off southern Brazil

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Abortion in elasmobranch fishes is a well known post-capture stress behavior with a long historical series of reports and superficial descriptions (Babel 1967, Cousseau 1973, Sunyé & Vooren 1997, Fahy *et al.* 2007). In fact, the whole process and physiological mechanism is completely unknown and it can be only speculated that the intrauterine decrease in oxygen level is the main stimulus to start embryos' motion and consequent abortion. However, mechanical stress due to removal from the water and loss of water pressure are certainly important factors on the abortion process. The present note and the associated video record the abortion of *Galeorhinus galeus* (Linnaeus 1758) almost immediately after capture. The specimen was caught at the mid-continental shelf (80-100 m deep) off southern Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul State, between Rio Grande (32° 03'S-52° 10'W) and Chuí (33° 45'S-53° 22'W) in early spring (October 28th to November 2nd) of 1992 by the FURG's (Fundação Universidade de Rio Grande) R.V. "Atlântico Sul" (Project Diadema). Several specimens (about 14) of *G. galeus* were captured along with *Squalus mitsukurii*, *S. megalops* and *Squatina* spp in one single bottom otter trawl. Although the presence of *G. galeus* in the area was unexpected at this time of the year (Peres & Vooren 1991, Vooren 1997, Lucifora *et al.* 2004), the record of pregnant females was not considered relevant due to the very punctual occurrence. Although well recorded, abortion in elasmobranchs lacks a fully description and systematic research in order to determine its physiology and variation among species. This video intends to illustrate this process in *G. galeus* and provides visual support for a future study.

The video was recorded in VHS-C by Dr. Alexandre Matthiensen (FURG) as part of the project and subsequently digitalized without sound by the first author.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO \(7,799 Kb\)](#)

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