



Sardina pilchardus, (Walbaum, 1792)

 European pilchard



Size

My maximum recorded length is 27.5 cm.
My average length ranges from 15 to 20 cm.



Habitat

I am a pelagic marine species. I am very sociable, forming large schools of fish with my peers, in the open sea. I generally swim at depths from 25 to 55 m at day and from 10 to 35 m at night.



Origins

I live in the North-East Atlantic, from Iceland and Norway to Senegal. I am also common to the Mediterranean Sea, especially in its western part.



Diet

I am a planctophageous, which means that I feed small organisms present in the water column.

During my early lifestages, I mostly feed from small algae. In contrast, as an adult, I am more interested in small crustaceans such as copepods, and fish eggs or larvae.

I eat mostly during the night, and come to the surface after dusk.



Curiosities!

For my nutritional qualities, I am recommended in the Mediterranean diet. I am a species of first importance in the management of aquatic resources, playing a major ecological and economic role. In particular, I am the main prey of many marine predators and I sustain one of the most important Mediterranean and Atlantic fisheries in terms of landings (in tons).

Source: FAO, Fishbase, INPN, wikipedia, DORIS, aqua portail