

Preface

Thanks to their bright colors, their abundance on coral reefs and some representatives such as clownfishes (including Nemo®), Pomacentridae is one of the universally known groups of marine vertebrates. They are widely used in aquarium trade and are found in all public aquariums around the world as representative of coral reef fishes. Besides their highly conspicuous aspect, the damselfish family shows also an important set of biological characteristics (algal farmer, sex change, symbiosis, sound production, high diversity, etc.) and has consequently interested biologists from many disciplines. As such, it seems that Pomacentridae form a group of highly interesting fishes and it is opportune to propose a book concerning the knowledge about this taxa. The central questions that have motivated the book could be: how is it possible to find a so high diversity of fishes in the same biotope? How do they share their environment? What kind of communication channel do they use? The gathering of various information in a common place should provide the basis required for going further and/or provoke additional works and questioning. We hope to share our fascination for this fish group with readers and highlight the huge number of their intriguing aspects.

The major aim of this book is to simultaneously provide a solid series of reviews that should help to globally understand the different aspects of the way of life of pomacentrids. The book provides important insights on different evolutionary aspects and adaptations that help to understand their important diversity and their various uses of the habitat. The book will be useful to graduate and undergraduate students who wish to obtain in-depth knowledge. It could also be used by senior scientists working not only on pomacentrids but on fishes in general. In many cases, we have tried to underline the connections between the different chapters and hope this book is more than a compilation of independent contributions.

As is usually the case in science, solidarity, cooperation and common wish to go beyond is required for this kind of initiative. We requested leading researchers from around the globe to contribute to this work. We are particularly grateful for their enthusiastic responses and the work they have done. We wish also recognize all people that have collected data on pomacentrids since many years.

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