

Two new species of *Pseudecheneis*, rheophilic catfishes (Teleostei: Sisoridae) from Nepal

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Abstract

Two new species of sisorid catfish of the genus *Pseudecheneis* are described from tributaries of the Ganges River in Nepal: *Pseudecheneis crassicauda* and *P. serracula*. *Pseudecheneis crassicauda* can be distinguished from congeners by a unique combination of 38–39 vertebrae, caudal peduncle depth 6.0–6.6% SL, eye diameter 7.5–8.3% HL, length of adipose-fin base 20.3–24.3% SL, pelvic fins reaching the base of the first anal-fin ray, and the presence of pale spots on the body. *Pseudecheneis serracula* can be distinguished from congeners in having a unique combination of 36–38 vertebrae, strongly elevated neural spines of the last 2–3 preanal and first 6–7 postanal vertebrae, length of adipose-fin base 26.8–30.4% SL, pelvic fins reaching the base of the first anal-fin ray, and the presence of pale spots on the body.

Key words: glyptosternines, Ganges River drainage, South Asia

Introduction

Rheophilic catfishes of the sisorid genus *Pseudecheneis* Blyth, 1860 occur in the headwaters of major river drainages throughout South and Southeast Asia. A member of the Glyptosterninae (a group distributed from the Caucasus to China), *Pseudecheneis* is easily diagnosed from other glyptosternines by a thoracic adhesive apparatus consisting of a series of transverse ridges (laminae) separated by grooves (sulcae) (de Pinna, 1996; Roberts, 1998), an adaptation to life in fast-flowing waters. Five species of *Pseudecheneis* are considered valid here, viz. *P. sulcata* (M'Clelland, 1842), *P. paviei* Vaillant, 1904, *P. immaculata* Chu, 1982, *P. sulcatoides* Zhou & Chu, 1992, and *P. sympelvica* Roberts, 1998. *Pseudecheneis sulcata* is known from the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Salween and Irrawaddy River drainages, *P. paviei* from the Red River drainage, and *P. immaculata*, *P. sulcatoides* and *P. sympelvica* from the Mekong River drainage.