



## The genera of the Neotropical armored catfish subfamily Loricariinae (Siluriformes: Loricariidae): a practical key and synopsis

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### Abstract

The subfamily Loricariinae belongs to the Neotropical mailed catfish family Loricariidae. Members of Loricariinae are recognized by their long and flattened caudal peduncle and absence of an adipose fin. Despite important studies conducted on this group, no comprehensive generic key is presently available. A Hill & Smith (1976) analysis and cluster analysis were performed on external morphological characters taken from specimens or borrowed from the literature. The two main groups recognized correspond to the tribes Harttiini and Loricariini. Within the Loricariini, four morphological groups were found: the *Rineloricaria* group, the *Loricariichthys* group, the *Loricaria* group, and the *Pseudohemiodon* group. Results of these analyses were used to construct a practical key to thirty genera, followed by a synopsis for each genus.

**Key words:** Loricariinae, genus, morphology, multivariate analyses, identification key

### Introduction

The Neotropics contain one of the most diverse freshwater ichthyofaunas in the world with around 6,000 of the 13,000 known species (Reis *et al.* 2003). In Central and South America, the Ostariophysi are undoubtedly the largest represented group and among them, the Siluriformes exhibit the greatest diversity with around 1,647 described species (Reis *et al.* 2003) distributed in 16 families, one of which was discovered and described only recently (Rodiles-Hernández *et al.* 2005). Among the Siluriformes, the Loricariidae, or armored catfish, is the most speciose family in the world comprising 673 valid species and around 300 recognized as undescribed (Reis *et al.* 2003). Loricariids are characterized by a depressed body covered by bony