



A new species of leaf fish, *Nandus andrewi* (Teleostei: Perciformes: Nandidae) from northeastern India

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Abstract

Nandus andrewi **sp. nov.** is described from the Ichamati River in northeastern India. It differs from all congeners in having a bluish white (vs. mottled brown) body in life, and a combination of the following characters: body depth 24.3–29.1% SL, pectoral fin length 15.1–18.5%, pelvic fin length 16.2–18.9% SL, eye diameter 18.3–21.7% HL, a dark spot on the caudal peduncle, and 45–52 lateral-line scales. A key to the species of *Nandus* is also provided.

Key words: Ichamati River, Percoidei, Ganges River drainage, freshwater fish

Introduction

Percoid fishes of the family Nandidae remain a poorly-diagnosed group (Britz, 1997). Until recently, the group was thought to comprise taxa found in freshwaters of Africa, Asia and South America (e.g. Nelson, 1994), but Kullander & Britz (2002) restrict membership of the Nandidae to the genus *Nandus* Valenciennes, 1831. The African and South American genera (*Afronandus*, *Monocirrhus*, *Polycentropsis* and *Polycentrus*) are reassigned to the Polycentridae (Kullander & Britz, 2002). *Nandus* species are found in river drainages in South and Southeast Asia; their natural range includes the Indian subcontinent eastwards on mainland Southeast Asia to the Mekong River drainage and southwards to the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Borneo. They resemble dead leaves in both their body shape and cryptic coloration, characteristics generally acknowledged to be useful as camouflage in ambushing prey and avoiding predators. There are four species currently recognized: *Nandus nandus* (Hamilton, 1822) from South Asia, *Nandus nebulosus* (Gray, 1835) from Sundaic Southeast Asia, *Nandus oxyrhynchus* Ng, Vidthayanon & Ng 1996 from mainland Southeast Asia, and *Nandus prolixus* Chakrabarty, Oldfield & Ng, 2006 from northeastern Borneo.

Recently, a distinctively coloured *Nandus* species has been showing up among aquarium fish exports from India. We have had the opportunity to examine specimens for which locality data was available, and have determined that this represents a fifth, unnamed species, herein described as *Nandus andrewi* **sp. nov.**

Material and methods

Measurements and counts were made following Hubbs & Lagler (2004) and with the changes proposed by Chakrabarty et al. (2006). Counts and measurements were made on the left side of specimens whenever possible. Measurements were made point to point with dial callipers data recorded to 0.1 mm, and were taken on all