



A new species of *Moenkhausia* from the rio Amazonas and rio Orinoco basins (Characiformes: Characidae)

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Abstract

A new species of *Moenkhausia* is described from the rio Amazonas and rio Orinoco basins. The new species can be distinguished from congeners mainly by the combination of a conspicuous, relatively small and circular humeral spot, a black spot on the upper caudal-fin lobe, lower caudal-fin lobe without spot or a faint one, and middle caudal-fin rays hyaline or with dark tips. Mature males have a unique combination of two large-sized bony hooks on the anal-fin rays and tiny spines on the distal portion of all fins, which distinguishes the new species from any other species of Characidae.

Key words: Systematics, *Moenkhausia lepidura* species-group, bony hooks

Resumo

Uma nova espécie de *Moenkhausia* é descrita das bacias dos rios Amazonas e Orinoco. A nova espécie pode ser distinguida das congêneres pela combinação de uma mácula umeral conspícua, relativamente pequena e circular, uma mácula escura no lobo superior da nadadeira caudal, lobo caudal inferior sem mácula ou com mácula pouco conspícua, e raios medianos da nadadeira caudal hialinos ou com a extremidade escura. Machos maduros possuem uma combinação única de dois grandes ganchos ósseos nos raios da nadadeira anal, e minúsculos espinhos na porção distal de todas as nadadeiras, que distingue a nova espécie de qualquer outra espécie de Characidae.

Introduction

The new species herein described is considered to belong to *Moenkhausia* following Eigenmann's definition of the genus (Eigenmann, 1903). According to this definition, *Moenkhausia* is characterized by a combination of characters, none of them, however, unique to the genus (e.g. premaxillary teeth in two rows, the inner with five teeth, complete lateral line, and partially scaled caudal fin) (Eigenmann, 1903; 1917). As suggested by several authors, *Moenkhausia* may not constitute a monophyletic assemblage (Fink, 1979; Costa, 1994; Lucena & Lucena, 1999; Lima *et al.* 2007; Benine *et al.* 2009).

The genus comprises 66 valid species to date, distributed mainly in the Amazonas and Guiana basins (Lima *et al.* 2003; Benine *et al.* 2009). As well as other speciose *incertae sedis* genera of Characidae, such as *Astyanax* Baird & Girard, *Bryconamericus* Eigenmann (in Eigenmann, McAtee & Ward), *Hemigrammus* Gill, and *Hyphessobrycon* Durbin, our taxonomic knowledge of species of *Moenkhausia* is precarious, with several poorly described and undescribed species. A new species of *Moenkhausia* is described below from the Amazonas and Orinoco basins.