



Article

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***Barilius signicaudus*, a new species of cyprinid fish from Maeklong Basin, western Thailand (Cypriniformes: Cyprinidae)**

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Abstract

Barilius signicaudus, a new species of cyprinid fish from the Khwae Noi and Khwae Yai branches of the Maeklong River, western Thailand, is described. It is characterized by the combination of a large, elongated blotch at the caudal-fin base (blotch is formed by the fusion of the large caudal spot at the fleshy end of the caudal base and the last vertical bar on the flank) that extends about 1/3 of the distance from the caudal-fin origin beyond the last scale on the caudal base to the margin of the caudal fork; an anal-fin origin opposing the 2nd–4th branched dorsal-fin rays; eight scale rows above the lateral line; dark pigment on the dorsal fin concentrated mainly along the margins of the rays; 36 or more precaudal lateral-line scales; and small dentary tubercles. This species has previously been identified as *Barilius pulchellus* and *Barilius ornatus*. *Barilius pulchellus* has no, or a small caudal spot, a dorsal fin with dark pigments concentrated in the middle of the interradiation regions, and much larger dentary tubercles. *Barilius ornatus* and similar species have an anal-fin position that opposes the 5th–7th branched dorsal-fin rays (rarely the 4th), or does not overlap with them at all, and have no, or small caudal spots.

Key words: *Barilius pulchellus*, *Barilius infrafasciatus*, *Barilius ornatus*, Maeklong, Khwae

Introduction

Cyprinid fishes of the genus *Barilius* Hamilton (1822) are generally recognized by their relatively elongate, compressed bodies and round bellies, vertical bars on the flanks, 9–17 total anal-fin rays, and sublaterally placed lateral lines (Hamilton 1822; Howes 1980; Talwar & Jhingran 1991; Rainboth 1996). *Barilius* can be separated from barred species of *Devario* by the absence of a “danioin notch” and the lack of a pigmented, wide horizontal stripe (Fang 2001). Males of many species are colorful and have tubercles on various body parts (Fowler 1934; Talwar & Jhingran 1991; Tejavej 2010). Species of *Barilius* are generally found in small, clean, clear mountain streams, but some species live in large rivers as well (Smith 1945; Talwar & Jhingran 1991; Tejavej 2010). They are one of the dominant small fishes in the hill streams and upland rivers over a vast geographical range from Pakistan and India eastward to Myanmar and Indochina (Hamilton 1822; Günther 1868; Day 1878; Hora 1921; Smith 1931, 1945; Howes 1980; Chu 1984; Kottelat 1984, 2001; Talwar & Jhingran 1991; He & Chen 1994; Tejavej 2010).

As of 2010 there are at least six species of *Barilius* in the mainland region of Southeast Asia (Tejavej 2010). During various trips from 2003–2009, the author found and received *Barilius* specimens from the Khwae Noi branch of the Maeklong basin in Kanchanaburi Province that were determined to be distinct from other species of *Barilius* in Thailand, even though they show great similarity to *B. ornatus*. Similar specimens were collected by others from the Khwae Yai branch of the Maeklong basin. These were assigned to *Barilius ornatus* (Tejavej 2010), but after further study of these specimens and comparisons with other Species of *Barilius*, they have been found to be neither *B. ornatus* nor *B. pulchellus*, which has been reported from the Maeklong basin (Vidthayanon *et al.* 1997), but are a previously unrecognized species that is described here.