Horabagrus melanosoma: a junior synonym of Horabagrus brachysoma (Teleostei: Horabagridae)

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Abstract

Horabagrus melanosoma was described from West Venpala in the lower reaches of the Manimala River, in the state of Kerala, India. It was distinguished from its nearest congener, H. brachysoma based on a combination of characters including darker body colour, shorter pelvic fin and greater number of anal fin rays. Examination of the type material revealed significant morphometric and meristic discrepancies with the original description. Based on multivariate morphometric, and genetic analysis of topotypical specimens, we propose that H. melanosoma should be treated as a junior synonym of H. brachysoma.

Key words: catfish, India, taxonomy, Western Ghats

Introduction

Plamoottil & Abraham (2013) described Horabagrus melanosoma (Fig. 1) as a medium-sized bagrid catfish, from West Venpala in the lower reaches of the Manimala River, Kerala, India (Fig. 2). The authors distinguished H. melanosoma from its nearest congener, H. brachysoma, based on a combination of characters including darker body colour, shorter pelvic fin, and greater number of anal fin rays, and several other non-overlapping morphometric characters (Plamoottil & Abraham 2013). Examination of the type material of H. melanosoma deposited at the Southern Regional Center of the Zoological Survey of India (SRC-ZSI), Calicut, India, revealed several discrepancies with the original description. Further, morphometric and meristic analysis of the type material, and molecular analysis of topotypic specimens suggests that H. melanosoma is conspecific with H. brachysoma (Günther).

Material and methods

Study sites and sampling. Topotypes of H. melanosoma were collected from Manimala River, Kerala, India (9°21'40"N, 76°35'10"E, 9 m a.s.l), and putative topotypes of H. brachysoma were collected from the Periyar, Chalakudy and Karuvannoor Rivers (part of the erstwhile Cochin State), and those of H. nigricollaris Pethiyagoda & Kottelat 1994 from Vettilapara, Chalakudy River, Kerala. The specimens were fixed in 10% formalin and

SYNONYMY OF HORABAGRUS BRACHYSOMA

Horabagrus nigricollaris, 12 ex., CRG-SAC. 2013.05.1-12, Vettilapara, Chalakudy River, Kerala, India, collected by Anvar Ali, 01.05.2013

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