



***Badis britzi*, a new percomorph fish (Teleostei: Badidae) from the Western Ghats of India**

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Abstract

Badis britzi, the first species of the genus endemic to southern India, is described from the Nagodi tributary of the west-flowing Sharavati River in Karnataka. It is distinguished from congeners by a combination of characters including a slender body, 21–24 pored lateral-line scales and a striking colour pattern consisting of 11 bars and a mosaic of black and red pigmentation on the side of the body including the end of caudal peduncle, and the absence of cleithral, opercular, or caudal-peduncle blotches, or an ocellus on the caudal-fin base. *Badis triocellus* Khyntiam & Sen is considered a junior synonym of *B. singenensis* Geetakumari & Kadu.

Key words: freshwater fish, Karnataka, Perciformes, Sharavati

Introduction

Percomorph fishes of the family Badidae currently comprise two genera: *Badis* (16 species) and *Dario* (six species), that are distributed in South and Southeast Asia, from southern and eastern India and Nepal, east to the Mekong drainage in Thailand and Laos (Kullander & Britz 2002; Britz & Kullander 2013; Eschmeyer 2014; Britz & Ali 2015). The first badid to be recorded from peninsular India was *Badis badis* (Hamilton, 1822) from the erstwhile Presidencies of Mumbai and Chennai (now mostly within Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu) (Day 1875–1878; Kullander & Britz 2002), the Godavari drainage (Karmakar & Datta 1998) and Chembarambakkam Lake near Chennai (Knight & Devi 2009). The fish recorded as *Badis dario* from Wayanad by Day (1875–1878) was recently shown to be a new species, *Dario urops*, by Britz *et al.* (2012). The recent discoveries of two unusual badids, namely *D. urops* Britz, Ali & Philip, and *D. huli* Britz & Ali, from west-flowing rivers in Karnataka (Britz *et al.* 2012, Britz & Ali 2015) has increased the number of species in this family in peninsular India to three.

During a recent survey of the Nagodi tributary of the west-flowing Sharavati River in Karnataka State, we discovered a species with a colour pattern strikingly different from any known species of Badidae, which we describe herein as *Badis britzi*.

Material and methods

Study site and sampling. Specimens of the new species were collected from the Nagodi tributary of the west-flowing Sharavati River, near the town of Nittur in Karnataka State, India. The series collected was limited to four individuals, three of which were fixed in 10% formalin and one in absolute ethanol. A specimen of *Badis badis* was also collected from Cauvery River near Mysore, Karnataka, India.

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