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## A new species of *Characidium* Reinhardt (Ostariophysi: Characiformes: Crenuchidae) from coastal rivers in the extreme south of Bahia, Brazil

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### Abstract

*Characidium helmeri*, a species of the family Crenuchidae apparently endemic to rivers draining the extreme south of Bahia, Brazil, is described. The new species is easily distinguished from congeners by having dark, vertically elongated, irregular spots or dashes on flanks, usually more evident over midlateral stripe and/or ventral half of body, where it may present a somewhat curved or zigzag-shape. *Characidium helmeri* can be further distinguished from most congeners by having lateral line reduced to 13–22 pored scales, adipose fin absent, isthmus naked on its anteriormost portion, 14 scales around caudal peduncle, 4 scales above lateral line and 4 below, two series of dentary teeth, supraorbital absent or extremely reduced, and basicaudal black spot well defined. The occurrence of reductive characters in *Characidium* is briefly discussed.

**Key words:** Characidiinae, Taxonomy, Reductive characters

### Resumo

*Characidium helmeri*, uma espécie da família Crenuchidae aparentemente endêmica de rios que drenam o extremo sul da Bahia, Brasil, é descrita. A nova espécie é facilmente diferenciada das congêneres por ter manchas ou traços irregulares escuros alongados verticalmente nas laterais do corpo, usualmente mais evidentes sobre a faixa mediana lateral e/ou metade ventral do corpo, onde podem apresentar forma curva ou de zigue-zague. *Characidium helmeri* pode ser ainda diferenciada da maioria das congêneres por ter linha lateral reduzida a 13–22 escamas perfuradas, nadadeira adiposa ausente, istmo nu na porção anterior, 14 escamas ao redor do pedúnculo caudal, 4 escamas acima da linha lateral e 4 abaixo, duas séries de dentes no dentário, supraorbital ausente ou extremamente reduzido e mancha na base da nadadeira caudal bem definida. A ocorrência de caracteres redutivos em *Characidium* é brevemente discutida.

**Palavras chave:** Characidiinae, Taxonomia, Caracteres redutivos

### Introduction

*Characidium* is the most species-rich genus of Crenuchidae, with 59 valid species of small freshwater fishes widely distributed in the Neotropical Region (Eschmeyer, 2015). Seventeen species of *Characidium* are known to occur in coastal drainages of eastern Brazil and most of them are described from rivers occurring between Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul states. Three species are known from northeastern Brazil: *C. bahiense* Almeida, *C. bimaculatum* Fowler, and *C. samurai* (Zanata & Camelier, 2014). A new congener apparently endemic to coastal streams in the extreme southern Bahia, with a remarkable combination of reductive characters, is presented herein. Reductive characters are known to occur in at least 13 species of *Characidium* in the Amazon, Paraná-Paraguay,