

## ***Chromidotilapia melaniae* and *C. nana*, two new cichlid species (Perciformes, Cichlidae) from Gabon, Central Africa**

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### **Abstract**

*Chromidotilapia melaniae* and *C. nana*, two new cichlid species, are described from southern Gabon and the southern parts of the Ogooue-River system in Gabon. *C. melaniae* differs from congeners by a combination of coloration, morphometric and meristic characters. *C. nana* is the smallest known species of the genus and is distinguished from congeners in having a single row of teeth in both jaws of adults (versus multiple rows). Both new species are pair-bonding, biparental, oviphilic mouthbrooders. Intrageneric relationships of *Chromidotilapia* in Gabon are discussed.

**Key words:** *Chromidotilapia*, Gabon, *Chromidotilapia melaniae*, *Chromidotilapia nana*

### **Introduction**

Subsequent to revision of the pelmatochromine cichlids (Thys van den Audenaerde, 1968, Greenwood, 1987), only a single species of *Chromidotilapia*, *C. kingsleyae* Boulenger, 1898 was recognized from Gabon. Shortly after the publication of Greenwood's (1987) study an undescribed species was imported from coastal regions of Gabon for commercial uses. By aquarists, the fish was referred to *C. spec.* "Shiloango", following Thys van den Audenaerde's (1968) use of this term for preserved specimens of an undescribed *Chromidotilapia* from Cabinda (Congo, Brazzaville) deposited at MRAC, Belgium. This species was bred and distributed by aquarists for some years, but no preserved material was available for comparison with the MRAC specimens. Specimens collected in the central and southern parts of Gabon in 2000 (regions near Lambarene and Tchibanga) clearly correspond with *Chromidotilapia spec.* "Shiloango" from Gabon, but not for certain with the MRAC material. In addition, specimens of a second undescribed *Chromidotilapia* species were also collected in the Tchibanga region. Herein both new species are formally described and the status of Thys van den Audenaerde's *C. spec.* "Shiloango" from Cab-