

## ***Botia kubotai*, a new species of loach (Teleostei: Cobitidae) from the Ataran River basin (Myanmar), with comments on botiine nomenclature and diagnosis of a new genus**

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### **Abstract**

*Botia kubotai*, new species, is distinguished from all other species of the genus by its unique body colour pattern. In juveniles, three black stripes and five black bars leave four pairs of elongate yellow blotches; with increasing age, the bars and stripes widen, the yellow blotches become more slender and rows of small yellow spots are added in the stripes and in the bars. The nomenclature of Botiinae and the systematics of the South and Southeast Asian taxa are discussed. A new genus is named: *Chromobotia* (type species: *Cobitis macracanthus*). *Hymenphysa* is a synonym of *Botia* and species usually placed in *Hymenphysa* should be called *Syncrossus*.

**Key words:** Cobitidae, loaches, *Botia*, clown loach

### **Introduction**

The Myanmar fish fauna is one of the most poorly known in Asia. Political conditions prevailing in the country for most of the second half of the 20th century have made it impossible to conduct research in most of the territory. In recent years, a number of surveys have been conducted in the country, but they have yet resulted only in a frustratingly low number of publications. At the same time, numerous species of Myanmarese fishes have found their way into the aquarium trade. Most are still unidentified or unnamed, creating the risk of accidental description in the aquarium literature, with attendant chaotic and misleading nomenclature. Thanks to the help of K. Kubota, I have been able to examine various collections from the Ataran River basin which include several of these recently imported species. This will allow the description and formal naming of most of them in a near future (see also Kottelat, 2003).