

***Gymnotus ardilai*: a new species of Neotropical electric fish (Ostariophysi: Gymnotidae) from the Rio Magdalena Basin of Colombia**

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Abstract

A new species of Neotropical electric fish, *Gymnotus ardilai*, is described from the Río de Oro near Bucaramanga in the Rio Magdalena Basin. *Gymnotus ardilai* is distinguishable from all congeners by the following combination of characters: 1, a clear patch at the caudal end of the anal fin; 2, two laterosensory canal pores (from the preopercular-mandibular series) in the dorso-posterior portion of the preopercle; 3, progressive loss of alternating dark and light pigment bands with the size; 4, a long head (10.2 – 11.2 % total length); 5, many (9–10) scales over anal fin pterygiophores; 6, few (47–48) pored lateral-line scales to first ramus; 7, low (84 n = 1) total number of pored lateral-line scales ; and, 8, relatively large eye (orbital diameter 8.5–9.0 % HL). *Gymnotus ardilai* is the first record of the genus from the Magdalena Basin and represents a unique record of Gymnotiformes from over 800 meters above sea level.

Key words: Gymnotiformes, *Gymnotus*, Magdalena, Colombia

Introduction

The weakly electric Neotropical fish genus *Gymnotus* has been the subject of several taxonomic studies in recent years (Mago-Leccia 1994; Albert & Miller 1995; Campos da Paz 1996; Campos da Paz & Costa 1996; Fernandes-Matioli et al., 1998a; 1998b; Albert et al., 1999; Campos da Paz 2000; Fernandes-Matioli et al., 2000; Albert 2001; Albert & Crampton 2001; Fernandes-Matioli & Almeida-Toledo 2001; Campos da Paz 2002; Albert & Crampton 2003; Campos da Paz 2003). Until recently *Gymnotus* was recognized as the only genus in the family Gymnotidae. The monotypic genus *Electrophorus* Gill, comprising the single strongly electric species *Electrophorus electricus* (L.) was recently included in the Gymnotidae (Albert 2001).