

## A new freshwater leech species of *Helobdella* (Annelida: Glossiphoniidae) from central Mexico

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### Abstract

*Helobdella atli* n sp. is described based on the examination of 20 specimens collected in Totolcingo Lake, Tlaxcala, Mexico. Leeches were found attached to submerged rocks and plants. Study of specimens included optical and scanning electron microscopy. Diagnostic characters are: sperm ducts with a long posterior extension, a dorsal nuchal scute on somite VIII, postcaeca absent in the last pair of crop caeca and the mouth pore in the anterior margin of the oral sucker. Previous records of *H. adiaestola* in Mexico correspond to *H. atli* n. sp.

**Key words:** Annelida, Hirudinea, Glossiphoniidae, *Helobdella*, Mexico

### Introduction

Glossiphoniidae is a diverse family of freshwater leeches, with representatives found in all continents except Antarctica. The genus *Helobdella* has been divided in two groups based on the presence or absence of a dorsal nuchal scute (or at least the glands producing it) at about somite VIII. The presence of this structure has been considered as a synapomorphy for the *stagnalis* clade but recently, Siddall & Borda (2003) found evidence that contradicts this proposal. The genus *Helobdella* is diagnosed as follows: glossiphoniids with gonopores separated by one annulus, one pair of cephalic eyespots, neither oesophageal organs nor mycetomes are present, none known to be sanguivorous on vertebrates (Siddall & Borda 2003).

The geographic distribution of the New World species of this group has been studied by some authors (Ringuelet 1944, 1978a, 1978b; Siddall 2001a; Siddall & Borda 2003). The greatest diversity of *Helobdella* is found in South America, where 11 species with