

***Helobdella nahuelhuapensis* sp. nov. (Hirudinea, Glossiphoniidae), from Bariloche, Argentina**

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Abstract

The new freshwater leech species *Helobdella nahuelhuapensis* is described based on the examination of 17 specimens collected near Nahuel Huapi Lake, Bariloche, Argentina with following diagnostic characters. Body thin and lanceolate. Chitinoid scute absent. Unpigmented region (nuchal gland) at somite VIII. Annuli subdivided dorsally. Dorsum surface lacking both papillae and tubercles. One pair of eyes on somite III; mouth pore in the anterior margin of the oral sucker; proboscis base at XII/XIII, diffuse parenchymal salivary tissue; oesophagus simple; crop with gastric chambers; postcaeca or diverticula extending posteriorly; intestine with four caeca. Six pairs of spherical testisacs; sperm ducts reach to somite XV/XVI. Atrium pyriform without preatrial loops. Ovisacs simple, reaching XIV.

Key words: *Helobdella*, new species, Argentina, leech, freshwater

Introduction

Glossiphoniidae is a cosmopolitan family of freshwater leeches (Hirudinea) composed of 23 genera (Sawyer, 1986) with a protrusible proboscis used to feed on invertebrate or vertebrate preys (Soós 1969; Klemm 1975, 1976; Sawyer 1986; Davies 1991), with representatives found in all continents except Antarctica. The genus *Helobdella* has been divided in two groups based on the presence or absence of dorsal nuchal scute (or at least the glands producing it) at about somite VIII. The genus *Helobdella* is characterised as follows: Glossiphoniidae 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, somite triannulate, (Siddall & Borda, 2003).

The greatest diversity of *Helobdella* is found in South America, where 11 species with scute or the associated nuchal gland have been recorded (Siddall, 2001a). Recently, *H.*