



***Nandus mercatus* (Teleostei: Perciformes: Nandidae), a new leaf fish from Sumatra**

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Abstract

Nandus mercatus **sp. nov.** is described from the Musi River drainage in Sumatra. It differs from all congeners in having a combination of the following characters: body depth 43.0–43.2% SL, 15 pectoral-fin rays, 29–32 lateral line scales, 11–12 scale rows below the lateral line, and slightly concave predorsal profile. The characters that diagnose the genus are also reviewed and identified. *Nandus* is here diagnosed as having the following combination of characters: ectopterygoid toothed, posterodorsal corner of the subopercular not produced into a slender process and the second preural centrum with a distally bifurcate hemal spine.

Key words: Musi River, Percomorpha, freshwater fish

Introduction

Fishes of the family Nandidae remain a poorly-diagnosed group of freshwater percomorphs (Britz, 1997), with membership recently restricted to a single Asian genus, *Nandus* (see Kullander & Britz, 2002). Members of this genus are found in river drainages in the Indian subcontinent eastwards on mainland Southeast Asia to the Mekong River drainage and southwards to the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Borneo. They are easily distinguished among Asian freshwater percoids by their sharp snout and cryptic coloration, with the latter feature being useful as camouflage in ambushing prey. There are five species currently recognized: *Nandus nandus* from the Indian subcontinent and Myanmar, *N. andrewi* from the Indian subcontinent, *N. nebulosus* from the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Borneo (except northeastern Borneo), *N. oxyrhynchus* from mainland Southeast Asia, and *N. prolixus* from northeastern Borneo (Ng & Jaafar, 2008).

During an ichthyological survey of Sumatra, two specimens of *Nandus* were obtained from the Musi River drainage in southern Sumatra. These were initially identified as *N. nebulosus*, but detailed comparison with material from the rest of Sundaic Southeast Asia (particularly from Sumatra) indicates that it belongs to a distinct species, which is herein described as *Nandus mercatus* **sp. nov.**

Material and methods

Measurements and counts were made following Hubbs & Lagler (2004) and with the changes proposed by Chakrabarty et al. (2006). Counts and measurements were made on the left side of specimens whenever possible. Measurements were made point to point with dial callipers data recorded to 0.1 mm, and were taken on all specimens examined in this study. Measurements of body parts including head length are given as proportions of standard length (SL). Subunits of the head are presented as proportions of head length (HL).