



Barbus niluferensis*, a new species of barbel (Teleostei: Cyprinidae) from Nilüfer River, Turkey, with re-description of *B. oligolepis

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Abstract

Barbus niluferensis, new species, is described from the Nilüfer River, Marmara Sea drainage, Turkey. It is distinguished by a weaker last simple dorsal-fin ray, serrated along the proximal half of its posterior margin, a maximum known size of 146 mm SL, a slender body, a short head, a short caudal fin, and larger irregular black blotches on the back and the flanks, and small black spots on the head, extending downwards to the cheeks. *Barbus oligolepis* Battalgi, 1941, is a valid species known from the rivers draining to the southern shore of the Marmara Sea.

Key words: Turkey, Cyprinidae, *Barbus oligolepis*, *Barbus niluferensis*, taxonomy

Introduction

The genus *Barbus* comprises a number of small to medium-sized fishes widely distributed in Europe, South-west Asia and North Africa. The species-level taxonomy of the genus is still not yet fully settled, and this especially applies for Turkish taxa. The Turkish literature generally follows the revision of Karaman (1971) (e.g. Geldiay & Balık, 1999; Kuru, 2004), although it has never been followed elsewhere (e.g., Kottelat, 1997; Bănărescu & Bogutskaya, 2003).

Over the years, the generic name *Barbus* has been used for about 800 nominal species of cyprinid fishes in Europe, Africa and Asia. As presently understood, however, the genus *Barbus* includes only species from Europe, North Africa and southwestern Asia (hereunder peri-Mediterranean *Barbus*). Although ignored by many European authors who still repeat that there are some 800 species of *Barbus* whose systematics is still confused, the genus-level systematics of the Eurasian species is reasonably clear. This has been the case since quite a long time, going back to Weber & de Beaufort (1916) and Smith (1945) for the Southeast Asian species, and Wu (1977) for the East Asian species. The Asian species are now placed in a number of genera (e.g., *Acrossocheilus*, *Barbonymus*, *Cyclocheilichthys*, *Discherodontus*, *Hampala*, *Hypsibarbus*, *Laocypris*, *Neolissochilus*, *Poropuntius*, *Puntius*, *Systemus*, *Tor*) belonging to several distinctive lineages. Tropical and southern African species are still called '*Barbus*', although it is well accepted that they are not at all related to the peri-Mediterranean species. In the absence of taxonomic revision at the genus level, we are left with no choice but to continue to use the name '*Barbus*' for them (with quotation marks in order to indicate they are not "real" *Barbus*) (Berrebi et al., 1996; Conway & Stiassny, 2008).