



Redescription of *Astyanax stenohalinus* Messner, 1962 (Characiformes: Characidae), a poorly known species from Argentina and Uruguay

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Abstract

Astyanax stenohalinus Messner, 1962 is redescribed based on type material and new specimens collected in many localities of Argentina and Uruguay. This species is distinguished by a combination of the following characters: possession of hooks in all fins of males, teeth not expanded distally, two or three maxillary teeth, 37–39 perforated scales in the lateral series, 25–30 branched anal-fin rays, and anal-fin origin located before a vertical through last dorsal-fin ray insertions.

Key words: freshwater fishes, characids, Río de la Plata basin, Laguna Merín

Resumen

Se redescrive *Astyanax stenohalinus* Messner, 1962, en base al material tipo y nuevos ejemplares colectados en varias localidades de Argentina y Uruguay. Esta especie se distingue por la combinación de los siguientes caracteres: presencia de ganchitos óseos en todas las aletas de los machos, dientes no expandidos en el extremo distal, 2 ó 3 dientes maxilares, 37–39 escamas perforadas en la línea lateral, 25–30 radios anales ramificados y el origen de la aleta anal está ubicado por delante de la vertical que pasa por la inserción del último radio dorsal.

Introduction

Astyanax stenohalinus Messner, 1962, was described based on six specimens from Laguna Mazangano in República Oriental del Uruguay in a mimeographed paper that included a short diagnosis. At present, the combination of characters given by Messner in the original description is not enough to distinguish other congeners, such as *A. latens* Mirande, Aguilera & Azpelicueta, 2004; *A. saguazu* Casciotta, Almirón & Azpelicueta, 2003, and *A. tupi* Azpelicueta, Mirande, Almirón & Casciotta, 2003 from *A. stenohalinus*.

Astyanax stenohalinus was cited in the Uruguayan literature only by Olazarri *et al.* (1970) and Nion *et al.* (2002). According to Malabarba *et al.* (2004), Messner (1962) was ignored by subsequent ichthyologists probably due to the limited distribution of the journal where it was published.

Collecting trips in the rivers and streams in both margins of the Río de la Plata, río Uruguay and other areas of Uruguay allowed us to find specimens of *A. stenohalinus* that demonstrate its widespread geographical distribution. The aim of this paper is to provide a redescription of this species based on the revision of type material and specimens collected from several localities.