



A new *Trichomycterus* lacking pelvic fins and pelvic girdle with a very restricted range in Southern Brazil (Siluriformes: Trichomycteridae)

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Abstract

Trichomycterus tropeiro, new species, is described from the headwaters of the rio das Antas, laguna dos Patos system, Southern Brazil. *Trichomycterus tropeiro* is distinguishable from other species of the genus by the absence of pelvic fins and pelvic girdle, except from *Trichomycterus candidus* and *Trichomycterus catamarcensis*. It differs from these two species in several counts and measurements. The apparent endemism of the species is discussed.

Key words: Neotropical, Laguna dos Patos system, Endemic fish, *Trichomycterus candidus*, *Trichomycterus catamarcensis*

Resumo

Trichomycterus tropeiro, nova espécie, é descrita para as cabeceiras do rio das Antas, sistema da laguna dos Patos, sul do Brasil. *Trichomycterus tropeiro* distingue-se das demais espécies do gênero pela ausência de cintura e nadadeiras pélvicas, com exceção de *Trichomycterus candidus* e *Trichomycterus catamarcensis*. Distingue-se destas duas espécies em várias contagens e medidas corporais. O aparente endemismo da espécie é discutido.

Introduction

The family Trichomycteridae has a wide geographical distribution in the Neotropic, occurring from Costa Rica to Argentina and on both sides of the Andes (de Pinna & Wosiacki 2003). The genus *Trichomycterus* is the largest of the family containing over 135 valid species (Eschmeyer & Fricke 2011). Many species of the genus inhabit headwaters and small streams, characterized by clear and cold waters with fast current and rocky bottom (de Pinna 1998), and present, generally, restricted geographic distribution and high endemism (de Pinna 1992; Malabarba *et al.* 2009).

Despite the common occurrence of the species of the genus in most tributaries of the rio Uruguay and laguna dos Patos basins in Southern Brazil, taxonomic studies of this genus have been neglected in that region. The species of *Trichomycterus* described from Southern Brazil are restricted in their ranges to the States of the Paraná and Santa Catarina, not reaching the rio Uruguay and laguna dos Patos basins in the Rio Grande do Sul State, Brazil.

The extensive analysis of specimens of *Trichomycterus* collected in the laguna dos Patos drainage revealed one apparently highly endemic new species from the headwaters of rio das Antas, easily distinguished from most species of the genus by the lack of pelvic girdle and associated elements. The new species is described herein, along with a discussion of the apparent endemism of the species.

Material and methods

Measurements were made point-to-point with digital calipers to the nearest 0.1 mm on the left side of the specimens. The measurements follow Tchernavin (1944) for the length of barbells, Wosiacki and de Pinna (2008) for the