



## A new distinctively banded species of *Pseudolithoxus* (Siluriformes: Loricariidae) from the upper Orinoco River

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### Abstract

*Pseudolithoxus kelsorum* is described as a new species based on type material from the upper Orinoco in Amazonas State, Venezuela. *Pseudolithoxus kelsorum* is diagnosed from all other *Pseudolithoxus* by having dark brown to black base color with eight to 11 (usually nine) light yellow vertical or oblique transversal bands between orbits and caudal fin, bands wide and rarely but sometimes incomplete or contorted as swirls (vs. dark brown to black base color with 18 or more thin, light yellow, frequently contorted transversal bands between orbits and caudal fin in *P. tigris*; black base color with small white spots in *P. anthrax* and *P. nicoi*; and light brown base color with dark brown to black spots in *P. dumus*). Distributions of *P. kelsorum* and other Ancistrini taxa support the presence of a zoogeographic filter limiting fish distributions across a reach of the Orinoco River between the Ventuari-Orinoco confluence and the Maipures rapids.

**Key words:** Neotropics, Taxonomy, Ancistrini, Guiana Shield, Biogeography, Zoogeographic Filter

### Resumen

Se describe una nueva especie, *Pseudolithoxus kelsorum*, con base en especímenes colectados en el alto río Orinoco, Estado de Amazonas, Venezuela. *Pseudolithoxus kelsorum* sp. nov. se diferencia de las demás especies de *Pseudolithoxus* por presentar un color de fondo de marrón oscuro a negro con ocho a 11 (generalmente nueve), franjas anchas (en ocasiones incompletas) de color amarillo claro entre las órbitas y la aleta caudal, que pueden ser verticales, transversalmente inclinadas, o retorcidas arremolinadas, (vs. color de fondo marrón oscuro a negro con 18 o más franjas delgadas de color amarillo claro entre las órbitas y la aleta caudal que pueden ser verticales, inclinadas hacia adelante, o transversalmente retorcidas en *P. tigris*; color de fondo negro con pequeñas manchas blancas en *P. anthrax* y *P. nicoi*; y color de fondo marrón claro con puntos de color marrón oscuro a negro en *P. dumus*). Las distribuciones de *Pseudolithoxus* y otros Ancistrini soportan la presencia de un filtro zoogeográfico de carácter fisicoquímico que limita diferencialmente las distribuciones de peces a través de una sección del río Orinoco entre la confluencia Ventuari-Orinoco y los raudales Maipures.

**Palabras clave:** Neotrópico, Taxonomía, Ancistrini, Escudo Guyanés, Biogeografía, Filtro Zoogeográfico

### Introduction

Isbrücker and Werner (Isbrücker *et al.*, 2001) erected *Pseudolithoxus* and designated *Lasiancistrus tigris* as the type species and *L. anthrax*, *L. dumus*, and *L. nicoi* as congeners. Although Isbrücker and Werner provided only a brief description and no diagnosis for *Pseudolithoxus*, those species form a monophyletic group previously diagnosed by Armbruster and Provenzano (2000). Characters given by Armbruster and Provenzano (2000) as diagnostic for this group include evertible cheek plates, a dorsoventrally flattened body, extremely hypertrophied odontodes on elongated pectoral-fin spines and along the snout margin, and three rows of plates on the caudal peduncle. Phylogenetic analysis of osteological characters inclusive of all Ancistrini genera (Armbruster, 2008)