



***Ompok karunkodu*, a new catfish (Teleostei: Siluridae) from southern India**

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Abstract

Ompok karunkodu, a new species of silurid catfish is described from the Amaravathi River, a right-hand tributary of the Kaveri [=Cauvery] River in Tamil Nadu, southern India. *Ompok karunkodu* can be distinguished from all congeners in the Indian subcontinent in having a markedly convex predorsal profile (vs. with a slight or distinct concavity in the supraethmoidal or supraoccipital region), and a unique combination of the following characters: prognathous lower jaw causing anterior profile of head to appear rounded when viewed laterally, maxillary barbel reaching to base of pectoral-fin spine, eye diameter 13.7% HL, head width 13.0% SL, body depth at anus 14.2% SL, 65 anal-fin rays, caudal peduncle depth 5.0% SL, caudal-fin length 12.6% SL, caudal fin with rounded lobes, 54 vertebrae, and dark midlateral stripe running along sides of body.

Key words: Ostariophysa, Tamil Nadu, Amaravathi River, Kaveri River

Introduction

Members of the genus *Ompok* La Cepède 1803, are medium-sized silurid catfishes found in lotic and lentic habitats throughout South and Southeast Asia. The genus has been acknowledged as a non-monophyletic group since Bornbusch (1995) showed that it is comprised of four clades: the *O. bimaculatus* group, the *O. leiacanthus* group, the *O. hypophthalmus* group, and the *O. eugeneiatus* group. The *Ompok bimaculatus* group is the only clade known from the Indian subcontinent (all others are restricted to mainland and Sundaic Southeast Asia). The taxonomy of the *Ompok* species known from the Indian subcontinent is highly confusing, with 20 nominal species being described from southern Asia (the Indian subcontinent, Myanmar and Sri Lanka), but only four recognized as valid (Ng & Hadiaty, 2009).

Recently, I was given the opportunity to examine a specimen of *Ompok* collected from the Amaravathi River in southern India. Detailed examination revealed this specimen to belong to an undescribed species, which is described herein as *Ompok karunkodu*, new species.

Material and methods

Measurements were made point to point with dial calipers and data recorded to tenths of a millimeter. Counts and measurements were made on the left side of specimens whenever possible. Subunits of the head are presented as proportions of head length (HL). Head length and measurements of body parts are given as proportions of standard length (SL). Measurements follow those of Ng (2003). Institutional acronyms follow Ferraris (2007).

***Ompok karunkodu* sp. nov.**

(Fig. 1)

Type material. Holotype: UMMZ 249905, 229.1 mm SL; India: Tamil Nadu, Amaravathi River in the vicinity of Amaravathi Dam, 10°24'N 77°16'E; A. Rao, January 2010.