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The types of *Osteoglossum formosum* Müller & Schlegel, 1840 (Teleostei, Osteoglossidae)

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Abstract

The designation of a neotype for *Scleropages formosus* (Müller & Schlegel, 1840) by Pouyaud *et al.* (2003) triggered a search for the type specimens of the species, which were found in the collections of the Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden (RMNH) and the Natural History Museum, London (BM(NH)). The publication date of the species is corrected. Moreover, detailed data on the day of capture and the type locality were uncovered. An English translation of the major part of the original Dutch description is provided, and a number of neglected colour descriptions and figures of *S. formosus* are discussed. Lastly, a lectotype is designated.

Key words: *Scleropages formosus*, Asian Arowana, neotype, lectotype, RMNH collection

Introduction

Pouyaud *et al.* (2003) described three new species of *Scleropages*, distinguished from *S. formosus* (Müller & Schlegel, 1840) by colouration, molecular data and morphometric characters. However, the significance of the morphological and molecular analysis was questioned by Kottelat & Widjanarti (2005) who considered it premature to follow Pouyaud *et al.* and continued to recognize a single species: *S. formosus*. Roberts (2012), in a description of a new *Scleropages* species from the Malay Peninsula, followed Kottelat & Widjanarti (op. cit.) and placed *S. aureus* Pouyaud, Sudarto & Teugels, 2003, *S. legendri* Pouyaud, Sudarto & Teugels, 2003, and *S. macrocephalus* Pouyaud, Sudarto & Teugels, 2003 in the synonymy of *S. formosus*.

Pouyaud *et al.* (2003) also redescribed *S. formosus* and designated a neotype for this species. Apparently, the last action was based on information on the types in Eschmeyer *et al.* (1998), although Pouyaud *et al.* (2003) cited the wrong volume.

According to the qualifying conditions of the Code (Art. 75.3) a neotype should only be designated when there is an exceptional need, and only when that need is stated expressly, and when the designation is published with a number of particulars, including (Art. 75.3.1) a statement that the neotype is designated with the express purpose of clarifying the taxonomic status or type locality of a nominal taxon. Such a statement is lacking in Pouyaud *et al.* (2003). According to Art. 75.3.4, the authors' reason for believing the name-bearing type specimen(s) to be lost or destroyed, and the steps taken to trace it or them, must be stated with the designation. Pouyaud *et al.* (2003) give no details on this point. Furthermore, Art. 75.3.5 requires evidence that the neotype is consistent with what is known of the former name-bearing type from the original description and other sources.

Although Pouyaud *et al.* (2003) mention the original description of *S. formosus* in the references, no details of morphometric or meristic measurements, description of the colouration or comments on the original colour plate are given. Therefore, the designation of a neotype for *S. formosus* by Pouyaud *et al.* (2003) does not meet the requirements of the Code. More important, and missed by Pouyaud *et al.* (2003), the designation of a neotype is unnecessary because the types are still extant.