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A new species of *Physoschistura* (Pisces: Nemacheilidae) from northern Thailand

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Abstract

Physoschistura chulabhornae, new species, is described from Maechaem River, a tributary of Ping River, upper Chaophraya River drainage, Chiangmai province, Thailand. It is distinguished from all other known species of *Physoschistura* in having an incomplete lateral line reaching at least to the origin of the anal fin with 62–83 lateral-line canal pores, the dorsal-fin origin slightly in front of the pelvic-fin origin, no axillary pelvic lobe, and a suborbital flap in the shape of a hammer head in the male.

Key words: new species, Maechaem River, stream loaches

Introduction

Physoschistura Bănărescu & Nalbant 1982, type species *Nemacheilus brunneanus* Annandale 1918, is a genus of small- to medium-sized Asian nemacheilid loaches (Lokeshwor & Vishwanath, 2012a). This genus is characterized by the following combination of characters: elongated body slightly arched anteriorly; blunt snout; mouth inferior, strongly arched; lower lip with a median interruption, forming two lateral triangular pads; processus dentiformis feebly to moderately developed; no corresponding incision on lower jaw; posterior chamber of air bladder well developed, not encapsulated, more or less conical; dorsal fin inserted slightly in front of pelvic-fin origin; forked caudal fin; pelvic fin not extending to anal fin; body with scales, no acuminate scales on caudal peduncle; sexual dimorphism present or not; dorsal fin with one or two black marks along base; one small blotch on upper part of caudal-fin base; irregular bars on body; and black band at base of caudal fin (Bănărescu & Nalbant, 1982; Kottelat, 1990; Bănărescu & Nalbant, 1995). This genus is distributed in the hill streams of the Brahmaputra (Lokeshwor *et al.*, 2012; Lokeshwor & Vishwanath, 2012a), Irrawaddy (Lokeshwor & Vishwanath, 2012b, c), Salween (Hora, 1929), Mekong and Chaophraya drainages (Kottelat, 1990).

Annandale (1918), Hora (1921, 1929), Kottelat (1990), Chen *et al.* (2011), Lokeshwor *et al.* (2012), and Lokeshwor & Vishwanath (2012a, b & c) described a total of 11 species of *Physoschistura*: *P. brunneana*, *P. chindwinensis*, *P. dikrongensis*, *P. prashadi*, *P. pseudobrunnaena*, *P. raoi*, *P. rivulicola*, *P. shanensis*, *P. tigrinum*, *P. tuivaiensis*, and *P. yunnaniloides* on the basis of specimens collected in India, Myanmar, and Thailand. *Physoschistura meridionalis*, described by Zhu (1982), was placed in a new genus, *Pteronemacheilus*, by Bohlen & Šlechtová (2011), and *Physoschistura elongata*, described by Sen & Nalbant in Singh, *et al.* (1982), was moved to *Schistura* based on mouth characteristics (Lokeshwor *et al.*, 2012).

The Maechaem River, in the Chaophraya River drainage, flows from north to south into Maeping River in the Jomtong District of Chiangmai Province, Thailand. The fish diversity of this basin has been incompletely reported. Suvarnaraksha (2012) recently described *Schistura maejotigrina* from the basin, and *Physoschistura chulabhornae*, a new species from this river basin is described herein.

Material and methods

Fishes were collected from a small tributary of the Maechaem River by electric shocker, scoop net and side-

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