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***Microlepidogaster discus*, a new species of Hypoptopomatinae (Siluriformes: Loricariidae) from the rio Jequitinhonha basin, southeastern Brazil**

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Abstract

A new Hypoptopomatinae is described from the upper rio Jequitinhonha basin. The new species is distinguished from all congeners by having the ventral laminar expansions of cleithrum and coracoid bearing only 1–30 odontodes, restricted to the area near the pectoral-fin insertion; the anterior plates of mid-ventral lateral series reduced, not ventrally elongated, the first or the second markedly round; pectoral-fin unbranched ray distinctly divided distally, with 7–15 ossified segments, reaching almost half of its length; and accessory process on first epibranchial present. *Microlepidogaster discus* is further distinguished from its congeners by several other osteological features. The problems concerning the taxonomy of *Microlepidogaster*, as well as the pattern of distribution of the genus, are discussed.

Key words: Biodiversity, Brazilian crystalline shield, Cascudinhos, Neotropical, taxonomy, Teleostei

Resumo

Um novo Hypoptopomatinae é descrito da bacia do alto rio Jequitinhonha. Essa nova espécie é diferenciada de todos os seus congêneres por ter as expansões laminares do cleitro e coracóide portando apenas 1–30 odontódeos, restritos à área próxima à inserção da nadadeira peitoral; as placas anteriores da série médio-ventral reduzidas e não alongadas ventralmente, a primeira ou a segunda marcadamente redondas; raio não ramificado da nadadeira peitoral dividido distalmente, com 7–15 segmentos ossificados, distribuídos até quase a metade do seu comprimento; e processo acessório do primeiro epibrânquial presente. Adicionalmente, *Microlepidogaster discus* se distingue de suas congêneres por diversas outras características osteológicas. Os problemas acerca da taxonomia de *Microlepidogaster*, assim como o padrão de distribuição do gênero, são discutidos.

Palavras-chave: Biodiversidade, Cascudinhos, Escudo cristalino brasileiro, Neotropical, Taxonomia, Teleostei

Introduction

Microlepidogaster Eigenmann & Eigenmann, 1889 is a hypoptopomatine genus that is reportedly only present in the upper rio Paraná basin, southeastern Brazil. The genus comprises four valid species: *M. perforatus* Eigenmann & Eigenmann, 1889, the type species, and *M. dimorpha* Martins & Langeani, 2011 both from the rio Grande drainage; and *M. longicolla* Calegari & Reis, 2010 and *M. arachas* Martins, Calegari & Langeani, 2013, both from the rio Paranaíba drainage. *Microlepidogaster* needs to be thoroughly defined as several species described or placed within the genus have been later reallocated to other genera within the Hypoptopomatinae (e.g. Regan, 1904; Miranda Ribeiro, 1911, 1918; Gosline, 1945; Schaefer, 1997, 1998).

Recent sampling in the upper rio Jequitinhonha basin revealed a new species of *Microlepidogaster*. According to many authors (e.g. Godinho *et al.*, 1999; Bizerril & Lima, 2005; Andrade, 2010) the rio Jequitinhonha seems to have a lower ichthyofaunal diversity than other similar drainages, and until recently, *Otothyris travassosi* Garavello, Britski & Schaefer, 1998 was the only known Hypoptopomatinae reportedly present in this basin.

16171, 16 (1 c&s), 27.9–35.7 mm SL; MCZ 8181, holotype, 32 mm SL; 14.7–34.5 mm SL; MNRJ 31886, 13 (2 c&s), 27.6–32.9 mm SL. *Rhinolekos britskii*: DZSJRP 6489, holotype, 32.2 mm SL; DZSJRP 12190, 17 paratypes (1 c&s), 21.8–35.5 mm SL. *R. garavelloi*, DZSJRP 10479, holotype, 31.4 mm SL; DZSJRP 12191, 37 paratypes (4 c&s), 10.7–32.8 mm SL. *R. schaeferi*, MCP 26939, holotype, 35.4 mm SL; DZSJRP 12192, 3 (1 c&s), 36.5–38.4 mm SL.

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