



Redescription of *Astyanax guianensis* Eigenmann 1909 (Characiformes: Characidae), a poorly known and widespread fish from the Amazon, Orinoco and Guiana Shield drainages

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Abstract

Astyanax guianensis is redescribed based on the holotype, paratypes, and additional specimens from the rio Essequibo in Guyana, rio Orinoco in Venezuela and from several localities in the Amazon river basin in Brazil, Colombia and Bolivia. *Astyanax guianensis* is diagnosed by having five to 10 maxillary teeth, 31 to 35 pored lateral-line scales, 21 to 25 branched anal-fin rays, and a dark vertical humeral blotch followed by a clear area and then by a dark longitudinal stripe, ending before the caudal-fin rays. In addition, comments on the importance of revisionary studies on the species of the Characidae are provided.

Key words: *Astyanax guaporensis*, *Astyanax multidentis*, *Moenkhausia collettii*, Neotropical, taxonomy

Resumo

Astyanax guianensis é redescrita com base no holótipo, parátipos e exemplares adicionais coletados no rio Essequibo na Guiana, no rio Orinoco na Venezuela e em diversas localidades da bacia do rio Amazonas no Brasil, Colômbia e Bolívia. *Astyanax guianensis* é diagnosticada por apresentar de cinco a 10 dentes no maxilar, 31 a 35 escamas perfuradas na linha lateral, 21 a 25 raios ramificados na nadadeira anal e uma mancha umeral escura seguida de uma área clara e, posteriormente, de uma faixa longitudinal escura terminando antes dos raios medianos da nadadeira caudal. Além disso, comentários sobre a importância de revisões taxonômicas de espécies de Characidae são fornecidos.

Palavras-chave: *Astyanax guaporensis*, *Astyanax multidentis*, *Moenkhausia collettii*, Neotropical, taxonomia

Introduction

The Neotropical genus *Astyanax* Baird & Girard is the most species-rich genus of the Characiformes, comprising almost 140 valid species (Eschmeyer & Fricke 2014). The species of the genus are distributed in American freshwater drainages from Texas (USA) to Argentina, living in environments such as, for example, caves (Wilkens & Streaker 2003), fast current streams (Bertaco & Malabarba 2001), and lakes (Meschiatti *et al.* 2000). *Astyanax* is one of the most taxonomically poorly known genus of the family Characidae. Some species were grouped into units defined mainly by color patterns, morphometric, and meristic data: the *Astyanax bimaculatus* (Linnaeus) species group (Garutti 1999), the *A. fasciatus* (Cuvier) species complex (Melo & Buckup 2006), and the *A. scabripinnis* (Jenyns) species group (Moreira-Filho & Bertolo 1991; Bertaco & Malabarba 2001; Bertaco & Lucena 2006). Most species belonging to these groups are difficult to diagnose. Recently, revisionary papers have been published to elucidate the identity of several species of *Astyanax* (e.g., Melo & Buckup 2006; Garutti & Langeani 2009; Pavanelli & Oliveira 2009; Bertaco *et al.* 2010), but there are still lots of poorly known forms that need an appropriate taxonomic characterization.

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