



Description of a new species of *Labeo* (Teleostei: Cyprinidae) from the lower Congo River

SINASELI M. TSHIBWABWA¹, MELANIE L.J. STIASSNY² & ROBERT C. SCHELLY²

¹Laboratoire de Biologie, Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Gombé, Av. Père-Boka, Kinshasa Gombé, R.D. Congo. Contact address : 3-8970, Av. Louis-Dessaulles, Montreal (Qc) H1E 7H6/Canada.

E-mail: sinaseli@hotmail.com

²American Museum of Natural History, Division of Vertebrate Zoology, Central Park West at 79th St., New York, NY 10024 U.S.A. E-mail: mljs@amnh.org; schelly@amnh.org

Abstract

A new labeonine cyprinid, *Labeo fulakariensis*, is described from material recently collected in rapids on the lower Congo River near the mouth of the Foulakari River, a large north bank tributary, in the Republic of Congo, and from the Yelala rapids in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The new species is readily distinguished from other Congolese *Labeo* except *L. greenii* and *L. reidi* by the following combination of characters: plicate lips, characteristic striping of the flanks, and a dark spot on the base of the caudal peduncle. *Labeo fulakariensis* is distinguished from *L. greenii* by dorsal fin shape and snout without a deep transverse furrow or upwardly directed fleshy anterior appendage, and from *L. reidi* by the position of the eyes, the circumpeduncular scale count (16 vs 17 to 20 in *L. reidi*) and maxillary barbels hidden and smaller than in *L. reidi*.

Key words: *Labeo*, Cyprinidae, new species, Africa, lower Congo River

Introduction

Cyprinid fishes of the genus *Labeo* have been divided into two groups on the basis of the anatomy of the inner surface of their lips which are either papillate or plicate (Tshibwabwa & Teugels, 1995). In the lower Congo region (from Pool Malebo to the Atlantic Ocean, see Thieme *et al.*, 2005), the first group is represented by 3 species: *Labeo lineatus* Boulenger, 1898, *L. weeksii* Boulenger, 1909, and *L. maleboensis* Tshibwabwa, 1997, and the second group is represented by 13 species: *L. annectens* Boulenger, 1903, *L. barbatus* Boulenger, 1898, *L. chariensis* Pellegrin, 1904, *L. cyclorhynchus* Boulenger, 1899, *L. degeni* Boulenger, 1920, *L. falcipinnis* Boulenger, 1903, *L. greenii* Boulenger, 1902, *L. longipinnis* Boulenger, 1898, *L. macrostomus* Boulenger, 1898, *L. nasus* Boulenger, 1899,