



Redescription of *Silurus burmanensis* Thant 1967: a *Silurus* not a *Pterocryptis* (Teleostei: Siluriformes: Siluridae)

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Abstract

The silurid species *Silurus burmanensis* is redescribed based on a recently collected specimen from the type locality. Based on its characters we conclude that *S. burmanensis* is not a member of the genus *Pterocryptis*, as suggested previously, but a valid species of *Silurus*. It seems closely related to, but sufficiently distinct from, the two Yunnanese species of *Silurus* described by Regan (1904, 1907). *Silurus burmanensis* thus represents the southwestern most occurrence of a species of the genus *Silurus* in Asia.

Keywords: Yunnan, Shan plateau, endemism, Lake Inle, Burma, Myanmar

Introduction

Silurus burmanensis Thant 1967, described from Inle Lake in the Shan states in Myanmar, has remained one of the puzzling taxa among catfishes of the family Siluridae. Bornbusch (1991) suggested that *S. burmanensis* is a species of the genus *Pterocryptis* Peters. It was subsequently considered a junior synonym of *Silurichthys bermorei* Blyth by Talwar & Jhingran (1992, incorrectly spelled *Silurus burmanicus* on p. 588), a species included in *Pterocryptis* by Bornbusch (1991). It was also treated as a member of *Pterocryptis* by Ferraris (2007). Since its description, *Silurus burmanensis* had not been collected again, although Inle Lake is one of the best explored places in Myanmar. A recent collection of a single specimen from the Inle Lake area offered the opportunity to study this catfish species in more detail and we provide a description of our findings in this paper.

Material and methods

Measurements were taken with digital callipers to the nearest 0.1 mm and largely follow Bornbusch (1991) with the following exceptions and additions: head length was measured from the tip of the upper jaw to the end of the opercle, head width at the hyomandibulo-opercular joint, head depth at the supraoccipital, body depth in front of the anal fin, pectoral-, pelvic- and dorsal-fin length as distance between the base of the fin to the tip of the longest element, fleshy and bony interorbital width are provided as distances between the fleshy and bony interorbital margins. Vertebral numbers were counted from radiographs. Fin-ray counts for unpaired fins were also obtained from radiographs, those of the pectoral fin from the alcohol specimen under transmitted light. Abbreviations used: BMNH, The Natural History Museum, London.