



A new species of *Metahomaloptera* (Teleostei: Balitoridae) from China

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Abstract

A new species of *Metahomaloptera*, *M. longicauda*, is described from the lower Jinsha River, China. The new species is distinguished from other species of *Metahomaloptera* by the following combination of characters: pectoral fin with 11–15 branched rays, tip of pectoral fin extending beyond origin of dorsal fin, pelvic fin with 10–12 branched rays, pelvic-fin tip reaching or extending beyond anus, dorsal fin inserting before middle of body, tip of dorsal fin far from vertical line of caudal-fin base, head width 19.4–22.6% SL, pre-pectoral length 8.4–9.9% SL, pre-anal length 69.0–74.3% SL, caudal peduncle length 17.1–20.7% SL, eye diameter 14.6–16.6% HL, caudal peduncle depth 33.7–43.1% caudal peduncle length, mouth width 63.2–75.5% body width at pectoral-fin origin.

Key words: Balitoridae, *Metahomaloptera*, new species, China

Introduction

The hillstream loach genus *Metahomaloptera* was erected by Chang (1944), with *M. omeiensis* as the type species. Chang (1944) identified *Metahomaloptera* using the following characters: “head and anterior part of body greatly depressed and ventrally flattened; snout broad, rounded, and trenchant; eye superolateral, with free orbital margin; mouth inferior, crescent-shaped, and of moderate size, with 8 barbels, 4 rostral and 4 maxillary; upper lip narrow, with single row of papillae; both jaws provided with sharp horny edges; gill-opening very small, crescent-shaped, situated entirely above the base of pectoral; pectoral fin with 20–23 rays; pelvic fin with 17–21 rays.” Xie, *et al.* (1984) described a subspecies of *Metahomaloptera omeiensis*, *M. o. hangshuiensis*, from a tributary of the upper Yangtse River. At present, only one species of *Metahomaloptera* has been recorded from the upper Yangtse River. Chen (1990) recorded *M. omeiensis omeiensis* in Yanjin and Weixin, Yunnan Province, China, He also added a note regarding a specimen of *Metahomaloptera* collected in Fumin County, Yunnan, China, and listed some differences between this specimen and *M. omeiensis omeiensis*, but lacking enough material, did not describe it as a new species. The study below is based on the material of *Metahomaloptera* from the lower Jinsha River and some topotypic material of *M. omeiensis omeiensis*. The specimen recorded by Chen (1990), together with the specimens of the lower Jinsha River represent a new species, *M. longicauda*.

Material and methods

Counts and most measurements followed Chu & Chen (1989). Additional measurements, *viz.* pre-dorsal length, pre-pectoral length, pre-pelvic length and pre-anal length, were taken from the anteriormost tip of the