



A new species of *Parotocinclus* (Siluriformes: Loricariidae) from the upper Rio São Francisco, Brazil

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Abstract

A new species of the hypoptopomatine loricariid *Parotocinclus* is described based on material from three rivers belonging to the upper and middle Rio São Francisco basin, the Rio das Velhas and Rio Jequitáí on the right margin and the Rio Paracatu on the left margin. The new species is readily distinguished from all congeners by having the abdomen completely devoid of dermal plates between the pectoral girdle and the anus, by differences in rostral and postrostral plates, and by having the pectoral girdle covered by skin medially and exposed and supporting odontodes only laterally.

Key words: Catfishes, Hypoptopomatinae, Neotropical, taxonomy, biogeography, systematics

Introduction

Despite being entirely located on the of the Brazilian Shield, a region with the highest diversity of neoplecostomine and hypoptopomatine loricariids, the Rio São Francisco basin harbours only a few, rather unrelated species of both subfamilies. Of the neoplecostomines only *Pareiorhaphis mutuca* and *Neoplecostomus franciscoensis* are currently known and among the hypoptopomatines four species are presently recorded for the entire basin: *Otocinclus xakryaba*, *Parotocinclus jumbo*, *P. prata* and *Plesioptopoma curvidens*. During the course of an expedition conducted in the Rio São Francisco basin in 1993 by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (ANSP), the Museum of Sciences and Technology (MCP), and the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), specimens of a remarkable new species of *Parotocinclus* were obtained. Two subsequent expedition (in May 2004 and October 2008) were organized to the area where the first specimens were collected, yielding several new specimens that allow us to describe the new taxon.

Methods

Measurements and counts follow Carvalho & Reis (2009). Measurements were taken as point-to-point linear distances with digital calipers under a dissecting scope on the left side of specimens, and recorded to the nearest 0.1 mm. Morphometric data are expressed as percents of standard length (SL), except for subunits of the head, which are expressed as percents of head length (HL). Plate counts and nomenclature follow the schemes of serial homology of Schaefer (1997). Vertebral counts include all vertebrae including the five centra modified into the Weberian apparatus, with the compound caudal centrum (PU1+U1) counted as one element. Vertebral elements were counted in cleared and stained specimens only. Osteological examinations were performed in specimens cleared and double stained for bones and cartilages (c&s) prepared according to the technique of Taylor & Van Dyke (1985).

The specimens examined for this study are deposited in the following institutions: American Museum of Natural History, New York (AMNH); Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Philadelphia (ANSP); Auburn