



Article

On the validity of *Pelvicachromis sacrimontis* Paulo, 1977 (Perciformes, Cichlidae), with designation of a neotype, and redescription of the species

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Abstract

Pelvicachromis sacrimontis Paulo, 1977 was originally described on the basis of an iconotype in an aquarium journal. Herein, the validity of the name as well as the species status is discussed, an updated diagnosis and description of the species is given, and a neotype and a series of paraneotypes is designated. The species differs from congeners in a combination of coloration features including a broad dark midlateral band, the absence of blue and reddish dots in the caudal fin of males, and the specific coloration of the dorsal fin in females.

Key words: type series

Introduction

The genus *Pelvicachromis* (Perciformes, Cichlidae) in its current definition sensu Thys van den Audenaerde (1968) and Greenwood (1987), contains eight described species. One of these species, *P. sacrimontis* Paulo, 1977, lacks a type specimen or type series, as the original description, published in an aquarium journal, only referenced an iconotype illustrated in the same article. Despite the fact that this publication does not present a complete diagnosis, it constitutes a valid description, following the applicable regulations for zoological nomenclature, mainly articles 8, 10, 23, 50 and 61 of International Code for Zoological Nomenclature.

For a long time, the validity of this taxon had either not been recognized, or the name had been defined as an “unjustified substitute“ for “*Pelvicachromis camerunensis*”, a name that appeared in Thys van den Audenaerde (1968), and was noted to be a commercial name that was not available (Daget *et al.* 1991). Nevertheless, specimens of this species from the MRAC collection were mentioned in Thys van den Audenaerde (1968) as *P. pulcher* B and *P. aff. pulcher* B, and recognized as being a distinct species, different from *P. pulcher* mainly in coloration patterns. The first recognition of the validity of *P. sacrimontis* Paulo, 1977 was by Lamboj (1999, 2004). It is the aim of this paper to present a detailed examination of the material for this species, including MRAC specimens and live aquarium imports, to discuss the status of the species as well as the validity of the name, and to give a formal diagnosis and description along with neotype designations for *P. sacrimontis*.

Material and methods

External counts and measurements follow Barel *et al.* (1977). All measurements were taken on the left side with digital calipers with an accuracy of +/- 0.03 mm. Additional specimens examined in this study are listed under Comparative materials. Radiographs were taken of some specimens for vertebral counts. In addition, live wild-caught specimens of *P. sacrimontis* and *P. pulcher* imported for the ornamental fish trade from Nigeria/Niger River system have been used for colour comparison, description of live specimens, and behavioural observations, but not included in morphological examinations or type series.

Abbreviations used throughout the text include TL: total length; SL: standard length; and HL: head length.