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Dario huli, a new species of badid from Karnataka, southern India (Teleostei: Percomorpha: Badidae)

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Abstract

Dario huli, new species, is described from a small tributary stream of the Tunga River in southern Karnataka, India. It can be distinguished from all its congeners except *D. urops* by the presence of a conspicuous black caudal-fin blotch and by anterior dorsal-fin lappets in males not being produced beyond fin spines. It is readily distinguished from *Dario urops* by the absence of the horizontal suborbital stripe (vs. presence), the presence of a series of up to eight black bars on the body (vs. 2–3 black bars restricted to caudal peduncle), 25 scales in a lateral row (vs. 28), 3–5 tubed lateral-line scales (vs. tubed lateral-line scales completely absent), 13+13=26 vertebrae (vs. 14+14–15=28-29), and the presence of teeth on hypobranchial 3 (vs. absence of teeth).

Key words: taxonomy, freshwater fishes, Western Ghats–Sri Lanka biodiversity hotspot

Introduction

The Western Ghats mountain range along the west coast of Peninsular India harbours a diverse freshwater-fish fauna of close to 300 species (Dahanukar *et al.* 2011). Renewed scientific interest in this fauna in the last few years has led to the discovery of a number of new species whose closest relatives live in the northeast of India and adjacent countries, such as, e.g., the sisorids *Pseudolaguvia austrina* (Radhakrishnan *et al.* 2011) and *P. lapillicola* (Britz *et al.* 2013), the cobitid *Pangio ammophila* (Britz *et al.* 2012a) or the psilorhynchid *Psilorhynchus tenura* (Arunachalam & Muralidharan *et al.* 2008). Another unexpected discovery was the badid *Dario urops* (Britz *et al.* 2012b).

The Badidae comprise a total of 21 valid species (see Kullander & Britz 2002; Geetakumari & Vishwanath 2010; Schindler & Linke 2010; Geetakumari & Kadu 2011; Britz *et al.* 2012) in two genera, *Badis* Bleeker and *Dario* Kullander & Britz. Before the discovery of the southern Indian *D. urops*, the known distribution of the genus *Dario*, with its three included species, was restricted to the Brahmaputra drainage in northern India (*D. dario*) and the Ayeyarwaddy drainage in Myanmar and China (*D. hysginon*, *D. dayingensis*). Recently, an additional species, *D. kajal*, was described from the Meghna river drainage in India (Britz & Kullander 2013).

During fieldwork in southern Karnataka, peninsular India, a species of *Dario* with a distinctive colour pattern was collected from along the banks of a small stream: it is here described as *D. huli*, new species.

Material and methods

Ten measurements and 10 counts were taken following the methods outlined in Kullander & Britz (2002). We adopted Kullander & Britz's (2002) terminology for colour pattern and cephalic lateral-line pores. Counts of vertebrae and procurrent rays are based on the single cleared and double-stained (Taylor & Van Dyke, 1985) specimen. Specimens are deposited in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Mumbai, India. Information on *D. urops* was taken from the original description (Britz *et al.* 2012b).

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