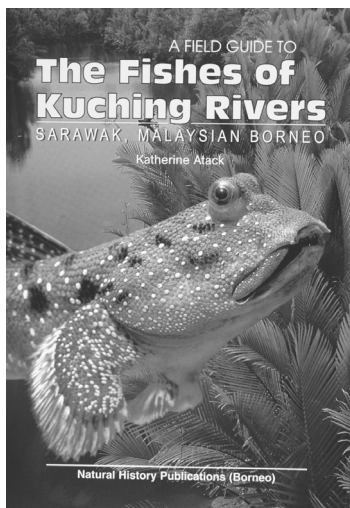


BOOK REVIEW



A Field Guide to the Fishes of Kuching Rivers, Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo. By Katherine Atack, 2006. Natural History Publications (Borneo) Sdn. Bhd. 200 pp. ISBN 983-812-113-4.

This is a compact volume (22 x 16 cm) lavishly filled with colour plates, covering the variety of fish species in the rivers running through the city of Kuching, the main city

of Sarawak. This book is not a taxonomical treatment, but rather catered for the layperson. This book is part of the result of the Sarawak Government / DANIDA Urban Environmental Management Scheme (2002-2005), involved with the monitoring of the quality of the rivers flowing through Kuching. The baseline data was surveyed from 2003-2004, and is presented in a reader friendly format.

A total of 102 mainly estuarine species (of which 12 are introduced species) are covered. The species are listed in taxonomic order. Each species account provides the

scientific, common and local names of the fish, followed by a brief description, habitat notes, diet details, range of distribution and short notes. Most species are accompanied with excellent photographs of living or freshly dead specimens. Certain species are illustrated with fresh specimens for the first time, e.g. *Coilia dussumieri*, *Setipinna breviceps*, *Polynemus melanochir melanochir*, *Carinotetraodon borneensis*.

Other sections of the book cover ecology of the three main aquatic habitats – freshwater, estuarine and marine; biology of fish; and socio-economic issues.

There are two shortcomings – p. 83-84, the species illustrated is not *Clarias gariepinis*, but most probably *Clarias batrachus*; no scale of measurement provided for all the fish illustrations.

This is a highly commendable effort, considering the author's background in marine biology. An excellent book to have for budding naturalists, scientists and fish lovers.

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