

Sungai Kiura



Bridge construction place at Sungai Kiura (all photos: A. Wagnitz).



Here is the second part of my report about our 2015 expedition to the west of Timika. The first part of this report was issued in the “Rainbowfish” 4/2017.

After we fished the Sungai Mimika that we couldn’t cross the day before, we concluded with the local soldiers to continue our trip with their off-road 4x4 pickups. One soldier acted as driver, a whole group crowded on the trunk of the car. We’ve been really enthusiastic! We were going to a place where nobody ever before looked for rainbowfishes.

After about an hour’s drive, our trip ended at a big river, where a bridge was going to be built. This River, called Sungai Kiura, was at some places twice as wide as the Sungai Mimika, but at most places much shallower. We shot some pictures and looked for a shallow place in order to cross the river by walking. There Eko put



Creek at Sungai Kiura, here we found *Melanotaenia rubrostriata* and *Mogurnda cingulata*.

out his electro-fishing-set and tried fishing in the shallow water. This yielded just nothing.

Now we crossed the river and followed a small creek coming out of the rainforest. Here Eko was more successful and caught some *Melanotaenia rubrostriata* and *Mogurnda cingulata*. We followed the creek a long way. Small creeks entered this creek from both sides, a vast network of creeks, ditches and ponds.

Lorikeet and hornbills were flying over us, lizards and monitors were darting away when we approached. Lots of insects buzzed around us, among that hundreds of tiny bees that didn't sting but were very interested in the salt of our sweating skin and annoying by their crawling. Wonderful dragonflies in all imaginable

colors were sitting on the plants and flying around.

We climbed over fallen trees, victims of the logging activities, branches and bushes but followed the way of the creek.

The water was getting more and more tannin stained. At a crossing the soldiers wanted a break and we wanted to fish a small creek with tea-colored water. Eko put his electrodes in the water and everything popping up was collected more or less elegant by Hans. Fishing was getting more difficult, because lots of logs were in the water.

Suddenly we saw a *Melanotaenia goldiei* coming up, about 12 cm long, than an *Ambassis agrammus* and again a *M. goldiei*. In no time we had a nice group of beautiful rainbowfishes and I really don't want to



Bit by bit the water was getting more stained. Fallen logs made walking difficult.



Typical for Ambassis agrammus from the Timika region are the silver scales that as far as I know isn't shown from other localities.



Melanotaenia goldiei "Kiura" short after capture.



In the meantime bred by Hans and available: Melanotaenia goldiei "Kiura" in the aquarium.

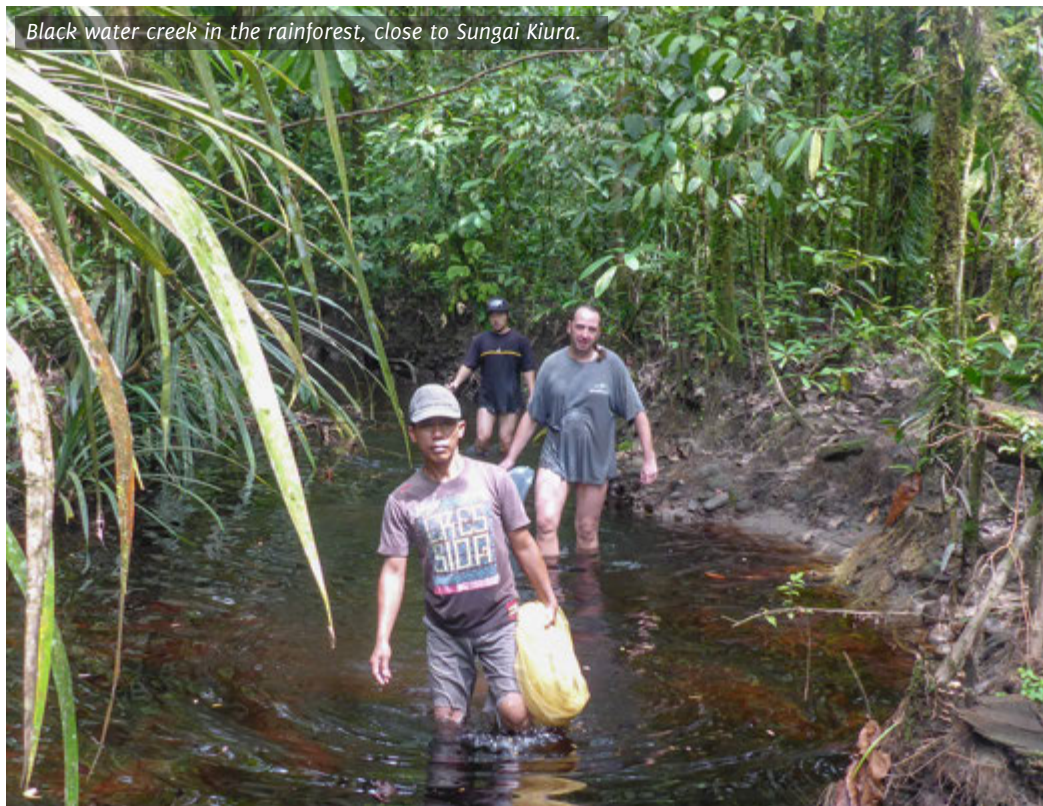


Melanotaenia cf. ogilbyi "Kiura" short after capture, most likely a new species.



Melanotaenia cf. ogilbyi "Kiura" in the aquarium.

Black water creek in the rainforest, close to Sungai Kiura.



explain their beauty by words. Just look at the picture. This is the proof that the name “Rainbowfish” is worth the name.

We proceeded to the next crossing where we found another small creek with really dark, better say black water. We’ve been completely sweated and tired but Hans insisted on fishing here, because he knows what to find in such a place. And indeed, after many attempts with the seine (electrofishing doesn’t work in black water), we had about 20 *Melanotaenia* cf. *ogilbyi* “Kiura” swimming in our transport bag. The air temperature was 30,3 °C, water temperature 26,2 °C, pH 5,9, conductivity 8 µS/cm. That is real black water.

All right, now we had fishes enough, so let’s go back to the waiting soldiers and walk back to the car. After we’ve been puzzled why they sent eight soldiers with assault rifles with us, now those guys proved to be useful by carrying the fishes back. We made our way back and crossed the Sungai Kiura with the unforgettable sight of a group of soldiers armed with fish bags wading through the water.

What a memory. Thanks Papua, thanks Hans, Jeffrey and Eko and thanks, dear soldiers.

►
Group picture after successful fishing at Sungai Kiura, Timika-Region (left to right: Eko, Hans Evers, Jeffrey Christian, Soldier, Andreas Wagnitz).



Hans is happy about the new rainbowfish, a relative of Melanotaenia ogilbyi.






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Tierbilder:
Chlamydogobius ranunculus im Aquarium, aufgenommen von D. Godlinski (oben), und *Aelanoaenia cf. ogilbyi* „Kiura“ kurz nach dem Fang in der Fotoküvette, aufgenommen von A. Wagnitz (unten).

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