



Review of the genus *Microphilypnus* Myers, 1927 (Teleostei: Gobioidi: Eleotridae) from the lower Amazon basin, with description of one new species

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Abstract

Microphilypnus Myers, 1927 is a genus with three nominal species (*M. amazonicus* and *M. macrostoma* from the lower Amazon basin, and *M. ternetzi* from Orinoco), and is among the most poorly studied groups of Neotropical fishes. In this paper, *M. ternetzi* and *M. macrostoma* are redescribed and validated and *M. amazonicus* is regarded as synonym of *M. ternetzi*. Also, a new species, *M. acanguara*, is described from the lower Amazon.

Key words: *Microphilypnus*, review, taxonomy, Amazon

Introduction

Members of the genus *Microphilypnus* Myers are among the smallest (maximum total length: 25 mm) and least known Neotropical fishes. These fish are commonly found on the bottom or on leaves, in channels, lakes, and creeks in the Amazon and Orinoco basins (Kullander, 2003; Menezes 2003). The genus was erected by Myers (1927), based on seven specimens from Dr. Carl Ternetz's collection. Myers recognized three species: *Microphilypnus amazonicus* and *M. macrostoma*, from the lower Amazon basin, and *M. ternetzi* from the Orinoco. He distinguished them on the basis of some external features such as dorsal and anal fin rays, head shape, and number of scales. Myers described his new genus with very few specimens in hand, so was unsure whether the species he recognized should actually be placed in the same genus.

Although here some ecological information on *Microphilypnus* has been published (Goulding *et al.*, 1988; Henderson & Hamilton, 1995; Bergleiter, 1999; Carvalho *et al.*, 2006), this group was not studied for more than 50 years, and only much later (Thacker *et al.*, 2006) it was investigated in taxonomic terms. The original focus of the study by Thacker *et al.* (2006) was a revision of another freshwater eleotrid genus, *Leptophilypnus*, from Central America, but the authors examined part of the type material of *Microphilypnus*, discussed and corrected much information from Myers' original descriptions. They emphasized that all the species described by Myers should be placed in the same genus (*Microphilypnus*), and regarded all of these species as valid. However, they expressed some doubt as to the recognition of *M. macrostoma*, which was caught in the same place as *M. amazonicus*, and opined that it could be an anomalous representative of this species. However, examination of additional material has made it clear that *M. macrostoma* and *M. ternetzi* are valid species, and that *M. amazonicus* is a junior synonym of *M. ternetzi*. In this study, new diagnostic characters for the species of *Microphilypnus* that occur in the Amazon basin are provided. Also, a new species from this region is described.

Methods and material

Measurements follow Hubbs & Lagler (1949) and Pezold & Cage (2002): pre-anal distance (from snout tip to vent); post-anal distance (from vent to base of the caudal fin); caudal peduncle length (from insertion of last anal fin to base of caudal fin); pectoral fin length (length of longest ray); pelvic fin length (length of longest ray); caudal