



***Microlepidogaster arachas*, a new species of hypoptopomatine catfish (Siluriformes: Loricariidae) from the upper rio Paraná basin, Brazil**

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Abstract

Microlepidogaster arachas Martins, Calegari & Langeani, **sp. nov.**, a new Hypoptopomatinae, is described from the upper rio Paraná basin. The new species is distinguished from *M. longicolla* and *M. dimorpha* by having the anterior portion of the compound supraneural plus first dorsal-fin proximal radial contacting the neural spine of the ninth vertebra. The new species differs from *M. perforatus* by having 18–29 dentary teeth; median series of lateral plates complete, reaching caudal-peduncle end, and continuous lateral line; and 20–24 mid-dorsal plates. *Microlepidogaster arachas* is further distinguished from its congeners by several other osteological features.

Key words: Hypoptopomatinae, Teleostei, Cascudinhos, neotropical, taxonomy, biodiversity

Resumo

Microlepidogaster arachas Martins, Calegari & Langeani, **sp. nov.**, um novo Hypoptopomatinae, é descrito para a bacia do alto rio Paraná. A nova espécie é distinguida de *M. longicolla* e *M. dimorpha* por apresentar a porção anterior do complexo supraneural mais o primeiro radial proximal da nadadeira dorsal contatando o espinho neural da nona vértebra. A nova espécie se diferencia de *M. perforatus* por ter 18–29 dentes no dentário; série mediana de placas laterais completa, atingindo o fim do pedúnculo caudal, e linha lateral completa; e 20–24 placas médio-dorsais. Adicionalmente, *Microlepidogaster arachas* se distingue de seus congêneres por diversas outras características osteológicas.

Palavras-chaves: Hypoptopomatinae, Teleostei, Cascudinhos, neotropical, taxonomia, biodiversidade

Introduction

Until recently, only *Microlepidogaster perforatus*, from the rio Carandaí in the upper rio Paraná basin, was the only known species in the genus. The type-species of *Microlepidogaster* was described by Eigenmann & Eigenmann (1889), who distinguished the new taxon based on the possession of the ventral surface covered with minute granular plates, dorsal fin inserted far posterior to the pelvic fins, and the temporal plate perforated. With exception of the posterior dorsal-fin insertion, that effectively distinguishes *Microlepidogaster* from most other genera, the other features are uninformative and do not diagnose it from the remaining members of the Hypoptopomatinae. Nevertheless, additional diagnostic features of *Microlepidogaster*, as well as its relationships with the remaining Hypoptopomatinae, are not clear and a revisionary study seeking to establish the taxonomic limits of *Microlepidogaster* is lacking.

The number of new species of Hypoptopomatinae described from the upper rio Paraná basin has been growing steadily in the last decade (Britski & Garavello 2003; Ribeiro *et al.* 2005; Ferreira & Ribeiro 2007; Calegari & Reis