

Taxonomic consideration and distributional range extension of *Osteochilichthys thomassi* up to Subarnarekha basin of West Bengal, India

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ABSTRACT

Osteochilichthys thomassi is a small endemic freshwater fish of Western Ghats region found in Krishna and Kaveri river of south India. Currently the species has been reported by Ali and his co-workers from Tami Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Present work reveals that the species is available in the Subarnarekha basin of West Bengal (Silda under Binpur-II). Therefore, *O. thomassi* is a widely distributed species, supporting Dahanukar observation and extends its distribution up to south-eastern part of India

Key words: *Osteochilichthys thomassi*, Extend, Distribution, West Bengal.

Introduction

Osteochilichthys thomassi is a small endemic freshwater fish of Western Ghats region (Talwar and Jhingran, 1991) originally described by Day (1877) as *Scaphiodon thomassi*. Hora (1942) revised the generic status of the fish species and considered it as *Osteochilus (Osteochilichthys) thomassi*. Pethiyagoda and Kottelat (1994) and Jayaram (2010) considered the species as *Osteochilichthys thomassi*. Regarding the distribution of the species, Ali *et al.* (2013) reported it from Tami Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Therefore, the species is no longer endemic to the Western Ghats. Present study reveals the existence of the species in the Subarnarekha basin of West Bengal but in very few numbers. Present report is the extension of distributional range for the species up to South-Western part of Bengal as well as addition in faunal richness of West Bengal Biodiversity.

Methods

The specimens were collected from different rivers, ponds, bills, markets of different blocks of Paschim Medinipur and Jhargram district, West Bengal. After collection, the specimens were immediately preserved by 4% formaldehyde and brought to laboratory of the department of Zoology (UG & PG) of Raja N. L. Khan Women's College (Autonomous). Finally specimens were washed and preserved 4-6% formaldehyde in a labelling container. The specimens were studied morphologically such as size, colour, colour band, fin number, fin shape, fin rays, scale number etc. All measurement of fish was made in metric system followed by Tawar Jhingran, 1991; Jayaram, K.C, 1999, Jayagram, K. C. 2010 & www. Fishbase.org. Distribution of this species had recorded.

Systematics

Osteochilichthys thomassi (Day, 1877)

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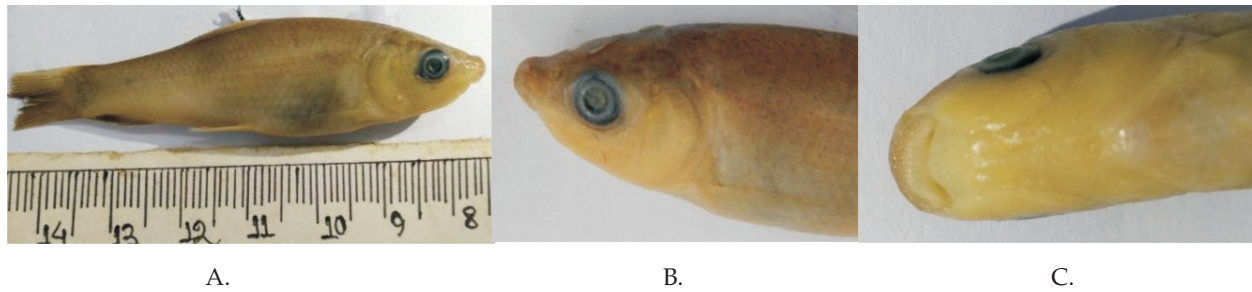


Fig. 1. *Osteochilichthys thomassi*. A: Lateral view of the specimen; B: Anterior portion Mouth; C: Ventral view of mouth.

Osteochilichthys thomassi was originally described as *Scaphiodon thomassi* Day (1877). A brief history of the species with special reference to Indian contributions has been given below.

1877 *Scaphiodon thomassi* Day, Part 3: 369-552, Pls. 79-138.

1942 *Osteochilus (Osteochilichthys) thomassi*, Hora, *Rec. Indian Mus.*, 44(1):3, fig. 2a.

1994 *Osteochilichthys thomassi* Pethiyagoda & Kottelat 1994, *Journal of South Asian Natural History* v. 1 (no. 1): 97-116.

Type species: *Scaphiodon thomassi* Day, 1877, Part 3: 369-552, Pls. 79-138.

Type locality: South Canara [now southwestern Karnataka], India.

Materials Examined: 1 female (4.1cm), 2 male (3.8cm-4.2 cm), Binpur II (Shilda, Belpahari), Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal, 13.09.2018, A. Jana and party. The specimens has been deposited in the miuseum of PG department of Zoology. Raja N.L. Khan Women's College (Autonomous) beaing the reference number RNLK/ZOO/FISH/51.

Diagnosis of the species: (Fig. 1) Body deep and slightly compressed with depth of 2.8- 3 times in SL. Snout obtuse with large pore. Mouth inferior, lower jaw anteriorly with horny covering. Lips are continuous and fleshy. A line of pores continued under the eye. Barbels absent, lateral line with about 38-39 scales. Dorsal fin with a dark band and caudal fin's outer edge is dark.

Distribution: India: It has been found in India (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu), Western Ghats of Karnataka. .

Paschim Medinipur: During the present study the species has been found in Binpur II block of Paschim Medinipur.

Remarks

Scaphiodon thomassi is endemic to southern part of

India in Kavery and Krishna river system (Talwar and Jhingran, 1991). The species is reported from Tamil Nadu (Devi *et al.*, 2005), Kerala (Silas, 1951; Ajithkumar 1999; Thomas *et al.*, 2002); Karnataka (David 1956, 1963; Sahanawaz and Venkatheshwarlu, 2009; Sahanawaz *et al.*, 2010), Andhra Pradesh (Jayaram, 1995), and Maharastra (Tonapi and Mulherkar, 1963). Record from Maharastra is controversial (Kharat *et al.*, 2003). Present work is the first time report of the species from west Bengal.

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