First Record of the Bumblebee Catfish, *Leiocassis poecilopterus* (Valenciennes, 1840) from Thailand

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ABSTRACT.—The bumblebee catfish, *Leiocassis poecilopterus* (Valenciennes, 1840) (Teleostei: Bagridae) is firstl y known from Thailand at Bala-Hala Wildlife Sanctuary, Narathiwat Province. This species is distinguished by elongated snout, inferior mouth and slender caudal peduncle. Observations of some biology are provided.

KEY WORDS: *Leiocassis poecilopterus*, Narathiwat, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Jayaram (1968) divided genus *Leiocassis* into two subgenera; subgenus *Leiocassis* and *Pseudomystus*. He explained that subgenus *Leiocassis* is different from subgenus *Pseudomystus* by having inferior mouth, snout angular and produced beyond inferior mouth. Mo (1991) elevated subgenus *Leiocassis* and *Pseudomystus* to generic rank because the phylogenetic characters of the two subgenera are remoted. In the Sundaic subregion, there are 8 and 13 species of genus *Leiocassis* and *Pseudomystus* found, respectively. The authors have recently discovered a species of the genus, *Leiocassis poecilopterus* from Bala-Hala Wildlife Sanctuary, Narathiwat Province, Thailand.

The genus *Leiocassis* is closely related to *Pseudomystus* which occurred 3 species in Thailand; *Pseudomystus siamensis*, *P. stenomus* and *P. leiacanthus*, but it differs by having more elongated snout and caudal peduncle. The geographic range of *L. poecilopterus* is known only from Sundaic subregion; Java, Sumatra (Indonesia); Borneo and Peninsular Malaysia (Roberts, 1989 and 1993). Smith (1945) and Monkolprasit et al. (1997) reported 3 species of bumblebee catfish from Thailand namely *Leiocassis poecilopterus* (base on misidentified of *P. siamensis*), *P. siamensis* and *P. stenomus*. Vidthayanon et al. (1997) reported 4 species; *L. poecilopterus* (base on misidentified of *P. leiacanthus*), *P. siamensis*, *P. fuscus* and *P. stenomus*. Saenjundaeng (2001) reported *Leiocassis poecilopterus* (base on misidentified as *P. leiacanthus*) from peat swamp in Narathiwat Province. The data of specimens were received from the Inland Fisheries Resources Bureau, Department of Fisheries and Kasetsart University Museum of Fisheries. The authors have examined all specimens of *P. siamensis* and *P. leiacanthus* which were labeled as *Leiocassis poecilopterus* from both places. We find that these specimens differ from *L. poecilopterus* by having blunt snout and subterminal mouth. The bumblebee catfish,
Leiocassis poecilopterus had not been recorded in Thailand previously.

In March 1998, the junior author collected two specimens of Leiocassis poecilopterus from the small stream of the Bala-Hala Wildlife Sanctuary, Kolok River basin, Waeng district, Narathiwat Province. These specimens have been deposited in the Reference Collection of the Inland Fisheries Resource Bureau, catalogued as NIFI, Department of Fisheries, Bangkok.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method for morphometric measurement and meristic counting follow Roberts (1994), Ng and Ng (1995) and Saenjundaeng (2001). Measurement of head length (HL) and standard length (SL) of fishes were made to the nearest mm, and morphometric characters were calculated as percentages of HL and SL. Vertebral counts were made from radiographs. The anteriormost rib–bearing vertebra was considered to be the fifth vertebra and the counts of total vertebrae have been made accordingly.

Leiocassis poecilopterus (Valenciennes, 1840)

(Fig. 1)

Bagrus poecilopterus Valenciennes in Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1840. Type locality: Hebak River, Java.


Material examined- NIFI 3168 (2 specimens, 64.8-121.1 mm SL) collected from Klong Ai Kading, Bala-Hala Wildlife Sanctuary, Waeng District, Narathiwat Province, Thailand, March 1998. Collector: Chavalit Vidthayanon.

Description: D.I 7; A.iii-iv / 11-13; C.8/7; P.I 8, V.i5

Head slightly compressed. Mouth small, subterminal position. Barbels short, maxillary barbel reaching only behind eye, maxillary barbel length 33.8-44.9 %HL, nasal barbel length 14.4-16.8 %HL, outer mandibulary barbel length 21.6-31.6 %HL and inner mandibulary barbel length 14.8-16.1 %HL. Adipose fin origin slightly anterior to anal fin origin. Depressed dorsal fin reaching adipose fin. Caudal fin forked; tip of upper and lower lobe pointed. Posterior border of anal fin slightly round. Head depth at eye 38.0-39.8 %HL, head width at eye 47.6-50.0 %HL. Snout produced, tip of snout pointed when look from below head, snout length 36.6-36.7 %HL. Eye small with subcutaneous, eye diameter 14.4-16.3 %HL. Interorbital length 26.0-28.0%HL. Supraoccipital process not reaching predorsal plate, supraoccipital process base length 11.2-12.5 %HL, supraoccipital process length 25.8-26.0 %HL. Body moderately compressed, body depth at dorsal fin origin 21.5-25.8 %SL and body width at dorsal fin origin 14.5-16.6 %SL. Prepectoral length 27.4-
28.2 %SL, predorsal length 43.5-44.4 %SL, prepelvic length 53.1-55.2 %SL and preanal length 68.6-69.3 %SL. Dorsal fin base length 11.1-11.9 %SL, adipose fin base length 17.6-20.8 %SL and anal fin base length 14.3-15.7 %SL. Post adipose distance 16.0-16.7 %SL. Pectoral spine length 16.6-17.6 %SL and dorsal spine length 16.0-18.2 %SL. Posterior border of dorsal and pectoral spine with 8-9 and 10-11 serrae respectively. Caudal peduncle slender, caudal peduncle length 16.3-17.7 %SL and caudal peduncle depth 9.4-9.9 %SL. Gill rakers on first left gill arch 15-16, vertebrae 39, branchiostegal ray 10.

Coloration- Color pattern in Leiocassis poecilopterus differs from P. siamensis. The background color is relatively yellowish, with three dark bars crossing body. Both dorsal and anal fin with dark submarginal band, caudal fin with two W-dark bands. Barbels pale.

Distribution- Leiocassis poecilopterus has been recorded from Java, Sumatra, Borneo (Sarawak, Sambas, Kapuas), Banka, Biliton, Peninsular Malaysia (Roberts, 1989 and 1993; Kottelat et al., 1993; Tan and Ng, 2000)

Ecology- This species inhabits small streams with gravel bottoms of the Kolok River. It lives under the rock crevices in 1.5-2.0 m depth. Feeds on aquatic insects and small crustaceans

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LITERATURE CITED


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