

BARBUS ALTIANALIS BOULENGER, 1900 AND *B. RUEPELLI*
BOULENGER, 1902 (PISCES, CYPRINIDAE); PROPOSED
CONSERVATION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS.
Z.N.(S.) 2164.

By Gordon McGregor Reid (*Department of Biological Sciences,
University of Sokoto, Sokoto, Northern Nigeria*)

During the course of a systematic investigation of African species of *Labeo* Cuvier, 1817 (Pisces, CYPRINIDAE) I came across a hitherto overlooked description of *L. rueppellii* from Lake Victoria (Pfeffer, 1896: 51–52). This description pre-dates that of *L. victorianus* Boulenger, 1901, the only *Labeo* species known from Lake Victoria. It appeared, at first sight, that I had uncovered a senior synonym for *L. victorianus*. I have since examined the *L. rueppellii* holotype (received from Dr. C. Karrer, Zoologisches Museum, Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, D.D.R.) and find that it is neither conspecific nor even congeneric with *L. victorianus*.

2. The *L. rueppellii* holotype agrees in all major details with Pfeffer's original description (he does not provide a figure), and particularly in such details as:

- (1) a bony anterior ray in the dorsal fin, with a damaged tip;
- (2) a semicircular fleshy process depending from the lower lip, i.e. the specimen is 'rubber lipped';
- (3) long anterior and posterior barbels.

All three characters, in combination, are characteristic of certain *Barbus* species but of no *Labeo* species. Pfeffer, therefore, placed this new taxon in the wrong genus; it should be identified as a species of *Barbus* Cuvier & Cloquet, 1816 (CYPRINIDAE).

3. The only *Barbus* species with longitudinally striated scales hitherto known from Lake Victoria is *B. altianalis* Boulenger, 1900. The *L. rueppellii* holotype conforms well to the holotype of *B. altianalis* and is well within the normal range of variation for this species on all diagnostic characters (for which see Banister, 1973: 12–20). On both morphological and geographical grounds, then, there can be no doubt that the holotype of *L. rueppellii* Pfeffer and that of *B. altianalis* Boulenger are conspecific. This being so the latter taxon would take the name *Barbus rueppellii* (Pfeffer, 1896).

4. I suggest, however, that the specific name *rueppellii* Pfeffer, 1896, as used in the binomen *Labeo rueppellii*, should be suppressed on the following grounds:

- (1) *Barbus altianalis* Boulenger is the widely used and accepted name for a commercial species of fish. In this respect, the

references listed at the end of this paper and marked with an asterisk satisfy the requirements of Art. 79b (*Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 31: 87–89).

The type locality for *Barbus rueppellii* (Pfeffer) is Lake Victoria, and that for *B. altianalis* Boulenger is Lake Kivu and Ruzizi river. It follows from this that there would be a shift in type locality for the nominate subspecies which would result in further nomenclatural confusion, viz. the name *B. rueppellii rueppellii* (Pfeffer) would replace *B. altianalis radcliffii* Boulenger in Lake Victoria, while the name *B. rueppellii altianalis* (Pfeffer) would replace *B. altianalis altianalis* Boulenger in Lake Kivu and the Ruzizi river.

(2) *Barbus ruepelli* Boulenger, 1902, would become a junior secondary homonym of *Barbus rueppellii* (Pfeffer, 1896) and a replacement name for the Boulenger species would be required. The name *Barbus rueppelli* Boulenger, which is still erroneously used by some fishery workers for certain populations of *Barbus intermedius* Rüppell, 1837, is of uncertain status in the present state of knowledge of this group. It would certainly be imprudent to allow it to be replaced by an unused senior homonym.

5. For the above reasons the Commission is therefore requested to:

(1) use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *rüppellii* Pfeffer, 1896, as published in the binomen *Labeo rüppellii*, for the purposes of both the Law of Priority and the Law of Homonymy, and to place it on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.

(2) place the following specific names on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:

- (a) *altianalis* Boulenger, 1900, as published in the combination *Barbus altianalis*;
- (b) *rueppelli* Boulenger, 1902, as published in the combination *Barbus rueppelli*.

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