Zootaxa 277: 1-18 (2003)
www.mapress.com/zootaxa/

ISSN 1175-5326 (print edition)
ZOOTAXA
ISSN 1175-5334 (online edition)

277

Gymnotus ucamara: a new species of Neotropical electric fish from the Peruvian Amazon (Ostariophysi: Gymnotidae), with notes on ecology and electric organ discharges

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Abstract

A new species of Neotropical electric fish, *Gymnotus ucamara*, is described from floodplain habitats in the Rio Ucayali Basin, Peru. The new species is distinguishable from all congeners by the following combination of characters: a clear patch at the caudal end of the anal fin; two laterosensory canal pores (from the preopercular-mandibular series) in the dorso-posterior portion of the preopercle; a coloration pattern with 18–24 dark brown bands separated by narrow pale interbands which are less than one-third the width of the dark bands; a long head (12.2–13.4 % total length); many (10–11) scales rows over the anal fin pterygiophores; few (38-43) pored lateral-line scales to the first lateral-line ramus; and a low (75–91) total number of pored lateral-line scales.

Key Words: biodiversity, electrogenesis, Gymnotiformes, várzea

Introduction

The weakly electric Neotropical fish genus *Gymnotus* has been the subject of several taxonomic studies in recent years (Mago-Leccia 1994; Albert & Miller 1995; Campos da Paz 1996; Campos da Paz & Costa 1996; Albert *et al.* 1999; Campos da Paz 2000; Albert 2001; Albert & Crampton 2001; Campos da Paz 2002). Until recently *Gymnotus* was recognized as the only genus in the family Gymnotidae. The monotypic genus *Electrophorus* Gill, comprising the single strongly electric species *Electrophorus electricus* (L.) was recently included in the Gymnotidae (Albert 2001).

Accepted: 15 August 2003; published: 29 August 2003