



A new species of suckermouth armored catfish, *Pseudancistrus kwinti* (Siluriformes: Loricariidae) from the Coppename River drainage, Central Suriname Nature Reserve, Suriname

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Abstract

A new species of suckermouth armored catfish, *Pseudancistrus kwinti*, is described from the Coppename River, Suriname. It can be diagnosed from all other described *Pseudancistrus* by the following combination of characters: dentary papillae absent, mid-dorsal plate row complete, coloration mottled or with bars, hypertrophied odontodes along edge of snout, and weakly evertible cheek plates. It is only known from the Coppename River drainage within the Central Suriname Nature Reserve, a United Nations World Heritage Site, and one of the most pristine environments remaining on the planet. Mining, increased fishing pressure, and tourism threaten to change the region.

Key words: Guiana Shield, Kwinti, Aquatic Rapid Assessment Program

Introduction

Very few areas on the surface of planet Earth can be considered pristine, but one candidate is the upper Coppename River basin. Located in the center of Suriname, the Coppename River flows north off the Guiana Shield, and is uninhabited except for a research / ecotourism station at Raleighvallen and an airstrip at Tafelberg. The uniqueness of the region has been recognized and it has been set aside as the Central Suriname Nature Reserve and designated a United Nations World Heritage Site.

Despite the fact that the region has been declared a preserve, almost nothing is known about the area's flora and fauna. To address the situation, the upper Coppename basin was surveyed in February to March 2004 by an Aquatic Rapid Assessment Program (AquaRAP) expedition that included an ichthyology team (Mol *et al.*, 2006). A new species of suckermouth armored catfish was discovered, and it is described here.

Methods

Counts and measurements are as described in Armbruster (2003), unless otherwise specified. Measurements were made with a digital caliper to the nearest 0.1 mm. For fin counts, uppercase roman numerals are used for spines, lowercase roman numerals are used for unbranched rays, and arabic numerals are used for branched rays. Institutional abbreviations are as follows: FMNH = Field Museum of Natural History, NZCS = National Zoological Collection of Suriname. Total plate count in median lateral row is as illustrated in Schaefer (1997). X-rays were used to count procurent caudal-fin rays, verify other spine and ray counts, and assess opercle shape.