

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF OREICHTHYS COSUATIS (HAM.)
IN KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK,
(PISCES : CYPRINIDAE)

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ABSTRACT

Oreichthys cosuatis (Hamilton), a hitherto unrecorded species from North-eastern part of India has been found distributed in Kaziranga National Park, Assam. This extends the range of distribution of this species to Eastern India and adds evidence to Satpura Hypothesis of migration of fishes.

INTRODUCTION

Hamilton (1822) described *Cyprinus cosuatis* from Kosi River and Day (1878) reported the occurrence of this species in "Bengal, through North-western Province, the Deccan and Bombay and down the Western Coast as as low as Cottayam in Trivandrum." The material of this species was also studied by Hora (1937a, b, 1942) and Hora and Nair (1941) from Madhya Pradesh and Peninsular India. Hora (1937 a) clarified the systematic position of *Cyprinus cosuatis* and placed it under the genus *Oreichthys* Smith although Day (1878) considered it under *Barbus*. This species was not so far reported from North-eastern part of India. Recently, a specimen of *Oreichthys cosuatis*, from Kaziranga National Park, has been studied and this report extends the distribution of this species to North-eastern region of India. Because of its interesting features and rather rare occurrence of this species, it is important to give a brief-description of material from North-eastern region.

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

Oreichthys cosuatis (Ham.)

(Fig. 1)

1822. *Cyprinus cosuatis* Hamilton, *Fish Ganges*, pp. 338, 392 (Type-locality : Kosi River).
1878. *Barbus cosuatis* : Day, *Fish India*, p. 581, pl. OXLIV, Fig. 1.
1937. *Oreichthys cosuatis* : Hora, *Rec. Indian Mus.*, 39 (4) pp. 321-323.

B III, D. III/8, P 1/13, V 1/8, A II/5, C. 19

Length of head 4.59 in total length (T. L.) and 3.42 in standard length (S. L.), length of snout 3.4 in head length ; length of snout 1.4 in eye diameter ; eye diameter 2.44 in head length ; interorbital width 3.36 in head length ; height of the body 5.2 in T. L. and 3.87 in S. L. ; length of caudal peduncle 6.5 in T. L. and 4.84 in S. L. ; height of caudal peduncle 10.26 in T. L. and 7.63 in S. L. ; height of caudal peduncle 1.58 in length of caudal peduncle ; length of longest dorsal ray 4.59 in T. L. and 3.42 in S. L. ; longest anal ray 6.5 in T. L. and 4.84 in S. L. ; base of

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dorsal 1.7 in longest dorsal ray and base of anal 2.73 in longest anal ray.

The body is somewhat lanceolate. The upper ray is slightly longer than the lower and the mouth is small. The dorsal fin originates slightly nearer the tip of snout than the base of caudal and opposite the posterior half of the pectoral fin. The longest ray of the dorsal fin is a little smaller than the depth of the body below it. The scales along the lateral-line are larger than those of rest of the body. The base of each scale has a dark tinge. There is a black band on the upper half of the first three branched rays. A lighter band along the lower half of the dorsal rays present. A dark band along the anal rays present.

is only one specimen, it is for the time being kept under *Oreichthys cosuatis* which is most close to it.

A study of more material from the same locality and its comparison with that from other parts of India should give a clearer taxonomic position of this specimen.

The distribution of *Oreichthys cosuatis* is quite interesting. It has earlier been recorded from West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala on the one side and Thailand in the far east on the other hand. The present report of this species from Assam indicates that this species is found all along the route of migration of fishes according to Hora's Satpura Hypothe-

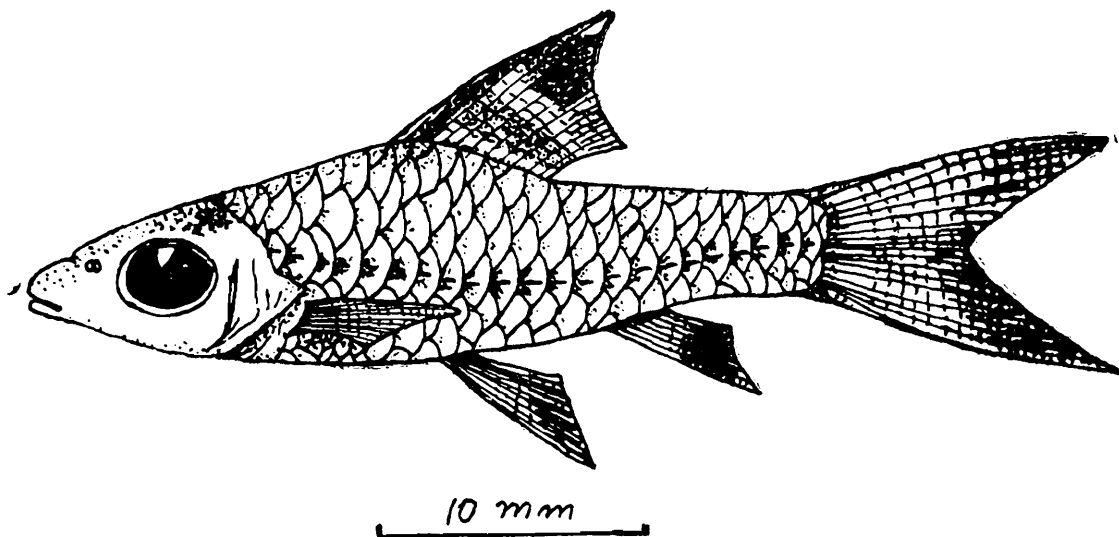


Fig. 1. *Oreichthys cosuatis* (Ham.) from Kaziranga National Park, Assam.

Distribution : Assam, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand.

Remarks : The present specimen differs from the description of this species given by Day (1878 : 581) in having shorter height of the dorsal, lesser height of the body, origin of the dorsal fin nearer the tip of snout and presence of lower labial fold etc. Since there

sis. The occurrence of this species in Assam is, therefore, very important from zoogeographic point of view and adds another evidence to Satpura Hypothesis of migration of fishes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors feel grateful to Dr. B. K. Tikader, Director, Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta for all facilities and encouragement.

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