

GARRA MENONI, A NEW CYPRINID FISH FROM SILENT VALLEY,  
KERALA, SOUTH INDIA

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ABSTRACT

A new species of *Garra*, *Garra menoni* is being described from Silent Valley, Kerala, and compared with the widely distributed *G. mullya* (Sykes) and *G. lissorhynchus* (Mc Clelland) an Assamese form.

INTRODUCTION

Silent Valley is a tropical evergreen forest in Western Ghats and is drained by the River Kunthi. 334 specimens (adults) and 124 juveniles were collected from River Kunthi, by the team from Zoological Survey of India during the course of a multidisciplinary expedition in 1979. The new species is named after Dr A. G. K. Menon.

*Garra menoni* sp. nov.

(Plate VI, fig. A and B)

*Description.*—Depth of body 5.29 (4.39-6.48), length of head 4.23 (3.71-5.23) in standard length. Width of head 1.3 (1.17-1.65); snout 2.01 (1.71-2.38); eye 5.7 (4.0-7.0) in length of head. Eye 2.63 (1.75-3.5) in inter orbital width; 2.85 (2.0-3.5) in snout. Pupil of eye either in the middle or a little behind the middle of the length of head. Snout round and smooth, the males

with fine tubercles. Two pairs of barbels, smaller than the diameter of eye. 7-8 outer gill-rakers in the lower part of the anterior arch. Mental disc well developed, length of the disc 1.46 (1.2-1.7) in its own width. Thirty two to thirty six scales in lateral line, 4.5 from the origin of dorsal to lateral line, 3-3.5 between this and the pelvic. Chest and belly naked. A part of the pre-pelvic region with subcutaneous scales. Dorsal iii/7-8; Pectoral i/12-15; pelvic i/7-8; anal ii-iii/5 and caudal 17-19 rays. Distance from vent to anal fin 3.48 (2.13-5.0) in that between pelvic and anal fin. Width of caudal peduncle 1.35 (1.0-1.82) in its own length. Posterior chamber of air bladder measured in one specimen is found to be 14% in S. L. Colour in formalin, dark brown above, paler beneath. A faint lateral band from gill opening to the base of the caudal fin.

*Distribution.*—River Kunthi, Silent Valley, Kerala State.

*Holotype* :—River Kunthi, Silent Valley (Alt. 867 metres), Kerala, 19 January, 1979, 69.0 mm S. L., Coll R. S. Pillai, Reg. No. F. 553.

*Paratype* :—River Kunthi, Kerala, 19 January 1979, 99 exs. 31.0-69.0 mm S. L. has the same data as that of holotype, Coll. R. S. Pillai.

*Type.*—All the type specimens are temporarily kept at this Regional Station will be eventually deposited in the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta.

*Relationship.*—This form differs from the widely distributed *G. mullya* (Sykes) in colour pattern, in the absence of scales on the chest and belly, and in the marked difference in the position of the vent. It differs from *G. hughi* Silas in the presence of scales in the middorsal streak, and in the lesser number of lateral line scales etc. In certain morpho-

metric characters this species bears resemblance to *G. lissorhynchus* (Mc Clelland), distributed in Assam, Himalaya but it differs from it in its characteristic colour pattern.

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#### REFERENCE

- MENON, A. G. K. 1964. Monograph of the Cyprinid fishes of the genus *Garra* Hamilton. *Mem. Indian Mus.* 14 (4) : 173-260.