

On the systematics and distribution of the snow trout *Schizothorax pelzami* Kessler, 1870, in Iran (Actinopterygii: Cyprinidae)

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Abstract. The cyprinid fish *Schizothorax pelzami* Kessler, 1870, was found to have the westernmost distribution of any schizothoracine, reaching north-central Iran. The type locality of this species was clarified and the subspecies *S. p. iranicus* was found not to be distinct.

Kurzfassung. Das Verbreitungsgebiet der Cyprinide *Schizothorax pelzami* Kessler, 1870, reicht bis in den nördlichen Inneriran, womit diese Art die am weitesten nach Westen reichend Verbreitung aller Schizothoracinen hat. Sie. Der Typus-Fundort dieser Art wurde geklärt und es zeigt sich, dass sich die Subspezies *S. p. iranicus* von der Nominatform nicht unterscheidet.

Key words. *Schizothorax pelzami*, systematics, distribution, Cyprinidae, Iran, Middle East.

Introduction

The snow trout species *Schizothorax pelzami* Kessler, 1870 is found in river basins draining to the Kara Kum desert of Turkmenistan from Afghanistan and Iran. These rivers include, from east to west, the Murgab River, the Tedzhen River (known as the Harirud or Hari River in Iran and Afghanistan), and a series of small rivers draining the northern slopes of the Kopet Dag, a mountain range of Iran and Turkmenistan, as far west as the Germab River at Geok-tepe (BERG 1948-1949). It is also known from internal basins just west of the Hari River basin in Iran. The type locality of the species, however, is given as the Shah River in the Caspian Sea basin of Iran where this species has not been collected again.

Additionally, KARAMAN (1969) described a distinct subspecies, *iranicus*, from a spring in Tehran, based on a single specimen. *Schizothorax* specimens have not been collected near Tehran despite several collecting missions. This record would be the westernmost distribution of the genus *Schizothorax*.

Schizothorax raulinsii Günther, 1889 described from a skin from the “Hari-rud River, near Khusan” (= Kohsan or Kuhestan at 34°39'N, 61°12'E in Afghanistan) is a synonym of *S. pelzami* (BERG 1933).

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the distribution of *S. pelzami* in Iran and to assess the status of the nominal Iranian subspecies.

Abbreviations. ZISP = Zoological Institute St. Petersburg, Russia; BM(NH) = Natural History Museum (formerly British Museum (Natural History)), London; ZMH = Zoologisches Institut und Zoologisches Museum, Hamburg; CMNFi = Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa; MLSU = Zoological Museum, State University, St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad); ZSI = Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta; SL = standard length; TL = total length.