

On the validity of the species in the snow-trout genus *Schizocypris* Regan, 1914 (Cyprinidae: Actinopterygii)

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Abstract: Three nominal species in the cyprinid genus *Schizocypris* were examined based on 30 meristic and morphometric characters. *S. ladigesi* of Afghanistan was shown to be a synonym of *S. brucei* while *S. altidorsalis* of Sistan on the Iran-Afghanistan border was shown to be distinct.

Kurzfassung: Drei nominale Arten der Cypriniden-Gattung *Schizocypris* wurden vergleichend untersucht, basierend auf 30 meristischen und morphometrischen Merkmalen. Es wird gezeigt, dass *S. ladigesi* aus Afghanistan ein Synonym von *S. brucei* ist, während *S. altidorsalis* aus Seistan an der iranisch-afghanischen Grenze als eigenständige Art bestätigt wird.

Key words: *Schizocypris*, Cyprinidae, revision, snow trout, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan.

Introduction

The cyprinid genus *Schizocypris* was described by REGAN (1914) based on *S. brucei* from the “Wana Toi, a tributary of the Gomal River in Southern Waziristan (32°20’N, 69°30’E)”. The Gomal or Gumal River is a right bank tributary of the Indus River of Pakistan. It was diagnosed as closely related to *Schizothorax* Heckel, 1838 but differed in having a naked thorax, abdomen and mid-dorsal strip, a transverse and inferior mouth lacking barbels or having only a minute posterior pair, a lower lip developed only at the mouth corners, a lower jaw without a horny sheath, and pharyngeal teeth compressed with flat grinding surfaces and a count of 2,3,4-4,3,2. The anal fin branched ray count of 6 also distinguishes this genus from *Schizothorax*. There are no known uniquely derived characters and the genus is diagnosed by this combination of characters.

ANNANDALE & HORA (1920) extended the distribution of the type species, *S. brucei*, to the Sistan endorheic basin straddling the Iran-Afghanistan border and subsequent authors followed their lead (see COAD 1995 for literature) as they also examined types of *S. brucei* and found specimens from the two localities to be specifically identical.

KARAMAN (1969) described a new species of *Schizocypris*, *S. ladigesi*, from “Afghanistan: Kankai-Fluß zw. Khost und Thangall (Mangall)”. This locality lies in either the Kabul River basin (BIANCO & BANARESCU 1982) or more probably the Chamkani River basin (COAD 1981), both being right bank tributaries of the Indus River. Mangall or Mangal is at 34°08’N, 69°43’E and Khost (Khowst or Matun) is at 33°19’N, 69°59’E. MIRZA (1995) has suggested that *S. ladigesi* is a synonym of *S. brucei* but did not compare material.

BIANCO & BANARESCU (1982) re-described Sistani material as a new species, *S. altidorsalis*, with a type locality of “Nahr-Taheri near Zabol, Seistan”. ZABOL lies at 31°02’N,