

## Again: About the Nomenclature of *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910; *Trichopus cantoris* SAUVAGE, 1884 and *Osphronemus saigonensis* BORODIN, 1930 – a necessary correction (Teleostei: Perciformes: Osphronemidae)

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### > Abstract

Here with a correction of some results of my previous paper of 2009 (lit. cit.) is given. The reason is that I could use exclusively literature sources for my studies, because the very important holotype of *Osphronemus* (sic) *trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861 was missing in the BMNH when I asked for it at the beginning of my research. Later it was detected and only after the publication of my results I could realize that the type BMNH 1860.3.19.319 belongs to another species than I expected. From this it follows that: (1) The first scientific description of the Snake-Skin Gourami is not *Osphronemus trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861 as assumed from 1897 up to the twenties of the last century by many authors and by me, but really is *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910. (2) The taxon *Osphronemus trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861 was based on a single varnished skin (dryfish) of about 93 mm SL only. As an unusual “variety” it belongs to the Threespot Gourami, *Trichopodus trichopterus* (PALLAS, 1770) but not as assumed to the Snake-Skin Gourami, *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910. To my knowledge this variety has never been found again anywhere. (3) Consequently the name *Osphronemus* (sic) *saigonensis* BORODIN, 1930 is not a junior synonym of *Osphronemus trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861, respectively *Trichopodus cantoris* (GÜNTHER, 1861), but of *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910. My statements about the taxon *Trichopus cantoris* SAUVAGE, 1884 remain unaffected.

### > Kurzfassung

Hiermit werden einige Aussagen in meiner jüngsten Publikation von 2009 korrigiert. Die Korrektur ist notwendig, weil ich für meine Studien fast nur Literaturquellen nutzen konnte, denn der wichtige Holotypus von *Osphronemus* (sic) *trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861, um dessen Ausleihe vom BMNH ich zu Beginn meiner Arbeit gebeten hatte, galt damals als verschollen. Erst nach der Veröffentlichung meiner Ergebnisse wurde ich darüber informiert, dass dieses wichtige Belegstück BMNH 1860.3.19.319 in der Zwischenzeit doch noch in der Fischesammlung des BMNH entdeckt wurde. An Hand einer elektronischen Abbildung konnte ich feststellen, dass es einer anderen als der vermuteten Art angehört. Daraus folgt: (1.) Die wissenschaftliche Erstbeschreibung des Schaufelfadenfisches ist nicht *Osphronemus trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861, wie es von zahlreichen Autoren von 1897 bis in die 1920er Jahre hinein und von mir selbst angenommen wurde, sondern *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910. (2.) Das auf einem einzigen lackierten Trockenfisch von etwa 93 mm SL basierenden Taxon *Osphronemus trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861 scheint in der Tat eine ungewöhnliche „Variante“ des Punktirten Guramis, *Trichopodus trichopterus* (PALLAS, 1770) zu sein und bezieht sich nicht auf jene Art, die später von REGAN (1910) als *Trichopodus pectoralis* beschrieben wurde. Meines Wissens wurde diese Variante später nie wieder gefunden. (3.) Folglich ist der Name *Osphronemus* (sic) *saigonensis* BORODIN, 1930 kein Juniorsynonym zu *Osphronemus trichopterus* var. *cantis* GÜNTHER, 1861, beziehungsweise zu *Trichopodus cantoris* (GÜNTHER, 1861) sondern zu *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910. Meine Aussage zu *Trichopus cantoris* SAUVAGE, 1884 bleibt von diesen Änderungen unberührt.

### > Key words

Nomenclature, *Trichopodus*, *Trichopus*, *Osphronemus*, Snake-Skin Gourami, Osphronemidae.

In the *Vertebrate Zoology* 59(1) pp. 53–60 (2009) I published a paper about the nomenclature of *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910, *Trichopus cantoris*,

SAUVAGE, 1884 and *Osphronemus saigonensis* BORODIN, 1930. When I started my work some time ago I asked the curators of the Natural History of London



**Fig. 1.** Holotype of *Osphromenus trichopterus* var. *cantoris* GÜNTHER, 1861. Photography by HARRY TAILOR, Photograph Unit of the BMNH

(BMNH), the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris (MNHN) and the American Museum of Natural History of New York (AMNH) for lending me the relevant type specimens of the taxa mentioned above respectively for providing me with informations about them. But only DAMARIS RODRIGUEZ (AMNH) was kindly able to send me photographs of the holotype of *Osphronemus saigonensis* (AMNH 222124). The type specimens of *Trichopus cantoris* SAUVAGE, 1884 (stored in the MNHN) as well as the holotype of *Osphromenus* (sic) *trichopterus* var. *cantoris* GÜNTHER, 1861 (stored in the BMNH) could not be discovered in the fish collections in the relevant museums at that time. Therefore I could use almost exclusively literature sources for my work.

As the most important result among others I found was that the name *Osphromenus trichopterus* var. *cantoris* GÜNTHER, 1861 refers to the Snake-Skin Gourami, *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910 but not to the Threespot Gourami, *Trichopodus trichopterus* (PALLAS, 1770). In CANTORS paper of 1850 there are already indications that he had the Snake-Skin Gourami in his collection (stored in the BMNH and later analysed by GÜNTHER). Furthermore from 1897 up to the twenties of the last century the Snake-Skin Gourami was called *Osphromenus trichopterus* var. *cantoris* by many authors (literature cited in my previous paper of 2009). And last but not least to the best of my knowledge, later no Threespot Gourami with a dark lateral band running from the eye through the two spots on each side up to the caudal fin base was found anywhere. On the other hand the Snake-Skin Gourami occasionally shows a dark lateral band from eye to the caudal fin, sometimes interrupted or zigzag like. Therefore I supposed the described feature belongs to the Snake-Skin Gourami and the name *Trichopodus pectoralis* created by REGAN (1910) would not be the oldest available name for that species.

After the publication of my article I was informed by JAMES McLAINE that the holotype of *Osphromenus trichopterus* var. *cantoris* GÜNTHER, 1861, had in the meantime been detected in the fish collection of the BMNH. Furthermore JAMES McLAINE kindly provided me with an electronic photograph of that important type specimen (as well as with photographs of other varieties of GÜNTHERS taxon *Osphromenus trichopterus*). It just took a quick look to realize that the fish (catalogue number BMNH 1860.3.19.319) is a Threespot Gourami but not a Snake-Skin Gourami – the same as I assumed and many other authors from 1897 up to the twenties of the last century did. The holotype is a dryfish (skin) of about 93 mm SL. It was varnished, as it was usual at that time and before. It shows the two dark spots in the middle of the side and on the caudal fin base – as it is typical for a Threespot Gourami – obviously connected by a narrow lateral

band running from the eye to the caudal fin base. On that single skin alone the name *Osphromenus trichopterus* var. *cantoris* has been based. As pointed out by J. McLAINE, GÜNTHER (1861) labeled all of the reference specimens of his varieties *koelreuteri*, *cantoris* and *leeri* of *Trichopodus trichopterus* as *Osphromenus trichopterus* only, and the designation of the holotype of the variety *cantoris* was carried out later by another scientist. But BMNH 1860.3.19.319 is the only dryfish (skin) mentioned by GÜNTHER (1861) in his descriptions of the varieties *koelreuteri*, *cantoris* and *leeri* of *Trichopodus trichopterus* (PALLAS, 1770). This fact supported the correctness of the designation of BMNH 1860.3.19.319 as the real holotype.

Of course, the surprising skin BMNH 1869.3.19.319 is no Snake-Skin Gourami! And therefore the results of my studies published in the paper mentioned above have to be corrected as follows: (1) The name *Osphromenus trichopterus* var. *cantoris* created by GÜNTHER in 1861 belongs to a Threespot Gourami but not to a Snake-Skin Gourami. Therefore this name is not the first available scientific one for the Snake-Skin Gourami as expected by myself as well as many earlier authors. (2) The first relevant scientific description of the Snake-Skin Gourami was published by REGAN (1910) as *Trichopodus pectoralis*. (3) The real scientific name for the taxon *Osphronemus* (sic) *saigonensis* BORODIN, 1830 is not *Trichopodus cantoris* (GÜNTHER, 1861) as supposed before but *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910. The statements about the taxon *Trichopus cantoris* SAUVAGE, 1884 in my paper are not affected by the recent findings.

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## Literature

- PAEPKE, H.-J. (2009): The Nomenclature of *Trichopodus pectoralis* REGAN, 1910; *Trichopus cantoris* SAUVAGE, 1884 and *Osphronemus saignensis* BORODIN, 1830 (Teleostei: Perciformes: Osphronemidae) – Vertebrate Zoology, **59**(1): 53–60.

