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A FEW FISHES FROM THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE CONGO BASIN

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Dr. James P. Chapin has brought back a small collection of fishes, comprising only 9 species, from Ankoro, at the junction of the Lualaba and Luvua Rivers, Belgian Congo. These rivers are tributary to the Congo, but the locality lies outside the forest to the southeast, hence its faunal interest.

There are 3 catfish (*Schilbe mystus*, *Parailia longifilis*, and *Auchenoglanis occidentalis*); 2 *Barbus*; 2 cichlids; and 2 *Anabas*; one each of the last three groups here described as new.

Two specimens of *Barbus minus* Boulenger (described from British East Africa) have barbels a little shorter than described, $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$ of, versus $\frac{3}{5}$ of, and a little longer than eye. *B. minus* is scarcely different from *B. neglectus* of the Nile, and probably close to *B. radiatus* of the Zambesi.

There are several small specimens of *Tilapia sparrmani* A. Smith (previously known from Angola, Lakes Mweru and Bangwelu, the Zambesi, etc.).

A single *Anabas multispinus* Peters (known from the Uelle, Zambesi Basin, etc.) has XIX versus XVII-XVIII dorsal spines.

***Barbus nigrifilis*, new species**

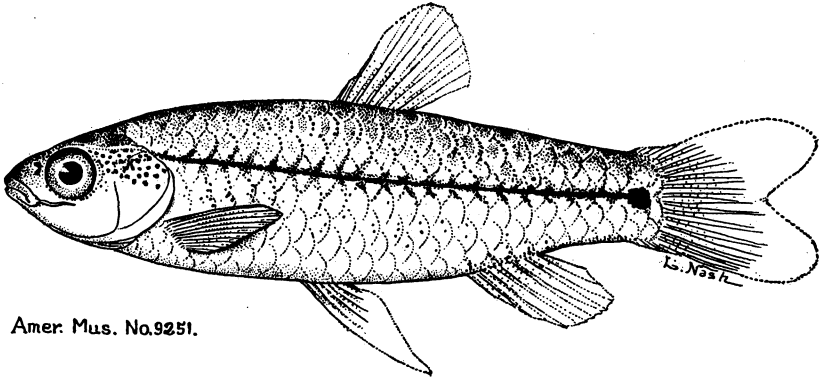
DESCRIPTION OF TYPE.—No. 9251, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; from Ankoro, southeast Belgian Congo; August, 1927; collected by J. P. Chapin.

Length to base of caudal 22 mm. Depth in this length, 3.6; head, 3.6. Eye in head, 3; snout, 3.6; maxillary, 4.7; interorbital, 3; width of body, 2; depth of peduncle, 1.7; its length, 1.5; longest dorsal ray, 1.1; longest anal ray, 1.9; pectoral, 1.3; ventral, 1.4; caudal broken. Barbel 1.5 in eye.

Dorsal (broken), 8 or 9; anal, 7, 5 branched rays. Scales (many missing), about 23; 9 around peduncle.

Mouth small, sub-inferior, not reaching front of eye. A single barbel on each side. Dorsal without spinous ray; its origin over ventral base, equidistant from base of caudal and front of eye; pectoral not quite reaching to ventral, and ventral reaching to anal origin. Scales radiately striated; lateral line complete or nearly so.

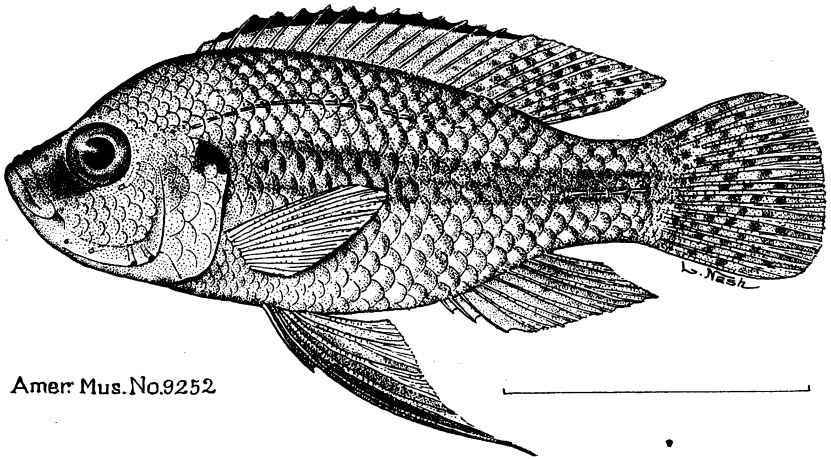
Upper part of head dark, lower part silvery; body pale, dark along the back and particularly about the bases of the vertical fins; a dark stripe along the midline from anal to caudal; a sharp black thread-like stripe on side from shoulder to base of caudal



Amer. Mus. No. 9251.

Fig. 1. *Barbus nigrifilis*, type.

where it terminates in a black spot; fins grayish. This little *Barbus* seems quite unlike anything described, but there is some uncertainty, from its being based on a single small imperfect specimen.



Amer. Mus. No. 9252.

Fig. 2. *Paratilapia ventralis*, type.

***Paratilapia ventralis*, new species**

DESCRIPTION OF TYPE.—No. 9252, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; from Ankoro, south-east Belgian Congo; August, 1927; collected by J. P. Chapin.

Length to base of caudal 52 mm. Depth in this length, 2.4; head, 2.7. Eye in

head, 3; snout, 3.5; maxillary, 2.8; interorbital, 3; thickness of body, 2; depth of peduncle, 2; its length, 3; longest dorsal spine, 2.9; longest dorsal ray, 1.6; third anal spine, 2.2; longest anal ray, 1.5; pectoral, 1.3; ventral, 0.7.; caudal, 1.2.

Dorsal XIV, 9; anal III, 7. Scales 26; lateral lines 16+10; $3\frac{1}{2}$ rows between lateral line and dorsal, $8\frac{1}{2}$ between same and ventral; 3 or 4 rows on cheek. An outer series of moderate, conical, slightly curved teeth, and narrow band of about 3 rows of minute teeth; 8 or 9 short gill-rakers on lower limb of first arch.

Profile slightly concave, touching upper rim of eye; nape elevated; lower jaw projecting; mouth oblique; maxillary not quite to under front margin of eye. Ventral with a stout initial spine and the first soft ray filamentous, reaching almost to anal axil; anal spines graduated; dorsal and anal lobes pointed; caudal well rounded. Scales smooth to slightly ctenoid, small on chest, forward on top of head to front of pupil. Color in spirits grayish, paler below; a dark lengthwise shade on the middle of peduncle, black blotch on corner of opercle. Pectoral pale, other fins dark grayish; spinous dorsal with a blackish margin; ventral outer margin with a pale streak, submarginally more broadly blackish.

There are 4 or 5 additional specimens of this species, which looks like *P. carlottæ* of the Zambesi form which fin and scale counts easily separate it, and is probably close to *P. dorsalis* from Brazzaville (Upper Congo) which is imperfectly known. In the genus *Haplochromis* it resembles *strigigina* and *moffati*. Boulenger's treatment of the cichlids in his 'Fresh-water Fishes of Africa' is unsatisfactory, but sometimes more easily followed than Regan's more recent papers. The former author's comprehensive use of *Paratilapia* is certainly a convenience, and the writer is not prepared to restrict that genus to a single Madagascan species as has been done.

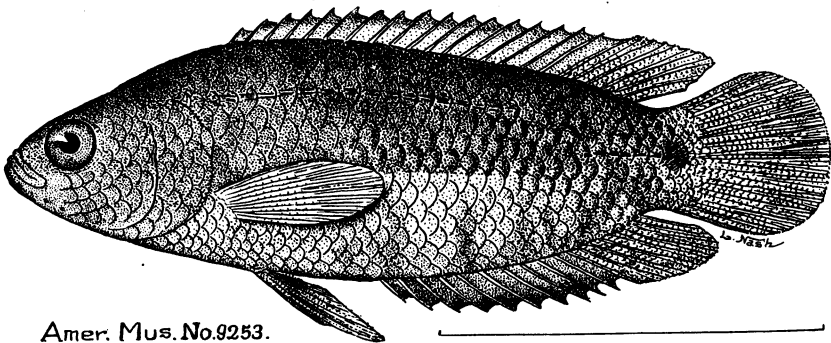


Fig. 3. *Anabas muriei ocellifer*, type.

***Anabas muriei ocellifer*, new subspecies**

DESCRIPTION OF TYPE.—No. 9253, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; from Ankoro, south-east Belgian Congo; August, 1927; collected by J. P. Chapin.

Length to base of caudal 45 mm. Depth in this length, 2.6; head, 3. Eye in head, 3.6; snout, 5; maxillary, 3.5; interorbital, 4; width of body, 1.7; depth of peduncle, 2; longest dorsal spine, 2.5; longest dorsal ray, 1.7; anal spine, 2.5; anal ray, 1.7; pectoral, 1.4; ventral, 1.6; caudal, 1.3. Length of peduncle $\frac{1}{2}$ eye.

Dorsal XVII, 7; anal X, 9. Scales, 28; lateral lines 17+11; 4 rows between lateral line and dorsal, $8\frac{1}{2}$ between lateral line and ventral; 16 around peduncle.

Of normal shape for the genus, rather thick-bodied in front and strongly compressed behind; snout bluntly rounded; lower jaw slightly projecting; maxillary to under front margin of eye; a few strong serrations above and below the opercular notch, and a group of a number of smaller ones lower down. Pectoral reaching to opposite anal origin, pointed ventral reaching somewhat farther back; caudal (broken) rounded. Color dark grayish; the lower sides paler; the fins, except the pectoral, darker. Sides with faint ill-defined dark and pale cross-marks, a somewhat vertical dusky blotch at base of caudal surrounded by a conspicuous broad pale cross-shade before and behind; ventral black, margined with pale.

This form would not have been differentiated from *A. muriei* of the White Nile, but that four somewhat smaller cotypes have XVII (3) and XVIII (1) dorsal spines, confirming this slight difference, *muriei* having XIV–XVI. They have X (2) and XI (2) anal spines, a tangible difference from *Anabas intermedius* from the upper Zambesi, with VII to IX, which is also close, as is *Anabas ctenotis* Boulenger from west of Lake Tanganyika.

So far as the evidence of the present small collection is of value, it points to the locality being outside the Congo fish-faunal area, rather with East African affinities, perhaps in a transition belt where the Nile influence might be expected to be relatively strong though distant.¹ It thus affords another shred of evidence that the limits of river basins are an unsound boundary for fresh-water faunæ.

¹Nichols, 1923, Science for Aug. 31, pp. 153–155.