

Morphological variation of *Hypostomus affinis* (Teleostei: Loricariidae) from eastern Brazilian drainages

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Morphological variations of *Hypostomus affinis* from the Paraíba do Sul, Doce and Mucuri rivers are described and discussed in the light of biogeographic scenarios for freshwater fish in eastern Brazil. Variations were observed in the lateral keels of the body and head, in the color pattern and in the number of premaxillary and dentary teeth. Keels are more conspicuous on specimens from the Paraíba do Sul River because dermal plates have rows of larger odontodes. The samples from Doce and Mucuri rivers have greater morphometric and chromatic similarities in relation to the samples from the Paraíba do Sul River. On the other hand, specimens from the Mucuri and Paraíba do Sul rivers have fewer teeth in both jaws than those from the Doce river. Despite such variations, no character alone is able to recognize and differentiate the specimens from each of these three drainages. Distribution and morphological variation of *Hypostomus affinis* are related to the geomorphological history of eastern Brazilian coastal drainages.

Variações morfológicas de *Hypostomus affinis* provenientes dos rios Paraíba do Sul, Doce e Mucuri são descritas e discutidas à luz dos cenários biogeográficos para os peixes de água doce do leste do Brasil. Foram observadas variações nas quilhas laterais do corpo e cabeça, no padrão de colorido, e no número de dentes do pré-maxilar e dentário. As quilhas são mais conspícuas nos espécimes do rio Paraíba do Sul, porque as placas ósseas têm séries de odontóides maiores. As amostras dos rios Doce e Mucuri têm maiores similaridades morfométrica e cromática em relação às amostras do rio Paraíba do Sul. Por outro lado, os exemplares dos rios Mucuri e Paraíba do Sul possuem menos dentes em ambas maxilas do que aqueles do rio Doce. Apesar de tais variações, nenhum caráter sozinho é capaz de reconhecer e diferenciar espécimes provenientes de cada uma destas três drenagens. A distribuição e a variação morfológica de *Hypostomus affinis* estão relacionadas à história geomorfológica das drenagens costeiras do leste brasileiro.

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