A note on the status of *Clupisoma naziri* (Pisces: Schilbidae)

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**ABSTRACT**

*Clupisoma naziri* Mirza & Awan was described on the basis of the specimens collected from the river Indus near Jinnah Barrage and the river Khiale near the village Khatki (Swat river system). The presence of a keel on the abdomen between the pelvic fins and the vent was not mentioned in the original description. This created a wrong impression that a keel was absent in this species. It has now been observed that a keel on the ventral side of the abdomen is indeed present between the pelvic fins and the vent in *C. naziri*. There is an adipose dorsal in the young as well as in the adult in *C. naziri*. In *C. garua* a keel is present in the abdomen between the pelvic fins and the vent. The adipose dorsal is present in the young ones having total length of 10 cm (nearly 4 inches) but is absent in the adults above the total length of 10 cm in *C. garua*. The number of fin rays in the anal fin is quite different in the two species: there are 29 to 36 fin rays in the anal fin in *C. garua*, whereas the number of anal fin rays is 40 to 47 in *C. naziri*.

**Key words:** Status, *Clupisoma naziri*, Keel.

**INTRODUCTION**

*Clupisoma naziri* was described by Mirza & Awan (1973) from the river Indus near Jinnah Barrage and the river Khiale (Swat river system) near Khatki village. Its range was subsequently extended upto Tarbela Dam in the Indus, upto Muzaffarabad in the Jhelum and some other tributaries of river Indus in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir. It is regarded one of the tastiest catfish in Pakistan. In the original description there is no mention about the presence or absence of an abdominal keel in this species. It gave the wrong impression that the abdominal keel was absent in this species. So this character (absence of keel in *C. naziri*) was used in the keys of genus *Clupisoma* by Talwar & Jhingran (1991) and Jayaram (1999 & 2006). However, it has been observed that a keel between the pelvic fins and the vent is present in *Clupisoma naziri*, like that in *Clupisoma garua*. These two species, however, differ from each other in the number of anal fin rays which are 40 to 47 in *C. naziri* and 29 to 36 in *C. garua*. Moreover, the adipose dorsal is present in young as well as in the adult in *C. naziri*. But an adipose dorsal is absent in the adult (more than 10 cm in total length) in *C. garua*. 
SYNONYMS OF _CLUPISOMA NAZIRI_ MIRZA & AWAN

_Clupisoma naziri_ Mirza & Awan, 1973  
_Clupisoma murius naziri_, Mirza, 1975  
_Clupisoma naziri_, Mirza, 2003

DISCUSSION

The genus _Clupisoma_ is represented in Pakistan by two species only: _C. garua_ (Hamilton) and _C. naziri_ Mirza & Awan. _C. garua_ is mainly distributed in the plains but _C. naziri_ is found in the submontane areas. Both these species are closely related but can be differentiated by the presence or absence of the adipose dorsal in the adult and the number of fin rays in the anal fin. _C. garua_ grows up to 60 cm in total length whereas _C. naziri_ grows up to 36 cm in total length. Both these species are found in the vale of Peshawar but _C. garua_ has not so far been collected from the river Indus upstream of Indus-Kabul confluence. The food and feeding of these species are also different but need more research work. _C. naziri_ is found in Azad Kashmir up to Muzaffarabad and also up to Kotly in the Jhelum and Poonch rivers, respectively.

The abdominal keel in _Clupisoma naziri_ is highly variable. In some specimens, it is quite apparent while in others, it is indistinct. It was due to this reason that its presence in the original description by Mirza & Awan (1973) was not mentioned.

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REFERENCES


