

Book Review

Peces de Los Andes de Colombia. By Javier A. Maldonado-Ocampo, Armando Ortega-Lara, José S. Usma Oviedo, Germán Galvis Vergara, Francisco A. Villa-Navarro; Lucena Vásquez Gamboa, Saúl Prada-Pedrerros and Carlos Ardila Rodríguez. Instituto de Investigación de Recursos Biológicos Alexander von Humboldt. Bogotá, D.C., Colombia, 2005. Soft Cover. 346 pp. ISBN 958-8151-50-3.

More than 30 years after the classical books by Dahl and Miles “*Los peces del Norte de Colombia*” and “*Los peces del Río Magdalena*”, Maldonado-Ocampo and his co-authors continue to further our knowledge of the diversity of freshwater Colombian fish. This book is a comprehensive and well-illustrated field guide to the fishes of the Colombian Andes. Written in Spanish, “*Peces de Los Andes de Colombia*” was inspired by the need to document and compile the known information on all the fishes of the Colombian Andes, many of which are only known from their original descriptions. The aim of this book is to present the rapid identification of 183 species of fishes of seven orders that inhabit the Cordilleras Oriental, Central, Occidental, and the Magdalena and Cauca Valleys, elevations greater than 500 meters in elevation. This aim is shown through taxonomic keys, short descriptions, illustrations, and distribution maps.

The book is organized into 10 chapters. Chapter 1 starts with a brief introduction in which the authors justify the need for the book, with their followed by an explanation of the organization of the guide, and then a succinct overview on the biogeography of Colombian Andean fishes. Chapter 2 presents taxonomic keys to the orders, families, and genera of the included species. Monotypic genera are identified at the species level.

Chapter 3 provides descriptions of each of the 183 species of included fishes. The text for each species is divided

into subsections: synonyms, popular names, conservation status in Colombia, description, biology and ecology, distribution, comments, and lists of specimens in the collections of selected museums.

Chapter 4 deals with the collection methodologies employed, as well as the methods used to preserve the fishes. Chapter 5 is the bibliography of the 233 literature citations in the book. Chapter 6 is a glossary and chapter 7 contains two appendices, the first begins a map of the Colombian Andes, and the second a list of 184 species of fishes treated, including *Chaetostoma alternifasciatum* is not, however, discussed in chapter 3.

Chapters 8, 9, and 10, contain illustrations used to show methods of taxa identification, outstanding and comprehensive color illustrations of 132 species, and georeferenced distribution maps for 182 species.

Despite minor spelling errors of some species names and in the text, “*Peces de Los Andes de Colombia*” is an important contribution to neotropical ichthyology. As a field guide, it can be used by anyone interested in fishes, from fishermen, to advanced hobbyists and ichthyologists. The accuracy of the species identifications and distributions, as well as the detailed fish illustrations, make this book a model for future works on the neotropical ichthyofauna.

The book can be purchased by sending a request to Javier Maldonado Ocampo, jamaldonado@humboldt.org.co, or to publicaciones@humboldt.org.co. The price is US\$ 30.00 plus shipping costs.

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