

Revision of the endemic barbine fishes of the Western Cape

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Together, the barbine fishes (the red-finned *Pseudobarbus* and “sawfinned” ‘*Barbus*’) of the southern Cape, two species of endemic catfish (*Austroglanis* spp.), a few species of Galaxias and one species of anabantid (*Sandelia capensis*) constitute the ichthyological equivalent of the Cape fynbos flora. The barbines are particularly diverse, charismatic, ripe for taxonomic attention, and environmentally and economically significant: in short, a perfect focus for the FBIP. All of the species are narrow endemics, which places them in a precarious position vis-a-vis environmental instabilities like climate change, invasive species and water abstraction. ‘*Barbus*’ *serra* and ‘*B.*’ *andrewi* are popular angling fish in the regional bio-economy.

The iconic genus *Pseudobarbus* was the first endemic clade of barbs to be recognised and removed from the taxonomic holding genus *Barbus* sensu lato, and it is clear that further equally charismatic Western Cape taxa merit distinction. Addressing the uniqueness of this fauna is the first goal of this work. The second goal is to re-evaluate the taxonomic diversity and distributions of these barbines, which include ‘*Barbus*’ *hospes*, ‘*B.*’ *serra*, ‘*B.*’ *andrewi*, ‘*B.*’ *capensis*, ‘*B.*’ *tervelyani*, ‘*B.*’ *calidus* and ‘*B.*’ *erubescens*. Undescribed species are known to exist and their distributions need mapping. This project will use semi-quantitative field sampling, morphological analysis and barcoding to unlock and mobilise components of the foundational SAIAB database for bio-economic development and global change planning and environmental decision-making at Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA) and CapeNature.