

Project Update: March 2020

We have completed the field trips to survey the distribution of *Poropuntius deauratus* in the central Vietnam provinces of Quảng Bình, Quảng Trị, Thừa Thiên-Huế, Kon Tum, and Gia Lai. A total of 72 specimens belonging to genus *Poropuntius* were collected from all sampling sites. They occurred in riffles, runs, and pools with a water temperature of 22–26°C, pH of 6.5–7.2, DO of 80.0–88.6%, conductivity of 1–10 $\mu\text{S}\cdot\text{cm}^{-1}$, and flow velocity of 0.17–0.67 m/s (Figure 1 & 2). *Poropuntius* spp. share their habitats with *Glyptothorax* sp., *Sewellia* sp., *Schistura* sp., and *Rasbora* spp. Specimens of *Poropuntius* were described using morphological characteristics to identify them to species level. Finclips from specimens were prepared for molecular analysis.



Figure 1: *Poropuntius deauratus*' habitat in Bach Ma National Park (Thừa Thiên - Huế province)



Figure 2: Ms. Thao (project leader) measured water conditions of *P. deauratus*

The standard length of *Poropuntius* spp. is 3.5 -18.8 cm. The characters of *Poropuntius* spp. belong to two morphotypes: group A (bright yellow caudal fin, 25–28 scales in lateral line, and 11–14 gill rakers on the first gill arch) and group B (pale yellow caudal fin, 30–36 scales in lateral line, and 11–14 gill rakers on the first gill arch). Following the descriptions in Serov et al. 2006, Roberts 1998, and Rainboth 1996. *Poropuntius* of group A can be identified as *P. normani* and group B can be *P. deauratus*.

Molecular data: all COI sequences of *Poropuntius* in group A and group B match 100% to sequences of *Poropuntius* sp. from Thailand (GenBank accession: MH550535). Therefore, the specimens that were collected from central Vietnam should be the same species. The identification of these species based on morphology is confusing and needs to be re-verified to understand their distribution. Now we are planning to survey the rivers in the remaining provinces of Quảng Nam, Quảng Ngãi, Bình Định, Phú Yên, Khánh Hòa, Ninh Thuận, Bình Thuận to conclude the taxonomy and distribution range of *P. deauratus* in Vietnam.