

## LITERATURE CITED

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**THE FRESH-WATER FISHES OF NORTH BORNEO.** Inger, R. F. & P. K. Chin. 1990. *Fieldiana: Zoology*, Volume 45 (1962). Reprinted by Sabah Zoological Society, Sabah, Malaysia, with supplementary chapter by P. K. Chin, 268+SC47 pp.

The reprinting and updating of this important ichthyological publication is welcomed and timely, especially considering the growing interest in Southeast Asian freshwater fishes. Since 1962, Inger and Chin's book has served as a key reference text to not only the freshwater fishes of Sabah (= British North Borneo), but also for the rest of Borneo and other parts of tropical Southeast Asia as well.

The first 268 pages of the book is identical to the original publication by the Chicago Natural History Museum which is now out of print. The last 47 supplementary pages written by Datuk Chin Pui Kong is intended to update and include species described or discovered since 1962. 46 new figures have also been added to the 120 in the previous addition. The many new figures, mostly of species not dealt with or illustrated in the original publication, are of a high quality and should prove most useful. This includes species like *Wallago maculatus* Inger & Chin which has never been illustrated before. In total, 85 native and 12 introduced food species are considered, 56 of which are endemic to Sabah or Borneo. Despite the scope of the investigations into Sabahan freshwater fish fauna over the years, it is apparent that much more remains to be done. Chin has added 10 species, mostly gastromyzontids, to their 1962 list of fishes. The fish fauna of many parts of Sabah however, despite the extensive studies of Inger and Chin, still remain poorly or even unsampled, and the number of known species can be expected to increase still further in the coming years.

The single weakness of the new edition of this book must surely be in the taxonomy and nomenclature. While the second author has attempted to update the book with new species and records in his supplementary chapter, it is apparent that he has only considered the literature pertaining directly to Sabah. This selectivity is a problem because the state of fish taxonomy has progressed a great deal since the 1960s, and the failure to refer to or utilise modern taxonomic/nomenclatural changes affects the usefulness of the book. Many groups have been revised between 1962 and 1990, e.g. the cobitids and balitorids (= homalopterids) (Sawada, 1982; Kottelat, 1984, 1987, 1988), barbans (Rainboth, 1981; Banarescu, 1986), channids (= ophicephalids) (Myers & Shapovalov, 1931); cichlids of the *Tilapia* complex (Trewawas, 1983) etc. While it must be granted that supraspecific classifications are often subjective, to follow a dated taxonomy without comment or explanation can be very confusing and reduces the value of the book. This is especially in view of the several regional ichthyological books which have been released since 1962 (e.g. Alfred, 1966; Mohsin & Ambak, 1983; Kottelat, 1989; Roberts, 1989; Lim & Ng, 1990) which use a more modern system of classification. It would have been better if a completely new edition of the book had been prepared, with the new information and figures incorporated in the main text for smoother flow and

easier use. The updated taxonomy can then also be incorporated. This shortcoming however, does not detract one from the value of the book, which is very "user-friendly" by any standards. The careful attention to distinguishing characters remains one of the strongest points of the book, and enables even "novice" ichthyologists to use the book without any serious difficulties. Fortunately, almost all the taxonomic inadequacies of the new book can easily be corrected by cross-referencing it to Roberts' (1989) important publication on the Kapuas fishes and Kottelat's (1989) list of the fishes from Peninsular and Continental Southeast Asia.

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