

Book Review

A Field Guide to the Fishes in Freshwaters of Sri Lanka

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Publisher: Department of Wildlife Conservation, Colombo, Sri Lanka

502 pp., 2021

ISBN 978-955-8135-14-3

Price LKR 5000.00

Citation: Ramani Shirantha R.R.A. 2021. A Field Guide to the Fishes in Freshwaters of Sri Lanka. Department of Wildlife Conservation, Colombo. XV + 502 pp.

A comprehensive guidebook for freshwater fishes of Sri Lanka has been a long-awaited need for fisheries scientists, academics, students, nature lovers and conservationists, environmentalists and policy makers, amongst others. The taxonomic keys of freshwater fishes of Sri Lanka (e.g., Munro, 1955; Mendis and Fernando 1962) and guidebooks (e.g., Pethiyagoda 1991) served the purpose for the time being, but with description of new species, renaming and change of conservation status over time, most of which have been incorporated in www.fishbase.org (Froese and Pauly 2022), this guidebook provides comprehensive reference.

The special features of this guidebook are that it includes the following descriptions for each species described.

- Distribution in 14 zones of the country covering the entire island;
- Natural occurrence or trans-basin introduction (transfer);
- IUCN conservation status based on IUCN National Red List of 2020 and Global Red List of 2021;
- Legal status under Flora and Fauna Protection Ordinance and Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act;
- Habitats; and
- Threats.

For fish identification, this guidebook provides three approaches namely, (i) dichotomous keys, (ii) descriptive pictorial guides, and (iii) digital colour photo guides.

The author, Ms. R.R.A Ramani Shirantha has produced this invaluable book entirely based on her expert knowledge, and field observation supported by a dedicated team of field assistants. I could not find any errors in this guidebook, and I congratulate Ms. Shirantha for accomplishing this great work.

This guidebook is therefore recommended to be included in all important libraries, especially in the universities in Sri Lanka and the natural history museums around the world.

References

- Froese, R. & D. Pauly (eds) 2022. FishBase. World Wide Web electronic publication. www.fishbase.org (06/2022).
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- Pethiyagoda, R. 1991. Freshwater Fishes of Sri Lanka. Wildlife Heritage Trust, Colombo, Sri Lanka. 362 p.

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