

PP-05

Incidence of *Clinostomum* Spp. (Digenea: Clinostomidae) Infection in Banded Gourami (Actinopterygii: Osphronemidae) from Kararia Wetland, India.

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The giant or banded gourami, *Trichogaster fasciata*, is a well-known ornamental fish appreciated for its vibrant colour pattern and pleasant appearance. This fish primarily inhabited rivers, ponds, streams, floodplains, bays, bars, haors, plains, and sub-montane regions, favour weedy environments. This is omnivorous, hardy, and air-breathing fish. It is a native fish species of India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Pakistan (Gupta & Banerjee, 2014; Rahman, 1989; Talwar & Jhingran, 1991). Despite having high food value and ornamental appeal, this fish is usually classified as a weed fish in aquaculture. However, it is threatened by various global parasite infestations that cause food value decline and may lead to fish mortality (Keisham & Mohilal, 2020; Moravec & Justine, 2017). Given the damaging effects of parasite infection on fish and human health, the current study was to record the incidence of metacercariae of *Clinostomum* spp. in banded gourami from Keraria Wetland, India.

In this study, the *Clinostomum* metacercariae were characterized and identified up to the genus level using morphometric keys. The key characteristics used for identification included the width of the body, the distance between the oral and ventral suckers, the arrangement of the genital complex, and the location of the genital pore. However, the arrangement of the genital complex was only considered a criterion due to its stability in whole mount preparation and visibility since the early stage of metacercaria. Therefore, the findings of the present corroborate with earlier studies done by (Caffara *et al.*, 2011), (Ngamniyom *et al.*, 2012), (Zimik *et al.*, 2019), (Bordoloi & Hazarika, 2023) and (Bera *et al.*, 2021). However, the testicular length and width are more petite than reports of (Zimik *et al.*, 2019) and (Bera *et al.*, 2021).

The study presented here is the first description of the incidence of *Clinostomum* metacercaria infection from banded gourami, collected from Kararia wetland, India.

