

Project Update: October 2011

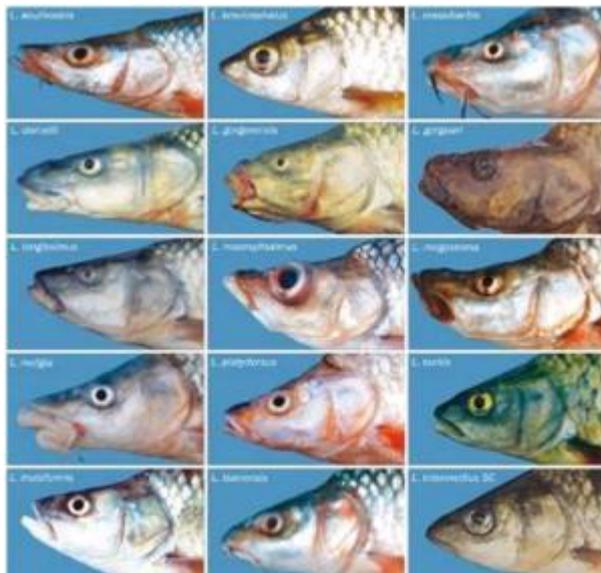
Four field trips were made to Gilgel Abay and tributary rivers in August and September 2011. Seven hundred and twenty two specimens of fishes were collected using gill nets of different mesh sizes. Of these, 658 specimens (91.14%) belong to the dominant genus *Labeobarbus* whereas 36 (4.99%) and 28 (3.88 %) specimens were *Varicorhinus beso* and *Clarias gariepinus*, respectively. Of the collected *Labeobarbus* spp., the majority (366) were females and 253 were males with a sex ratio of (F:M—1.45:1). The sex of the remaining specimens could not be clearly identified.

Eleven of the 16 species of *Labeobarbus* spp. recorded from Lake Tana were collected from Gilgel Abay and its tributary rivers, with a range of maturity stages (largely mature) preliminarily confirming that these fishes migrate to these rivers for spawning.

One hundred and seventy specimens were collected from Gilgel Abay main course, while 142 and 110 specimens were collected from tributary rivers, Zabzi and Kilty, respectively indicating that these rivers could be main sites of spawning for these species. It has also to be noted that the number of fish specimens caught has relatively increased in the last two periods of sampling (In September than in August) indicating that the fishes migrate later in the rainy season.

The dominant species in Gilgel Abay and tributary rivers is found to be *L. intermedius* (294 specimens) followed by *L. brevicephalus* (110 specimens) and *L. nedgia* (59 specimens). The least represented were *L. macrocephalus* (4 specimens), *L. platydorsus* (7 specimens) and *L. longissimus* (9 specimens).

A problem of logistics, especially great difficulty in reaching the river mouth should be noted. The sampling effort will continue throughout October and November 2011 and a workshop will be held at the end of December to evaluate the samplings from Gilgel Abay and tributary rivers and also raise awareness among fishermen and development workers in the area.



Head morphology of the fifteen *Labeobarbus* species flock in Lake Tana. (Source: De Graaf *et al.*, 2004)