

Submission date. 27/09/2025

Associate editor's decision after peer review (07/01/2026).

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

Manuscript ID NI-2025-0072 entitled "Three new species of cloud fish, *Hypsolebias* genus, *H. trilineatus* species group from the Rio Paracatu, Rio São Francisco basin, Brazil (Cyprinodontiformes: Rivulidae)." which you submitted to the Neotropical Ichthyology, has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewer(s) are included at the bottom of this letter.

The reviewer(s) have recommended publication, but also suggest some revisions to your manuscript. Therefore, I invite you to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise your manuscript.

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Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to the Neotropical Ichthyology, your revised manuscript should be submitted before 09-Mar-2026. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision by this date, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Neotropical Ichthyology and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,

Dr. Priscila Camelier

Associate Editor, Neotropical Ichthyology

pricamelier@gmail.com

Anonymous reviewer #1

Recommendation. Major Revision

Comments.

Dear Editor and Authors,

I have completed my review of the manuscript entitled "Three new species of cloud fish, *Hypsolebias* genus, *H. trilineatus* species group from the Rio Paracatu, Rio São Francisco basin, Brazil (Cyprinodontiformes: Rivulidae)."

The manuscript offers a relevant contribution to knowledge of the biodiversity of Cerrado biome, with the aim of describing three new species of seasonal Killifish of genus *Hypsolebias*. The study has the potential to contribute to the taxonomic systematics of this genus, as well as raise the alert for anthropic impacts identified in the area where the new species occur.

Overall, the study is consistent with the scope of the journal. However, the manuscript contains errors ranging from the title to the figures section. Below, I present a brief detailed review, highlighting the main limitations identified in the study.

1. The manuscript is not adequately standardized according to Neotropical Ichthyology metrics. Many errors have been identified, ranging from the authors' institutional affiliations and manuscript topics to the references.

2. The abstract does not include information about methodology or the new group definition proposed for *Hypsolebias*. The keywords could be better selected to represent the scope of the manuscript.

3. The introduction is good, but there are inconsistencies in zoological taxonomic nomenclature and systematic information about *Hypsolebias*, including generalizations that should be approached with caution. In this section of the study, I suggest that the authors explain why and how they are defining a new group of *Hypsolebias*, highlighting the diagnostic characteristics that validate the inference.

4. The methodology is good and consistent with the results.

5. The results require special attention by the authors.

In this section, I found errors that were repeated throughout the three diagnoses and descriptions. I would like to highlight my concern with the diagnosis, which is not organized, includes taxonomic errors, and does not respond to the necessary requirements of what is expected for this type of text.

The descriptions are not written in telegraphic form.

The diagnoses often presented descriptions of the characters instead of comparative analyses. The authors may be compromising the validity and support of the diagnosis when they demand all efforts for color character analysis. This is concerning because the color of *Hypsolebias* is variable and depends on physical-chemical factors such as the pH water, life stage, and availability of resources. A diagnosis based only on color patterns could highlight a series of homoplasies in the study group. In addition, the new species are not compared with each other, which is essential for their taxonomic validation.

6. About 80% of the discussion is presented as diagnosis. I suggest that the authors review the text and resolve some biogeographical inconsistencies that have been identified. I would also like to recommend that the authors be cautious with biogeographical speculation, since the study includes only a single type of data set: morphology.

7. References should be standardized according to NI metrics.

8. The figures are excellent, except for the map in Figure 3, which needs to be redone to improve the quality of the geographic information.

Overall, the study was conducted using appropriate methodology and includes relevant contributions in the context of the taxonomy and conservation of the genus *Hypsolebias*. Some conceptual issues need to be revised to ensure greater scientific consistency and clarity in the presentation of the results. The suggestions presented here are intended only to improve the organization and clarity of the text. Therefore, the manuscript may be considered for publication after major reviews.

Anonymous reviewer #2

Recommendation. Major Revision

Comments.

O artigo é excelente, original, traz uma contribuição muito importante para estudos de rivulídeos do Brasil, no entanto, precisa ser melhor organizado.

Author's Rebuttal Letter (04/03/2026).

Prezados Senhores,

Segue respostas perguntas:

1. Padrões de acordo com as métricas da Ictiologia Neotropical refeitos.
2. Incluído no resumo a informação da criação da nova espécie grupo.
3. Conforme recomendação a explicação sobre o novo grupo está incluída na Discussão, com a inclusão de suas características.
4. A metodologia é boa e consistente com os resultados.
5. Diagnose refeita conforme orientações no Manuscrito.
6. Discussão refeita conforme orientação no Manuscrito. As informações biogeográficas são baseadas em bibliografia apresentadas no trabalho
- 7.Referencias refeitas de acordo com as normativas da NI
- 8.Fig. 3 refeita.

Associate editor's decision after peer review (04/05/2026).

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

Manuscript ID NI-2025-0072.R1 entitled "Three new species of cloud fish, *Hypsoblebias* genus, from the Rio Paracatu, Rio São Francisco basin, Brazil (Cyprinodontiformes: Rivulidae), with a proposal of a new specie group (*H. trilineatus*)." which you submitted to the Neotropical Ichthyology, has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewer(s) are included at the bottom of this letter.

The reviewer(s) have recommended publication, but also suggest some revisions to your manuscript. Therefore, I invite you to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise your manuscript.

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Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to the Neotropical Ichthyology, your revised manuscript should be submitted before 04-Jul-2026. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision by this date, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Neotropical Ichthyology and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,
 Dr. Priscila Camelier
 Associate Editor, Neotropical Ichthyology
 pricamelier@gmail.com

Anonymous reviewer #1

Recommendation. Major Revision

Comments.

Dear Editor and Authors,

I have verified that the errors and inconsistencies I identified during the first round of review still persist in the current version submitted by the authors.

I also note that the authors submitted a version of the manuscript that appears to address only the comments of the second reviewer. Additionally, the required documents for the second review, including the rebuttal letter and the draft version of the manuscript showing alterations were not provided.

Therefore, I declare that I did not conduct the second review, as the authors did not comply with the basic requirements of the peer review process of Neotropical Ichthyology.

Anonymous reviewer #2

Recommendation. Accept

Comments. (There are no comments.)

Author's Rebuttal Letter (05/05/2026).

Padronizar "peixes das Nuvens"

Na imagem que vocês apresentam não parece ter 13 manchas: A foto é de um peixe coletado em 2008, a referência das manchas são informações do trabalho de descrição.

Key to species of the *Hypsolebias trilineatus* species group (Males):

2b. Pelvic-fin with six rays; anteroventral portion of the flank golden with dark brown blotch, posterior portion of flank light purplish brown, with dark purplish brown bars and 6-8 horizontal rows of light greenish blue dots or reddish-brown background with pale vertical black spots and irregular golden dots or light brown with 4-5 lines formed by greenish-blue dots or golden

Associate editor's decision after peer review (28/05/2026).

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

Manuscript ID NI-2025-0072.R2 entitled "Three new species of cloud fish, *Hypsolebias* genus, from the Rio Paracatu, Rio São Francisco basin, Brazil (Cyprinodontiformes: Rivulidae), with a proposal of a new specie group (*H. trilineatus*)." which you submitted to the Neotropical Ichthyology, has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewer(s) are included at the bottom of this letter.

The reviewer(s) have recommended publication, but also suggest some minor revisions to your manuscript. Therefore, I invite you to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise your manuscript.

In particular, please carefully address the comments and suggestions provided in the attached file from Reviewer 1, enclosed with this decision letter, which contain several relevant points regarding the manuscript. Although these comments do not preclude publication, they should be properly considered and incorporated into the revised version. When submitting your new revision, please provide a revised version of the manuscript together with a detailed response letter explaining how each point raised by Reviewer 1 was addressed or, when applicable, providing justification for any suggestions not incorporated.

To revise your manuscript, log into <https://mc04.manuscriptcentral.com/ni-scielo> and enter your Author Center, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision.

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Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Neotropical Ichthyology and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,

Dr. Priscila Camelier

Associate Editor, Neotropical Ichthyology

pricamelier@gmail.com

Author's Rebuttal Letter (11/06/2026).

1. The title is not properly organized and seems repetitive. OK. Title changed
2. Please, do not use a period in the title. Ok
3. This information should be included along with each author's institutional address. OK
4. I suggest moving this to the end of the abstract and establishing a link with the state of conservation found. Changed.
5. Key words changed.
6. Included (Costa,2006)
7. Rivulidae family: The genus *Hypsolebias* was created in 2006; the references are to the changes that occurred within the Rivulidae family in relation to the groups of genera in which the genus *Hypsolebias* is included or related.
8. According to the suggestion
9. The allocation of the three new species to the *Hypsolebias trilineatus* species group is based on a comparative morphological analysis / an integrative approach using both morphological characters following the phylogenetic definitions established by Costa (2007, 2011)
10. Phrase relocated in the discussion

11. Add specific location information.

12. Added requested information.

Hypsolebias rosai

Diagnose: Reorganized and Reformatted

13. The color pattern of males is a key characteristic for diagnosing species within the Aplocheiloidei. Females recognize males by their color patterns to assess potential mates (Costa, 1995, 1998; Wildekamp, 2004, Britzke et al., 2016). H. shibattai, 2014: The text states that sexual dimorphism is evident and includes striking color patterns and elongated fins in males. The document explicitly highlights that color patterns have proven to be an important tool for diagnosing species (citing Costa, 1995).

Description:

14. Add: Largest male examined XX mm SL; largest female XX mm SL

15. Add: pocket-shaped in females

16. Add: Filamentous rays on tip of dorsal and anal fins in males, tip of filaments reaching vertical through half of caudal fin.

Males color: Reorganized and Reformatted

Females color: Reorganized and Reformatted: Despite the rain in the photo, the female's coloring is quite clear.

Habitat: Modified according to suggestions.

Cerrado: characterized by small trees with twisted trunks and branches, thick bark, and deep roots. It exhibits great structural variation, ranging from open formations (grasslands) to dense forests

Conservation status. Updated

Hypsolebias baptistai

Diagnose: Reorganized and Reformatted

Coloration in life: Reorganized and Reformatted

Habitat: Eliminated: in the end of the rainy season, the water became translucent throughout the floodplain.

Cerrado: characterized by small trees with twisted trunks and branches, thick bark, and deep roots. It exhibits great structural variation, ranging from open formations (grasslands) to dense forests

Conservation status. Updated

Eliminated: Species found based on information from environmental licensing processes.

Hypsolebias maylermartinsi

Diagnose: Reorganized and Reformatted

Coloration in life: Reorganized and Reformatted

Habitat: Embedded suggestion

Conservation status. Updated

Discussion

Reorganized and Reformatted

The Cynolebiini tribe has its evolutionary origin: We agree with the reviewer's precise observation regarding the evolutionary timeline of Cynolebiini and Hypsolebias.

The last paragraph: Remade

Associate editor's decision after peer review (03/07/2026).

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

It is a pleasure to accept your manuscript entitled ""Three new species of cloud fish of genus *Hypsolebias* (Cyprinodontiformes, Rivulidae) from Rio São Francisco basins, Northeast Brasil"" in its current form for publication in the Neotropical Ichthyology.

Congratulations for the acceptance of your article, and be aware on the following topics:

1. Publication Fee

NI will charge a publication fee if none of the co-authors is an active SBI member. This measure is essential to strengthen SBI and thus ensure the continuity of our journal,

scientific society, and biannual meetings. SBI is not limited to Brazilians but is open to anyone interested in freshwater and marine Neotropical fishes. More details on SBI are available at <https://www.sbi.bio.br/>. Please email tesouraria.sbi@gmail.com to confirm whether any of your co-authors is a current SBI member and to activate your SBI membership if needed. Otherwise, if you will cover the publication fee of R\$1.000, please inform us at the same email. For authors outside Brazil, the fee will be converted to US dollars based on the official exchange rate on the date of payment. The only exceptions to this fee are invited articles.

2. Science Communication and Social Media

NI actively promotes published articles to both academic colleagues and the general public, including science journalists. To support this, we create social media posts and require images and/or videos of fish related to your work. If your article does not include such images, please send a photo of a representative fish species, preferably alive in its natural habitat. If you do not have your own photo, you may provide a link to an online image, along with the source, author, and, if applicable, authorization for its use. We also publish video summaries of articles in Portuguese on our Instagram (@neoichth). We ask you to designate one author to record a short video using a mobile phone, following the attached instructions. The video should include visual materials (photos, graphics) and a script for subtitles to enhance accessibility. Please email the completed material to our Social Media Editor, Igor Souto-Santos, at icass.ufrrj@gmail.com within 30 days.

Additionally, if your article is taxonomic in nature and has been submitted to Zoobank, it is your responsibility to update the manuscript's status on Zoobank once it has been published.

All of the above information and materials are mandatory for the publication of your article, including the scientific dissemination component, which is crucial in the current climate of science denial and misinformation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at neoichth@nupelia.uem.br.

Please send an e-mail to neoichth@nupelia.uem.br within five working days to let us know you are aware of all the important points mentioned above.

Thank you for your fine contribution. On behalf of the Editors of the Neotropical Ichthyology, we look forward to your continued contributions to the Journal.

Sincerely,

Dr. Priscila Camelier

Associate Editor, Neotropical Ichthyology
pricamelier@gmail.com

Neotropical Ichthyology

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- **Nielsen DTB, Yoshinaga T, Lira FO, Silva MJ.** Three new species of cloud fish of genus *Hypsolebias* (Cyprinodontiformes: Rivulidae) from rio São Francisco basins, Northeast Brazil. *Neotrop Ichthyol.* 2026; 24(3):e250072. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-0224-2025-0072>



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