

AMENDMENTS TO APPENDICES I AND II OF THE CONVENTION

A. PROPOSAL

Deletion of Xiphophorus couchianus from Appendix II.

B. PROPOSER

The Swiss Confederation.

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

- 11. Class: Pisces
- 12. Order: Atheriniformes
- 13. Family: Poeciliidae
- 14. Species: Xiphophorus couchianus
- 15. Common Names: English: Monterrey platy fish
French: xiphophore de Couch
Spanish: Xijo de Couch
- 16. Code Numbers: 525.005.020.002 (ID Manual)

2. Biological Data

- 21. Distribution: Mexico: Rio San Juan River system (Rio Grande basin), Huasteca Canyon near Sta. Catarina and Monterrey, Nuevo León.
- 22. Population: Xiphophorus couchianus has been described from at least eight localities. Populations of Monterrey, Huasteca and Libertad probably extinct due to drought, and from Cadereyta the species is known only from the last century. Of the remaining populations one is relatively safe.

Small populations in captivity.
- 23. Habitat: Head-water regions, small rivers and ponds. Threatened by drought.

3. Trade Data

- 31. National Utilization: None.
- 32. Legal International Trade: Has never been recorded in trade since 1975.
- 33. Illegal Trade: No evidence.
- 34. Potential Trade Threats: Unlikely to be any.

4. Protection Status

No information available.

CITES history: Listed at Washington, D.C., 1973. Has never been reviewed.

5. Information on Similar Species

Xiphophorus couchianus was first described in 1859 from Monterrey and Cadereyta by Ch. Girard. Xiphophorus specimens collected by M. Gordon from Huasteca have also been considered to be X. couchianus, but Meyer (1982) believes that they belonged to a different species.

In the Arroyo Chapultepec natural hybrids between X. couchianus and X. variatus are found. This hybrid population has been described as X. roseni. In the Río Purificación and in the El Limón area a natural hybridization between X. variatus and X. xiphidium occurs. The conclusion has to be drawn that X. couchianus cannot be considered a valid species.

In addition, since 1968 artificially reproduced Xiphophorus specimens of various species and artificially reproduced Xiphophorus hybrids have been released in the Monterrey area. These also hybridize with X. couchianus.

There is no ID Manual sheet on X. couchianus and its relatives. A proper identification of the various forms is possible only by very specialized experts.

6. Comments from Countries of Origin

Solicited but not received.

8. References

Baensch, H.A. and R. Riehl, 1985. Aquarien-Atlas, Vol 2. Melle.

Meyer, M.K., 1982. Xiphophorus-Hybriden aus Nord-Mexico. Zool. Abh. Mus. Tierk. Dresden 38(18).