

Order CHARACIFORMES

African Pikes

Family **HEPSETIDAE**

Hubbs 1939



Hepsetus odoe. Illustration by Johann Friedrich Hennig. From: Bloch, M. E. 1794. Naturgeschichte der ausländischen Fische. Berlin. v. 8: i-iv + 1-174, Pls. 361-396.

Hepsetus

Swainson 1838

etymology not explained, probably from the ancient Greek *hepsētós* (Gr. ἠψητός), a small fish boiled for human consumption¹ (e.g., the anchovy *Anchoa hepsetus*); however, name is also used for toothy, pike-like piscivores, perhaps alluding to the Greek poet Archippus (late 5th-century BC), who wrote: “An hepsetus fell in with an anchovy / And quick devoured him,” and/or to the ecologically convergent characid *Oligosarcus hepsetus* (Cuvier 1829) from South America

***Hepsetus cuvieri* (Castelnau 1861)** in honor of Georges Cuvier (1769–1832), one of the three zoologists (including Dumeril and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire) whom Castelnau called his “masters” (translation); Cuvier also described the genus (Alestidae: *Hydrocynus*) to which this species was presumed to be related

***Hepsetus kingsleyae* Decru, Vreven & Snoeks 2013** in honor of writer and explorer Mary Henrietta Kingsley (1862–1900), who collected several species of fishes from the Ogowé Basin in Gabon, including a few specimens of *Hepsetus*

***Hepsetus lineatus* (Pellegrin 1926)** Latin for lined, presumably referring to “very crisp brown longitudinal lines between each series of scales” (translation)

***Hepsetus microlepis* (Boulenger 1901)** *micro-*, from *mikrós* (Gr. μικρός), small; *lepis* (Gr. λεπίς), scale, referring to its smaller, more numerous scales compared with *H. odoe*

***Hepsetus occidentalis* Decru, Snoeks & Vreven 2013** Latin for western, the westernmost species of the genus

***Hepsetus odoe* (Bloch 1794)** local name for this species in Guinea (now Republic of Guinea), Africa; according to Jubb (1967), *odoe* refers to its numerous teeth²

¹Thompson, D. W. 1947. A glossary of Greek fishes. London: Oxford University Press. vi + 302 pp.

²Jubb, R.A. 1967. Freshwater fishes of Southern Africa. Cape Town: A. A. Baljema. vii + 248 pp + 15 plates.