



A CHECKLIST OF ICHTHYOFAUNA FROM FLOODPLAIN LAKES OF THE MIDDLE ARAGUAIA

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The Tocantins-Araguaia basin is home to the most diverse freshwater fish fauna in the Cerrado biome. Despite its high biodiversity, this basin remains poorly studied in fish ecological studies. This study presents a list of fish species from different lakes distributed throughout the middle portion of the Araguaia river. Sampling was conducted in 16 floodplain lakes, using gillnets, seine nets, and traps. A total of 175 fish species were recorded, spanning various orders and families. Species richness varied significantly among sites, ranging from 13 species in Lakes Bandeirantes and Rico to 63 species in Lake Varal. The orders that stood out most in the fish assemblages were Characiformes and Siluriformes, with a major contribution from families such as *Characidae*, *Cichlidae*, and *Loricariidae*, recognized as some of the most dominant families in Neotropical freshwater systems. Notably, we found four species as new records for the Araguaia basin, two of which constitute new records for the entire Tocantins–Araguaia system, expanding the known distribution of these species. We also observed a difference in the composition of fish communities among the lakes, suggesting a possible influence of local environmental conditions and connectivity on the distribution of these species. Overall, our results emphasize the ecological importance of lake environments as key reservoirs of fish species diversity in the Tocantins–Araguaia basin.

Palavras-chave: *Fish; Floodplain; Freshwater; Lake; Marginal Areas*