

# Crenicichla

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*Crenicichla*, the **pike cichlids**, is a genus of cichlids native to South America where they are found in most of tropical and subtropical areas between the Andes and the Atlantic.<sup>[1]</sup>

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## Description

The smallest species of *Crenicichla* (notably members of the *C. wallacei* species group) are no larger than 6–14 cm (2.4–5.5 in),<sup>[2]</sup> and technically qualify as "dwarf cichlids" for the aquarium hobby – though their aggressive and voracious habits should let prospective keepers beware. The biggest pike cichlids can grow to about 50 cm (20 in) long.<sup>[2]</sup> Most *Crenicichla* measure in the range of 15–30 cm (6–12 in). Like many other predatory fishes, a pike cichlid has a wide mouth and elongated body.

## Distribution and ecology

The genus *Crenicichla* is native to South America and lives in freshwater rivers, streams, pools, and lakes. The majority of the species are found in the Amazon Basin, but some species are found further north in The Guianas, Venezuela, Colombia, and as far south as central Argentina and in all river systems of Uruguay.

A majority of the species lives in warm waters, but several exceptions occur, notably those species living in subtropical parts of Argentina and Uruguay. Pike cichlids are predatory and feed on fish, insects, and other small animals. They usually place themselves where they can stay undetected by the prey, like close to a sunken tree stem or behind a rock. This behavior, as well as the correspondingly adapted shape, which resembles that the unrelated pikes (Esocidae) of the Holarctic, gives the pike cichlids their common name.

## Species

### Pike cichlids



*C. punctata* from the Pelotas River, Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)

### Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Superclass:	Osteichthyes
Class:	Actinopterygii
Subclass:	Neopterygii
Infraclass:	Teleostei
Superorder:	Acanthopterygii
Order:	Perciformes
Family:	Cichlidae
Subfamily:	Cichlinae
Genus:	<i><b>Crenicichla</b></i>
	Heckel, 1840

### Type species

*Crenicichla macrophthalmia*  
Heckel, 1840

### Synonyms

- *Batrachops* Heckel, 1840
- *Boggiania* Perugia, 1897

The 89 recognized species in this genus are:

- *Crenicichla acutirostris*  
Günther, 1862
- *Crenicichla adspersa* Heckel,  
1840
- *Crenicichla albopunctata*  
Pellegrin, 1904
- *Crenicichla alta* C. H. Eigenmann,  
1912 (Millet)
- *Crenicichla anthurus* Cope,  
1872
- *Crenicichla brasiliensis* Bloch,  
1792
- *Crenicichla britskii* S. O.  
Kullander, 1982
- *Crenicichla cametana*  
Steindachner, 1911
- *Crenicichla celidochilus*  
Casciotta, 1987
- *Crenicichla chicha* Varella, S. O.  
Kullander & F. C. T. Lima, 2012 <sup>[3]</sup>
- *Crenicichla cincta* Regan, 1905
- *Crenicichla compressiceps*  
Ploeg, 1986
- *Crenicichla coppenamensis*  
Ploeg, 1987
- *Crenicichla cyanonotus* Cope,  
1870
- *Crenicichla cyclostoma* Ploeg,  
1986
- *Crenicichla empheres* C. A. S.  
de Lucena, 2007
- *Crenicichla frenata* T. N. Gill,  
1858
- *Crenicichla gaucho* C. A. S. de  
Lucena & S. O. Kullander, 1992
- *Crenicichla geayi* Pellegrin, 1903  
(Halfbanded pike cichlid)
- *Crenicichla gillmorlisi* S. O.
- *Crenicichla marmorata*  
Pellegrin, 1904
- *Crenicichla menezesi* Ploeg,  
1991
- *Crenicichla minuano* C. A. S. de  
Lucena & S. O. Kullander, 1992
- *Crenicichla missioneira* C. A. S.  
de Lucena & S. O. Kullander, 1992
- *Crenicichla mucuryna* R. Ihering  
(pt), 1914
- *Crenicichla multispinosa*  
Pellegrin, 1903
- *Crenicichla nickeriensis* Ploeg,  
1987
- *Crenicichla niederleinii*  
Holmberg, 1891
- *Crenicichla notophthalmus*  
Regan, 1913
- *Crenicichla pellegrini* Ploeg,  
1991
- *Crenicichla percna* S. O.  
Kullander, 1991
- *Crenicichla phaiospilus* S. O.  
Kullander, 1991
- *Crenicichla prenda* C. A. S. de  
Lucena & S. O. Kullander, 1992
- *Crenicichla proteus* Cope, 1872
- *Crenicichla punctata* R. F.  
Hensel, 1870
- *Crenicichla pydanielae* Ploeg,  
1991
- *Crenicichla regani* Ploeg, 1989
- *Crenicichla reticulata* Heckel,  
1840
- *Crenicichla rosemariae* S. O.  
Kullander, 1997
- *Crenicichla santosi* Ploeg, 1991
- *Crenicichla saxatilis* Linnaeus,

- Kullander & C. A. S. de Lucena, 2013 [4]
- *Crenicichla hadrostigma* C. A. S. de Lucena, 2007
- *Crenicichla haroldoi* Luengo & Britski, 1974
- *Crenicichla heckeli* Ploeg, 1989
- *Crenicichla hemera* S. O. Kullander, 1990
- *Crenicichla hu* Piálleck, Řičan, Casciotta & Almirón, 2010
- *Crenicichla hummelincki* Ploeg, 1991
- *Crenicichla igara* C. A. S. de Lucena & S. O. Kullander, 1992
- *Crenicichla iguapina* S. O. Kullander & C. A. S. de Lucena, 2006
- *Crenicichla iguassuensis* Haseman, 1911
- *Crenicichla inpa* Ploeg, 1991
- *Crenicichla isbrueckeri* Ploeg, 1991
- *Crenicichla jaguarensis* Haseman, 1911
- *Crenicichla jegui* Ploeg, 1986
- *Crenicichla johanna* Heckel, 1840
- *Crenicichla jupiaensis* Britski & Luengo, 1968
- *Crenicichla jurubi* C. A. S. de Lucena & S. O. Kullander, 1992
- *Crenicichla labrina* Spix & Agassiz, 1831
- *Crenicichla lacustris* Castelnau, 1855
- *Crenicichla lenticulata* Heckel, 1840
- *Crenicichla lepidota* Heckel, 1840 (Pike cichlid)
- *Crenicichla lucenai* Mattos, I. 1758 (Ringtail pike cichlid)
- *Crenicichla scottii* C. H. Eigenmann, 1907
- *Crenicichla sedentaria* S. O. Kullander, 1986
- *Crenicichla semicincta* Steindachner, 1892
- *Crenicichla semifasciata* Heckel, 1840
- *Crenicichla sipaliwini* Ploeg, 1987
- *Crenicichla stocki* Ploeg, 1991
- *Crenicichla strigata* Günther, 1862
- *Crenicichla sveni* Ploeg, 1991
- *Crenicichla taikyra* Casciotta, Almirón, Aichino, Gómez, Casciotta, Almirón & Řičan, 2013 [6]
- *Crenicichla tendybaguassu* C. A. S. de Lucena & S. O. Kullander, 1992
- *Crenicichla ternetzi* Norman, 1926
- *Crenicichla tesay* Casciotta & Almirón, 2009
- *Crenicichla tigrina* Ploeg, Jégu & E. J. G. Ferreira, 1991
- *Crenicichla tingui* S. O. Kullander & C. A. S. de Lucena, 2006
- *Crenicichla urosema* S. O. Kullander, 1990
- *Crenicichla vaillanti* Pellegrin, 1903
- *Crenicichla virgatula* Ploeg, 1991
- *Crenicichla vittata* Heckel, 1840
- *Crenicichla wallacii* Regan, 1905
- *Crenicichla yaha* Casciotta, Almirón & Gómez, 2006
- *Crenicichla ypo* Casciotta,

- Schindler, Ottoni & Cheffe, 2014 <sup>[5]</sup>
- *Crenicichla lucius* Cope, 1870
- *Crenicichla lugubris* Heckel, 1840
- *Crenicichla macrophthalmma* Heckel, 1840
- *Crenicichla maculata* S. O. Kullander & C. A. S. de Lucena, 2006
- *Crenicichla mandelburgeri* S. O. Kullander, 2009
- Almirón, Casciotta, Almirón, Gómez & Řičan, 2010
- *Crenicichla zebrina* Montaña, López-Fernández & Taphorn, 2008

In addition to these, several undescribed species are known.<sup>[2]</sup>

## References

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- Casciotta, J., Almirón, A., Aichino, D., Gómez, S., Piálek, L. & Rícan, O. (2013): *Crenicichla taikyra* (Teleostei: Cichlidae), a new species of pike cichlid from the middle río Paraná, Argentina. *Zootaxa*, *3721* (4): 379–386.

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