

New Cichlids

Check out some new African and South American cichlids.

Text and Photos By Oliver Lucanus

Cichla piquiti is one of nine new Cichla species described by Dr. Sven Kullander in 2006.

Diplotaxodon limnothrissa

This unusual cichlid from Lake Malawi was imported for the first time to Denmark by Carstens Dyrehandel, a specialized cichlid store in Aalborg. The slender form and small mouth make this cichlid appear more like a Benthochromis or Cyprichromis from Lake Tanganyika. Even its behavior is similar to the pelagic (open water) cichlids from that lake. The adult size is around 7 inches (18 cm). Supposedly, this fish is the most common cichlid in the lake, yet strangely, it was described by Turner only in 1994. The species occurs in the open water in depth up to 200 meters. Diplotaxodon are mouthbrooders, producing small clutches of eggs (15 to 20). Like many Utaka cichlids, the males of courting Diplotaxodon are supposed to develop a brilliant yellow blaze on the forehead. Hopefully, this unusual Malawi cichlid will also be imported to the United States in the near future.

In the aquarium, Diplotaxodon behave more like the pelagic Tanganyikan species than any Malawi cichlids. They should be kept in groups of at least 12, with only few large rocks in the aquarium. They feed on small live foods of any kind but will also readily accept flakes and other foods.

Cichla species

The number of species of peacock bass keeps growing as more species are identified. In 2006, Dr. Sven Kullander described nine new Cichla species to add to the six previously described ones. The blue peacock bass (*C. piquiti*) is one of the nicest species in this group of giant cichlids that are becoming increasingly popular with large cichlid hobbyists. Further research will likely mean more species will be described in the coming years. For now, the peacock bass family looks as follows. To read about other new species, [click here](#).

The nine new species of Cichla (peacock bass) are: *C. jariina* from Rio Jari, Para State; *C. kelberi* from Rio Tocantins and introduced to Bahia; *C. melaniae* from the lower Rio Xingu; *C. mirianae* from upper Rio Xingu and Tapajos in Mato Grosso; *C. pinima* from Rio Curua Una, Xingu and Tapajos; *C. piquiti* from Rio Araguaia and upper Rio Tocantins; *C. pleiozona* from Rio Guapore and parts of Mato Grosso; *C. thyrurus* from upper Rio Trombetas and *C. vazzoleri* from the lower Rio Trombetas.

The six previously described species of Cichla are: *C. intermedia* from the Rio Orinoco basin; *C. monoculus* from all along the Amazon mainstream; *C. nigromaculata* from Rio Orinoco, Cassiquare and Rio Negro; *C. ocellaris* only from the Guyanas; *C. orinocensis* from the Rio Orinoco basin and Rio Negro and *C. temensis* from Rio Orinoco and Rio Negro.

All peacock bass are huge cichlids that will grow more than 2 feet in length. For long-term care, they require aquariums of 300 gallons or more (for a group of six to eight fish). Most species will feed on anything that moves, but they prefer live fish or fresh shrimp as their diet.