

Family Cichlidae (cichlids)

No cichlids are native to Florida; however, several introduced species are established and reproducing (see <http://nas.er.usgs.gov> for more information). Most of these species are popular aquarium fishes; however, some of them are also prized gamefishes. Cichlid fishes occur primarily in inland (freshwater) habitats, but many species can also tolerate salinity and may occasionally be found in estuarine habitats. Cichlids are superficially similar to native sunfishes (family Centrarchidae) but can be distinguished by a two-part lateral line and one nostril on each side of the head. Centrarchids have a single, continuous lateral line and two nostrils on each side of the head. From Page and Burr (1991) and Nelson (2006).