

Blue Acara Cichlid

Aequidens pulcher



Natural Range

Central and South America

Maximum Size and Longevity

Maximum size 12- 15cm, with a life span of 8-10 years

Water Quality

- Temperature: 24 °C - 28 °C.
- pH: 6.5—7.8
- General Hardness: 100—250 ppm.

Feeding

In the wild the Blue Acara is primarily carnivorous, eating small fish, crustaceans and insects. In the aquarium however it will eagerly take pellets and most commercially available fish foods. We recommend high protein based foods, that contain a larger amount of fish meal. This fish will also benefit from frozen foods, we use and suggest Aquarium Industries Naturals Range Frozen Bloodworm and Brine Shrimp.



Compatibility

Blue Acaras have a relatively peaceful temperament, at least when not protecting young. They have the potential to bully smaller fish and are therefore normally housed with fish of their own size or larger. *A. pulcher* is best kept with other reasonably peaceful American cichlids such as: Festivums (*Mesonauta festivus*), Convicts (*Amatitlania nigrofasciata*), Firemouths (*Thorichthys meeki*), Severums (*Heros severus*) and Geophagus sp.

Colour and Varieties

A. pulcher exhibits slight geographical differences in colour. The colouration varies regionally between the various populations, from a pale off-white blue to a bluish-green and even a dark/deep blue. Some reports have sighted variants with red or even orange dorsal fins.

Sexing

Mature males will be larger and develop slightly pointed dorsal and anal fins, where as females will be smaller and generally have a more rounded appearance than males.

General Information

A. pulcher is one of the easiest substrate spawning cichlids to breed. To obtain a pair, simply buy 5-6 juveniles and allow them to grow up. Once a pair forms naturally it is wise to remove the others, unless you have a large aquarium. If you provide lots of potential spawning sites like flat rocks, stones and broad leaved plants, spawning will occur with relative ease. The Blue Acara, *A. pulcher*, is often confused with another South American cichlid from the same genus, the Green Terror, *Aequidens rivulatus*. The latter species is a lot more aggressive than the Blue Acara, so it's best to research before you buy.

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