Pterophyllum is a small [genus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genus) of [freshwater](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fresh_water) fish from the [family](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Family_(biology)) [Cichlidae](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cichlidae) known to most aquarists as angelfish. All Pterophyllum species originate from the [Amazon Basin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon_Basin), [Orinoco Basin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orinoco_Basin) and various rivers in the [Guiana Shield](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guiana_Shield) in tropical South America. The three species of Pterophyllum are unusually shaped for [cichlids](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cichlid) being greatly laterally compressed, with round bodies and elongated triangular dorsal and anal fins. This body shape allows them to hide among roots and plants, often on a vertical surface. Naturally occurring angelfish are frequently striped transversely, coloration which provides additional [camouflage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camouflage). Angelfish are ambush [predators](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predation) and prey on small fish and [macroinvertebrates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invertebrate). All Pterophyllum species form [monogamous](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monogamy) pairs. [Eggs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egg_(biology)) are generally laid on a submerged log or a flattened leaf. As is the case for other cichlids, brood care is highly developed.

Pterophyllum should not be confused with [marine angelfish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomacanthidae), [perciform fish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perciform) found on shallow ocean [reefs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reef).