非洲肺鱼

现生肺鱼中的耐旱代表

现生肺鱼共有三属六种。其中非洲肺鱼属现存4个物种，广泛分布于热带非洲的淡水生境，包括沼泽、湿地、水流缓慢的河流以及季节性泛滥平原。它们身形细长如鳗鱼，体表具有圆鳞，眼睛较小，长有可以碾碎硬质食物的坚硬齿板。其胸鳍和腹鳍呈细长的鞭状或丝状结构，具有发达肌肉，可以在水底支撑身体，表现出类似“行走”的运动方式。非洲肺鱼拥有高度发达的肺部，是主要依靠空气呼吸的肉食性鱼类。旱季时，它们可钻入泥中分泌黏液形成“硬茧”，通过降低代谢进入休眠状态，在长期缺水环境中存活。

African lungfish

A Group of Drought-Adapted Living Lungfish

There are six extant species of lungfish belonging to three genera. The genus *Protopterus* (African lungfishes) includes four living species, widely distributed in freshwater habitats across tropical Africa, including swamps, wetlands, slow-flowing rivers, and seasonally flooded plains. With an elongated, eel-like body, African lungfishes possess small round scales and small eyes and strong tooth plates adapted for crushing hard food items. Their pectoral and pelvic fins are elongated and filamentous, supported by well-developed muscles, allowing them to prop up their bodies underwater and perform a form of “walking-like” locomotion underwater or on muddy surfaces. African lungfishes possess highly developed lungs and are carnivorous fishes that rely primarily on air breathing. During the dry season, they can burrow into mud and secrete mucus to form a protective “cocoon,” entering a state of dormancy with reduced metabolism and surviving prolonged periods of drought.