

# Chicxulub

## The End of Dinosaurs

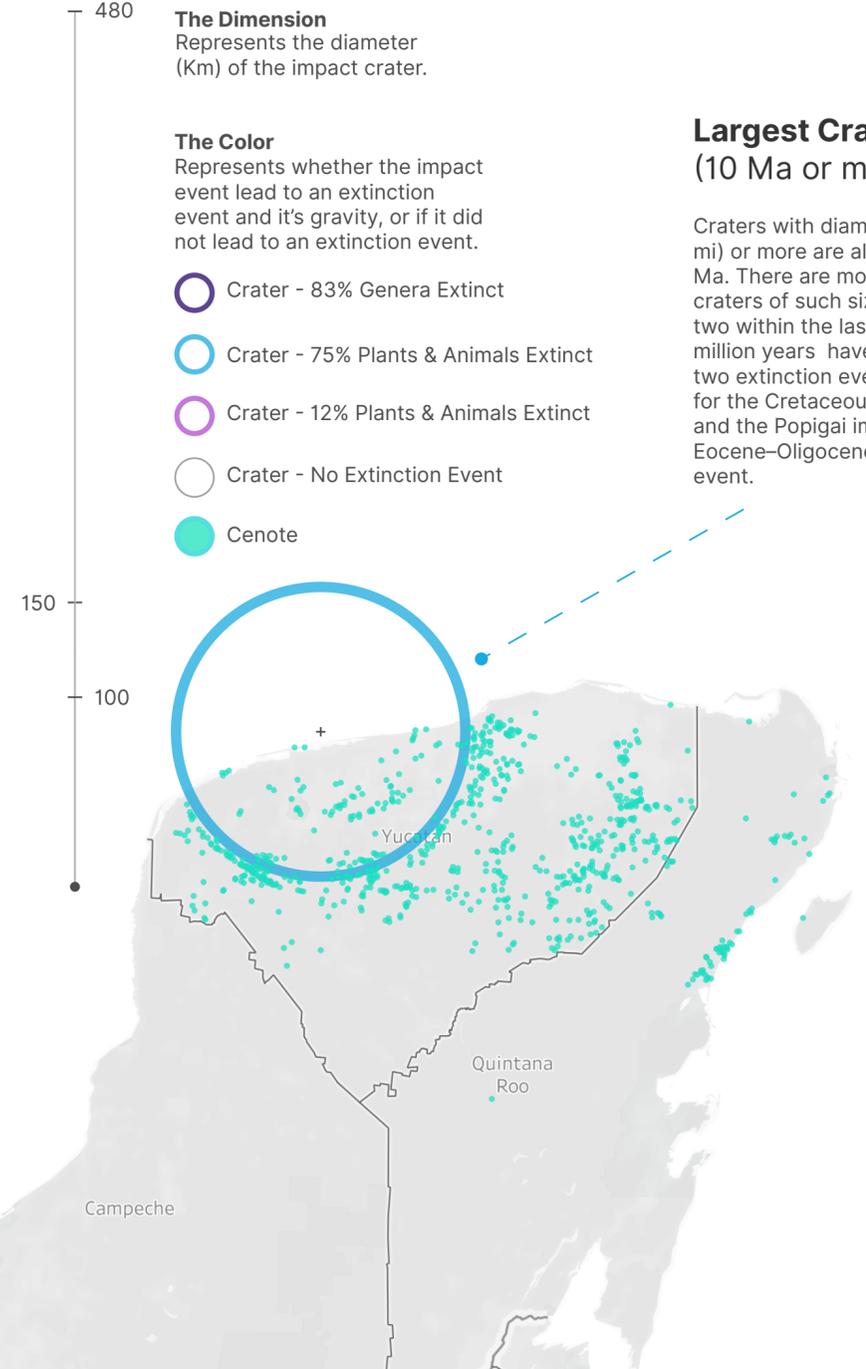
The Chicxulub crater is an impact crater buried underneath the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico. Its center is located near the town of Chicxulub, after which the crater is named. It was formed when a large asteroid or comet about 11 to 81 kilometers (6.8 to 50.3 miles) in diameter, known as the Chicxulub impactor, struck the Earth. The date of the impact coincides precisely with the Cretaceous–Paleogene boundary (commonly known as the "K–Pg boundary"), slightly less than 66 million years ago, and a widely accepted theory is that worldwide climate disruption from the event was the cause of the Cretaceous–Paleogene extinction event, a mass extinction in which 75% of plant and animal species on Earth became extinct, including **all non-avian dinosaurs**.

### Chicxulub Crater & Centoes

#### Cretaceous–Paleogene (K-Pg) Extinction Event

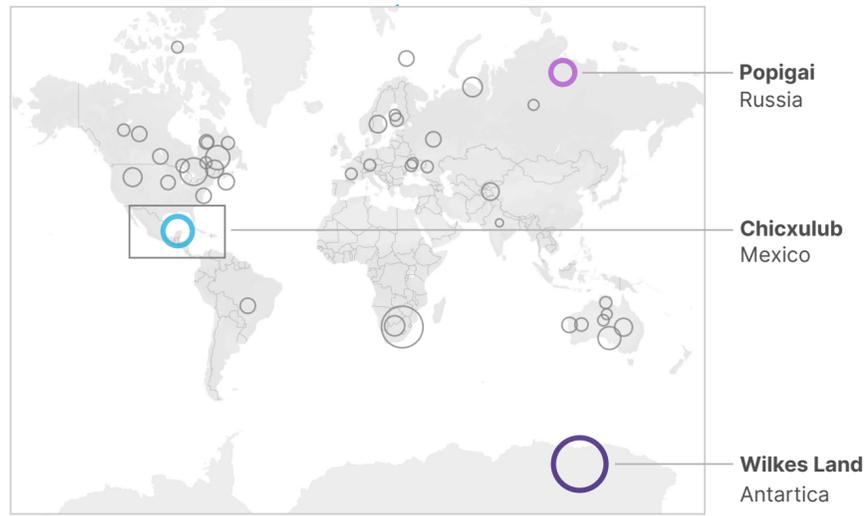
A cenote is a natural pit, or sinkhole, resulting from the collapse of limestone bedrock that exposes groundwater underneath. Especially associated with the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico, cenotes were sometimes used by the ancient Maya for sacrificial offerings.

Although cenotes are found widely throughout much of the Yucatán Peninsula, a higher-density circular alignment of cenotes overlies the measured rim of the Chicxulub crater. This crater structure, identified from the alignment of cenotes, but also subsequently mapped using geophysical methods (including gravity mapping) and also drilled into with core recovery, has been dated to the boundary between the Cretaceous and Paleogene geologic periods, 66 million years ago.



**Largest Craters (10 Ma or more)**

Craters with diameter 20 km (12 mi) or more are all older than 10 Ma. There are more than forty craters of such size. The largest two within the last hundred million years have been linked to two extinction events: Chicxulub for the Cretaceous–Paleogene and the Popigai impact for the Eocene–Oligocene extinction event.



**Popigai Crater**  
Eocene-Oligocene (E-Og) Extinction Event

The Popigai crater is the latest impact event that caused an extinction event. All other extinction events were a mixture of different factors like ocean acidification or volcanic activity.

**Wilkes Land Crater**  
Permian-Triassic (P-Tr) Extinction Event

It is the Earth's most severe known extinction event, with up to 96% of all marine species and 70% of terrestrial vertebrate species becoming extinct. It was the largest known mass extinction of insects. Some 57% of all biological families and 83% of all genera became extinct.