

## African Rift Lake Cichlids



African Rift Lake Cichlids come in a wide range of colours and varieties.

Left: Assorted Cichlids from Lake Malawi

Top Right: This Red Rubin Peacock Cichlid also originates in Lake Malawi

Both the Cyprichromis Leptosoma Utinta Blue Flash (mid right) and Juvenile Tropheus Duboisi Maswa (bottom right) are from Lake Tanganyika.



### Natural Range

There are 2 main lakes in Africa that house these Cichlids - Lake Malawi and Lake Tanganyika. These two lakes contain over 1,500 known varieties of fish, with more yet to be named, and new discoveries still being made. It is quite remarkable that most cichlids of the "Great Lakes of Africa" are endemic to their own lake, (i.e. found nowhere else in the world).

### Water Quality

African cichlids like their water to be clear and clean, so having a good filtration system is a must.

The general water conditions are as follows:

**pH:** 7.6 – 8.0

**GH:** 300 – 400ppm

**Temp:** 25° - 27° (for breeding, a little higher 28°)

### Feeding

When feeding African cichlids you must be aware that not all of them will like the same diet. For example, Tropheus cichlids and Goby cichlids are mostly vegetarian, and will relish food like spirulina flake, tablets and pellet's or even dried Nori paper (sushi wraps).

Most other cichlids will eat frozen brine shrimp and frozen mysis shrimp. The AI Naturals Range of Frozen Foods contains both of these shrimp, as well as a Malawi Cichlid mix that has been specifically created to suit African cichlids.

African cichlids are known to get a disease called 'Malawi Bloat'. This can be avoided by feeding the correct foods to the correct fish and making sure the food you feed is fresh and not off or out of date.

### Colour and Varieties

There are many different types of cichlids in the African lakes. As mentioned earlier there are over 1500 species of fish.

Some of the more popular among aquarium owners are: Peacock Cichlids, Electric Yellow, Tropheus Cichlids, Princess Cichlids, Zebra Cichlids.

For specific Care Sheets on these, and other Cichlids, visit our website [aquariumindustries.com.au](http://aquariumindustries.com.au).

### Breeding

African cichlids are divided into two different breeding categories, mouth brooders and substrate spawners.

Mouth brooding females will hold the eggs and young in their mouth until they are ready to be released. Goby cichlids are the exception to this rule - they share parenting and the male will help rear the eggs/young.

Substrate spawners will lay eggs on rocks, in caves or a depression in the sand, or in side the curl of a shell (these are known as shell dwellers) and both parents will protect the eggs and young.

Adult African cichlids will be very protective of their babies and fight to keep them safe.

### General Information

Like other aquarium fish, African (Rift Lake) cichlids are dependant for their wellbeing on their environment (the water). Providing good water quality, nutrition, and compatibility are maintained, these beautiful aquarium fish will give the aquarist an enormous amount of trouble free enjoyment.