

African Cichlid

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Because there are so many varieties to choose from, [African Cichlids](#) are certainly one of the most popular of all aquarium fish. Add to this their interesting behaviors, extroverted personalities, and the fact that they are the most colorful of all freshwater fish, and their popularity is no surprise.

Africans are not without their challenges to the aquarist, however. They can be aggressive (especially during breeding and spawning), predatory, and destructive. Providing the fish adequate hiding places with extensive rockwork can tone down this behavior.

Of all their behaviors, parenting is what cichlids are best known for. Members of this species are egg layers. Most deposit their eggs carefully on a hard surface rather than scattered and abandoned. The eggs are then guarded until hatching. The fry are cared for until they can fend for themselves. Most are mouth brooding species, the females carry the eggs and fry in their mouths to protect them.

With the array of species and the diversity of behaviors, Africans are sure to retain their popularity as an entertaining freshwater aquarium fish. Some common African Cichlids include [Red Zebra](#), [Cobalt Blue](#), [Electric Yellow Lab](#), [Electric Blue](#), Albino Compressiceps, and [Frontosa](#).

Interesting Facts:

Origin:	Africa's Lake Malawi, Lake Victoria, and Lake Tanganyika.
Size:	From 4 to 15 inches
Diet:	Omnivorous.
Tank Setup:	Freshwater. A large amount of rocks with caves.
Tank Conditions:	72-82°F; pH 7.8-8.5; dH 10-18
Min. Tank Capacity:	50 gallons
Light:	Low Light.
Temperament:	Aggressive.
Swimming Level:	Middle and bottom of aquarium.
Care Level:	Easy

Reproduction:

Most are mouth-brooders; some are substrate spawners.