

FEDERATION OF BRITISH AQUATIC SOCIETIES

FISH CARE SHEET No: 15

Rift Valley Cichlids

01/02/2001

Species : Too numerous to list. Approximately, 60 genera containing 650 species.
See those fishes listed in the current Federation Size Book under Class Dc

Family : Cichlidae.

Geographic Origin : Lakes Malawi, Tanganyika & Victoria.

Common Names : Mbuna (Malawi) Rift Lake Cichlids.

Compatibility : Should not generally be kept with small fish e.g. Tetras. In some cases, they cannot be kept with one another. If considering purchasing these cichlids, we recommend that you consult specialist books on the subject.

Minimum Aquarium Size : The small Tanganyika cichlids e.g. *Julidochromis* and *Neolamprologus* species, can be kept in 600mm x 380mm x 300mm (24" x 15" x 12") aquaria as a single species. If considering setting up a 'community' tank of Malawi or Tanganyika cichlids, then considerably larger tanks are required.

Temperature : 23°/27°C 73°/81°F, is considered to be ideal, some fluctuation is normal in nature.

Habitat : Gravel substrate with plenty of rockwork. These fish need numerous places to hide and to establish their own territory.

Water Parameters : Prefer a hard water environment in most cases. Excessive water changes should be avoided.

Health : Generally do not have too many health problems. Damage to fish due to territorial disputes may have to be treated.

Diet : Most cichlids will accept the whole range of foods. Some are algae grazers so will probably require algae tablets as part of their diet. Do not over feed – problems of pollution can occur when food enters cracks in rockwork and is uneaten.

Plants: Plants that are firmly attached to rockwork will survive. (e.g. *Anubias nana*) Only plants that are large and firmly rooted will not be vulnerable to the digging actions of the tank inhabitants.

Breeding Notes : Spawning methods include egg-depositing (often in caves or empty shells) and mouthbrooding. Some species raise successive broods without problems.

Availability: Very wide range of specimens available. Research into the species desired and their compatibility with other fish is highly recommended.

Show Class. FBAS show Class Dc.