

# Tropheus



<b>Natural Range:</b>	<b>Endemic to Lake Tanganyika in Africa.</b>
<b>Maximum Size:</b>	<b>10 - 12cms</b>
<b>Temperature Range (°C):</b>	<b>24°C - 26°C</b>
<b>pH:</b>	<b>pH 8 - 8.8</b>
<b>General hardness (ppm CaCo3):</b>	<b>GH: 200 - 300ppm</b>
<b>Carbonate hardness (ppm CaCo3):</b>	<b>KH: 180 - 240ppm</b>
<b>Diet:</b>	<b>Frozen vegetable food, frozen mysis or brineshrimp, spirulina flakes and lettuce. These fish are algae grazers in the wild and will eat algae off rocks and glass.</b>
<b>Compatibility:</b>	<b>Other Africans, such as; Peacocks, Electric Yellows, Gobies.</b>

## Colour and varieties:

There are many colour variations, ranging through the different tropheus species categories; T. sp "moorii" T. sp. "black", T. sp "red", T. sp. Duboisi, T.sp. ikola, T. sp. "mpimbwe, T.brichardi. Many *Tropheus* have the ability to colour morph, for example some of the black species can be totally black and then the side of the body will quickly change to a bright red band depending on the fish's mood. *Tropheus moorii* comes in a dazzling array of colours and colour patterns. There are well over 40 different geographical variants of *T. moorii*, each with its own distinctive morphology or colour.

## General Information:

Lake Tanganyika is the largest of the African rift lakes in terms of water volume and is the home of all the *Tropheus* species. The lake has unique water parameters with a high pH and hardness and has a unique salt composition. The majority of all fish which live in Tanganyika are endemic to the great lake and not found elsewhere.

*Tropheus* live in rocky outcrops in shallow water feeding on algae, rich with tiny crustaceans. *Tropheus*' are aggressive and their territorial nature makes them one of the more difficult species to keep in aquaria. Try keeping *Tropheus* in a group of 10 or more fish in a 200+ litre aquarium, to try and distribute the aggression evenly. *Tropheus* can be kept with some other African species (peacocks, electric yellows, gobies, etc) and will generally keep most aggression directed at other *Tropheus*. Fine sand or aquarium gravel can be used as a substrate and being predominantly vegetarian means any plants added will be eaten. Lots of rock formations should be used to create hiding places and preferably keep more females than males. Water changes should be regular (preferably 1/3 per week, depending on stocking density) and good filtration maintained.

## Sexing and Breeding:

Sexing *Tropheus* is difficult, when they reach adult size sexing can be achieved through venting. This is done by turning the fish upside down in a net and viewing the vent area, to identify a female the vent will be more pronounced and swollen compared to that of a male. The fish needs to be close to 8cm or larger for accurate sexing. *Tropheus* are mouth brooders and incubate their large eggs in their mouth. They can have anywhere up to 8-10 fry and it is best to remove the female to a nursery tank after eggs are fertilized for a higher survival rate of young.

## Handy hints for successful keeping:

Keep as many as possible, the more *Tropheus* in an aquarium the more the aggression will be spread out.