



## The Living Jewels of Lake Malawi

The fish in our aquarium come from Lake Malawi in Africa and are called cichlids.

Malawi may hold 500 to 1,000 cichlid species and has more fish species than any other lake in the world.

Almost all of Lake Malawi's species are endemic, they are found there and nowhere else.

All Lake Malawi cichlids but one are mouthbrooders. Releasing her eggs one at a time, the female takes the egg into her mouth, then nuzzles the male's genital region, causing him to release sperm into the water, which the female inhales, thereby fertilizing the egg.

The female carries the eggs in her mouth, protecting them until they are ready to survive alone.



Young fish are constantly threatened by other cichlids. At the first sign of danger the mother chases away the intruder. She then signals her young to reenter her mouth, where they are out of harm's way.