

Tom's Tanganyikans

BREEDER'S: News & Tips

The Misunderstanding of Petrochromis!

Any article that I have read about Petrochromis Moshi, Kazumbe, Texas, etc. describe the fish as extremely aggressive. Anyone who reads that will be influenced to stay away from keeping these beautiful species. Generally speaking they are on the aggressive side. But there are things you can do to promote harmony among the group. Like every species they need special conditions and tank set-ups.

I too stayed away for a long time due to the high aggression rate and high costs to purchase a colony.

Recently I got involved with Petrochromis Kazumbe and Moshi and Red Eye lakola and believe I have found a way to successfully keep and breed them. The groups are Kazumbe - 3 males and 12 females, Moshi - 3 males, 4 females, Red Eye lakola - one pair.

In the beginning the aggression was high and fierce. I estimated that there were enough hiding spots, but it was not enough for their liking. PVC pipes and bioballs came to the rescue! For the kazumbe, one end of a 125 gal. tank was filled with pieces of cut pipes and bio balls threaded on fishing line and combined together in a maze like fashion. In place of bio balls, an entanglement of plastic plants would also suffice. The other end was just one cave for the dominant male. An open space was left in the middle for a feeding ground. For the Moshi in a 100 gal. tank, I used only pvc pipes and other caves made from rocks and broken clay. All the fish are wild and not fully grown, sizes from 4 to 7".

After 3 months together the most of them have bred including the smallest females. Some have held to the end of term. We currently have fry from both groups. The Red Eye lakola, to my surprise are also getting along with each other and other tank mates.

My conclusion is that if you are able to have even the wild fish get along in large tanks by using a lot of hiding spots, then keeping tank raised fish in this manner should prove to be even easier. For the novice these fish might still prove to be difficult, but the experienced hobbyist could benefit from these set-up tips and keep a group successfully.

