

D-19 Comparison of the breeding patterns of three cichlid species colonizing the Victoria reservoir

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As in shallow lowland reservoirs, cichlids form the mainstay of the fishery at the Victoria reservoir. This investigation was focused on the comparison of

breeding patterns of three exotic cichlid species, *Oreochromis mossambicus*, *O. niloticus* and *Tilapia rendalli* inhabiting the Victoria reservoir.

Using standard techniques, the fecundity, mean monthly gonadosomatic index, mean size at maturity and the sex ratio were estimated in the laboratory.

The mouth brooding habit, the formation of spawning aggregates, and a higher female to male sex ratio are striking features in the breeding patterns of *O. mossambicus* and *O. niloticus* in contrast to *T. rendalli*. However, certain features such as high fecundity (1020 -7,495 eggs per female), high mean monthly G.S.I. of females (1.6-2.0) during periods of inundation of the littoral zone which indicate synchronization of breeding with favourable environmental conditions, multiple spawning and early maturation of both sexes (21.3 cm for males and 17.9 cm for females) ensure the survival of *T. rendalli* in this reservoir.

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