

## Dramatic Discus

Discus are 3 species in the larger group called Cichlids (pronounced sick-lid). Discus are from the Amazon River in South America.



They get their name from their shape - very thin and round. Most discus are covered in stripes of blue, green or red in order to blend in with the grasses on the river bed and to communicate with other discus.



Discus are unique because of the way they take care of their babies. Like a lot of cichlids, the discus carefully take care of their eggs and larvae. The small fry (the name for baby fish) hang out with mom or dad when they are tiny. And the parents actually have a special slime that the fry will eat for the first week.

### Create a discus disk!

What you will need:  
paper plates  
staples  
stuffing  
markers  
scissors

### Try This!

1. Staple your paper plates together (insides touching) about 3/4 of the way around.
2. Fill with stuffing or crumpled plastic bags.
3. Staple remainder shut.
4. Color a discus on both sides of your plates
5. You now have a discus disk!

Discus like to live in lakes, rivers, streams and shallow puddles. During the day they will hang out in the shadows enhancing their camouflage. Discus like to live in small groups, they are happier and feel safer this way. They are at their happiest when they get to hang out with their friends...just like you!

A full grown discus can get up to 10 inches across, and will eat small shrimp, fish and worms. Sometimes the food they eat will actually make them more colorful! Their stripes and spots are not just for decoration. They actually use them to communicate with each other.

How cool is a fish that can talk with its stripes?!

### Discus Disco

Discus make great fish for your aquarium. They like to be in groups and with many colors and styles out there to choose from you can find just the right discus for you!



They also get along with some other community fish. Since they like special water, these cool critters will dance their way all around your tank.

