Comprehensive 200-Gallon Reef Tank Stocking & Implementation Plan

Tank Goals:

- Mixed Reef Tank with Corals & Fish
- Focus on Peaceful, Reef-Safe Fish
- Colorful, Flowing Corals with Some SPS

Month-by-Month Stocking & Implementation Plan

Months 0-1: Cycle Tank

- Live/Dry Rock, Sand, Bacteria
- Add Copepods toward the end of the cycle to seed the tank and establish a population before fish are added
- Monitor ammonia, nitrite, nitrate.
- No livestock yet.

Months 1-2: Cleanup Crew (CUC)

Add: - 15x Trochus Snails - 10x Nassarius Snails - 10x Cerith Snails - 8x Astrea Snails - 10x Blue-Leg Hermit Crabs - 5x Scarlet Hermit Crabs

Notes: - Gradually add CUC after cycle completes. - No shrimp yet; allow tank to stabilize further. - Start light schedule to encourage algae growth for grazers.

Months 2-3: First Fish

Add: - Clownfish Pair (Ocellaris or Percula) - Royal Gramma - Blenny (Tailspot or Lawnmower)

Notes: - Hardy starter fish. - Blenny helps with algae control.

Months 4-5: Schooling Fish + Beginner Soft Corals

Add Fish: - 5-7x Blue-Green Chromis - 3x Banggai or Pajama Cardinals

Add Corals: - Zoanthids - Green Star Polyps (GSP) - Xenia (optional) - Mushrooms (optional)

Notes: - Start with soft corals in isolated areas to prevent overgrowth. - Gradual fish additions.

Months 5-6: Beginner LPS Corals

Add Corals: - Duncan Coral - Candy Cane Coral - Torch Coral (start small, spaced out) - Hammer Coral (optional)

Notes: - Moderate flow/light corals. - Monitor for aggression and ensure space between LPS.

Month 6: Wrasses & Filefish

Add Fish: - McCosker's Flasher Wrasse - Fairy Wrasse - Firefish Goby - Aiptasia-Eating Filefish

Notes: - Wrasses need a secure lid. - Add Filefish after wrasses settle to prevent competition.

Month 7: Tangs & Rabbitfish

Add Fish: - Kole Tang - Tomini Tang - Yellow Tang - One Spot Foxface Rabbitfish

Notes: - Add tangs and Rabbitfish together to minimize aggression. - Excellent algae control team.

Months 7-8: Anemone

Add Corals: - Bubble Tip Anemone

Notes: - Ensure tank stability. - Monitor anemone movement carefully; protect powerheads.

Months 8+: Shrimp + Goby Pair

Add Fish: - Shrimp + Goby Pair (Yasha Goby + Pistol Shrimp)

Notes: - Add after tank stability improves. - Provide sand bed for burrowing.

Months 9-10: Beginner SPS Corals

Add Corals: - Montipora (Capricornis or Digitata) - Birdsnest Coral (optional)

Notes: - SPS corals need stable alkalinity, calcium, and nutrient levels. - Place high in tank with high light and flow.

Months 9-12+: Optional Fish

Add Fish: - Mandarin Dragonet (optional; only in mature tanks with ample copepods or target feeding)

Month 12+: Advanced SPS (Optional)

Add Corals: - Higher-demand SPS or Acropora if desired

Notes: - Only after proven long-term stability.

Feeding Plan for Specialized Fish:

Fish	Preferred Foods
Blenny (Tailspot/Lawnmower)	Algae, spirulina, mysis, Nori
One Spot Foxface Rabbitfish	Nori (daily), macroalgae, mysis, pellets
Aiptasia-Eating Filefish	Aiptasia (initially), mysis, clam, small meaty foods
Wrasses	Frozen mysis, brine, pellets (small frequent feedings)
Tangs	Nori (daily), algae-based pellets, frozen herbivore blends
Mandarin Dragonet (optional)	Live copepods, enriched frozen foods (target feed if necessary)

Water Parameter Targets (For Corals & Fish Stability):

Parameter	Target Range
Nitrate	2-10 ppm
Phosphate	0.03-0.1 ppm
Alkalinity	8-9 dKH
Calcium	400-450 ppm
Magnesium	1300-1400 ppm
Salinity	1.025
Temperature	77-79°F

Key Coral Placement Guidelines:

- **GSP, Xenia:** Isolated low-flow rocks or islands (prevent takeover).
- **Zoanthids, Mushrooms:** Lower rockwork or sand edges.
- **Torches, Hammers:** Mid-level, moderate flow; space well apart.
- **Duncans, Candy Canes:** Lower to mid-level, medium light.
- **Anemone:** High-light, secure area with minimal nearby corals.
- **Montis, Birdsnest:** Upper rockwork; high light and flow.

Notes:

- Quarantine fish whenever possible.
- Feed a varied diet to minimize aggression and coral nipping.
- Monitor nutrient levels regularly, especially after adding SPS.
- Trim back fast-growing softies to maintain balance.
- Add new corals gradually to prevent rapid chemistry swings.

This plan provides a carefully staged approach to stocking your 200-gallon reef tank, balancing beauty, functionality, and long-term health for both corals and fish.