Glossary

ahermatype – soft corals and a few hard corals that do not build reefs.
algae – simple, chiefly aquatic plants, such as seaweed and kelp.
anemone – a marine invertebrate related to corals and jellyfish.
anthropogenic – human-caused changes.
atoll – a ring-shaped series of small coral islands that enclose a central lagoon.
barrier reef – a long narrow ridge of coral parallel to the coastline but separated from it by a lagoon.
 budding – a form of asexual reproduction where a new cell is formed from the parent cell.
calculator carbonate – a white chemical compound which occurs naturally as chalk and limestone. This is the material which forms coral skeletons.
camouflage – the act or means of disguising something to deceive a predator.
carnivore – an animal that eats other animals.
cnidarian – members of the phyla Cnidaria which are characterized by a body that only opens at one end, such as corals, jellyfish, and anemones.
colony – a connected, interrelated group of hard coral polyps.
conservation – preservation from loss.
coral – colonial marine animals characterized by limestone skeletons, often forming reefs or islands.
coralline algae – type of red seaweed that encrusts itself with lime which helps to cement the dead coral rock together.
coral bleaching – loss of color by corals which occurs when the corals are stressed and expel their endosymbionts.
coral reef – a stony marine structure formed from joined skeletons of corals cemented together by algae and other organisms.
crepuscular – term used to describe animals that become active at dawn and/or dusk.
crustacean – usually a marine animal that has a hard shell.
development – the process of breaking down into smaller elements; decaying.
diurnal – term used to describe animals that become active during the day.
decomposition – all of the plants and animals in a community along with the non-living environment.
edible species – a species in danger of extinction.
edosymbionts – refer to zooxanthellae.
environment – everything surrounding an organism.
equator – an imaginary line circumscribing the Earth’s surface, dividing the Earth into Northern and Southern hemispheres.
extinct – no longer in existence.
fringing reef – a coral reef that forms adjacent to the shoreline that does not have a lagoon.
food chain – a linear pattern of nutrient and energy transfer among organisms in an ecosystem.
Great Barrier Reef – the largest living organism in the world, stretching over 1,240 miles off the eastern coast of Australia and visible from outer space.
hard corals – reef-building corals that secrete external limestone skeletons and typically have tentacles in multiples of six.
herbivore – an animal that eats plants.
hermaphrodite – containing both male and female sex cells.
hermatype – hard corals that build reefs.
vertebrate – animal without a backbone.
lagoon – a body of shallow water separated from the open sea by a barrier, such as a reef.
mangroves – tropical trees that grow in the transitional zone between land and sea; some mangroves have roots that grow above the ground.
mariculture – the farming of marine plants and animals.
mesenterial filaments – long tubular structures which the coral polyp extends to defend itself from attack.
nematocyst – stinging organ found in corals, jelly-
fish, anemones, and other related organisms, which, when stimulated, ejects a harpoon-like structure that chemically paralyzes the victim.

**nocturnal** – term used to describe animals that become active during the night.

**nudibranch** – a marine organism also called a sea slug or marine snail.

**octocorals** – coral polyps that typically have eight tentacles and secrete flexible skeletons; also called soft corals.

**omnivore** – an animal that eats both plants and animals.

**patch reef** – an island of coral usually found growing on the floor of a lagoon.

**photosynthesis** – process by which the zooxanthellae use sunlight to convert the carbon dioxide and water in the polyp tissue into oxygen and carbohydrates.

**phytoplankton** – tiny floating or drifting aquatic plants.

**plankton** – tiny floating or drifting aquatic plants or animals.

**planula** – free-swimming coral larva.

**pollution** – that which makes something foul or unclean.

**polyp** – the tiny cylindrical body of a coral animal which has a mouth opening surrounded by tentacles.

**population** – all the members of a species that live in the same area and make up a breeding group.

**predation** – a relation between animals in which one captures and feeds on others.

**primary consumer** – organisms that get their nutrients from primary producers; typically herbivores that get their nutrients by eating plants.

**primary producer** – organisms capable of producing their own food, typically through photosynthesis, using light as an energy source.

**propagules** – specialized seed pods that grow on the end of mangrove roots which drop down from the canopy of the tree.

**protection** – the act of defending or guarding from attack.

**reef crest** – the highest and shallowest part of the reef.

**reef face** – the seaward facing slope of the reef.

**seagrass** – simple aquatic plants that grow on the sandy floor of the lagoon.

**secondary consumer** – organisms that typically obtain their nutrients by eating primary consumers; typically carnivores that get their nutrients by eating herbivores.

**sediment** – fine particles of solid matter suspended in water or settling to the bottom of it.

**soft coral** – coral polyps that secrete flexible skeletons; also called octocorals.

**spawning** – a form of sexual reproduction where eggs and sperm are released, usually in water.

**species** – a group of organisms that look alike and are capable of producing fertile offspring.

**sustainable** – use that minimizes negative impacts on the ecosystem or environment while maintaining its contribution to society.

**symbiotic** – mutually beneficial relationship between two different species.

**synergistic** – working together.

**tentacles** – flexible, unsegmented feelers used for feeding, touching, and smelling.

**tetraodontoxin** – a powerful poison in some fish which can cause serious illness and even death if ingested.

**tropics** – region of the Earth’s surface lying between the tropic of Cancer and the tropic of Capricorn (23 degrees, 27 minutes north and south of the equator).

**vertebrate** – an animal with a backbone.

**zooxanthellae** – one-celled algae that live inside the tissue of various animals, such as hard coral polyps, and produce photosynthetic products that the host can use.

**zooplankton** – tiny floating or drifting aquatic animals.
Bibliography


*Coral and Coral Reefs*. Sea World Education Department, 1992.

*Coral Reefs*. Greenpeace Fact Sheet.


References for Students

BOOKS

The publications listed below provide excellent resource material on coral reef ecosystems. See the following section for educational materials that are available through the REEF RELIEF mail order service.


Tate, Suzanne. Mary Manatee: A Tale of Sea Cows, and Tammy Turtle: A Tale of Saving Sea Turtles. Nags Head Art, P.O. Box 88, Nags Head, NC 27959 (tel: 919-441-7480).


PUZZLES AND STAMPS

Life In the Coral Reefs. New York: Judy/Instruction, Simon & Shuster. 50 piece floor puzzle.


Ocean World Puzzle. Hope, Arkansas: Fink & Co./EDUCA. 100 large size pieces with an illustrated guide to identify marine life.

VIDEOS, SLIDES AND CD-ROMS


**Educational Merchandise**

The following lists books, childrens books, videos, cassettes, CD-ROMs and other educational merchandise that is available through Reef Relief. To order, please see the order form at the end of this section.

**BOOKS**

**A Guide to Angelfishes & Butterflyfishes.** Text and Photographes by Gerald R. Allen, Roger Steen and Mark Allen. Hardcover. $29.95

**A Guide to Underwater Florida.** Ned DeLoach. Maps and directions for 600 of Florida’s best ocean and spring dives. 352 pp. $18.95

**Anemone Fishes and their Host sea Anemones.** Photos and text by Daphne G. Fautin & Gerald R. Allen 159 pp. $29.95

**Blue Frontier, Saving America’s Living Seas.** A comprehensive look at ocean politics in America. David Helvarg. Paperback 299 pp. $15.00. Hardcover $25.95

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**Collaborative and Community-based management of Coral Reefs.** Edited by White, Hale, Renard and Cortesi. Case studies of how various worldwide communities have worked to protect their coral reefs. Includes a chapter on REEF RELIEF. Paperback. 130 pp. $22.00

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**Diving and Snorkeling in the Florida Keys.** John Halas, Judy Halas, and Don Kincaid. A handy photo-packed reference of more than 36 diving and snorkeling areas along the Florida Keys. Paperback. $12.95

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**Everglades.** Edited by Susan Cerulan. Hardcover. 256 pp. $18.95


**Fort Jefferson and the Dry Tortugas National Park.** L. Wayne Landrum Produced by the former park manager. Images and text. Hardcover. 71 pp. $19.95

**Kayaking in the Keys.** Kathleen Patton. Well written by a local resident. Hardcover. 190 pp. $199.95

**Manatees and Dugongs of the World.** Jeff Ripple. Photographs Doug Perrine. 131 pp. $19.95


**Marine Plants of the Caribbean.** Mark and Diane Littler, Bucher, and Norris. A field guide from Florida to Brazil—the best book to identify algae on the reef . Paperback with 225 color plates, 263 pp. $25.00.

**Marine Reserves, a Guide to Science, Design, and Use.** Jack Sobel and Craig Dahlgren 369 pp. $70.00

**Peterson’s Guide to Coral Reefs.** Eugene Kaplan. Paperback, 256 pp. $17.00


**Peterson’s Guide to Atlantic Sea Shores.** Kenneth L. Gosner. Paperback with 329 pp. $16.95


**Protecting Paradise.** Peggy Cavanaugh and Marget Spontak. Features 300 ways to protect Florida’s encironment. Paperbak with 475 color plates, pp. $39.95

**Reef Creature Identification.** Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach. The definitive reference on marinelife. Paperback with 475 color plates, 344 pp. $35.00


**Reef Fish Identification.** Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach. The definitive reference on reef fish. Paperback with 345 color plates, 288 pp. $30.00
**Reef Fish.** Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach. In-A-Pocket waterproof companion to Reef Creature and Coral Identification for Divers and Snorkelers. 4 3/4" X 6" 23 pp. $11.92

**Reef Set.** Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach. Set of three hard cover books and a shelf case featuring the three definitive resources to identify reef life: Reef Coral Identification of Florida, Caribbean, Bahamas; Reef Creature Identification of Florida, Caribbean, Bahamas; and Reef Fish Identification of Florida, Caribbean, Bahamas. $120.00

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**Angel Fish.** Lian Smith. A pull and lift book. Hardcover. $10.95

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Baru Bay: Australia. Bob Weir and Wendy Weir (our very own REEF RELIEF board members!). A beautifully illustrated children’s book about a young girl on her visit to a coral reef in Australia where she encounters the many life-forms that live on and around reef - a rainforest, Aboriginal people, and crocodiles on land, as well as bright blue sea stars, reef animals, and dolphins in the water. The book features an illustration key with animal names and a glossary. The audio cassette tape features Bob Weir of the Grateful Dead narrating the story with original music that he produced inspired by the ocean and aboriginal musicians. Excellent for use in the classroom and with the Coral Reef Teacher’s Guide. Hardcover, 40pp. with cassette tape. $ 20.00

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Coral Reefs: Rainforests of the Sea. Oceanic Research Group in association with The Video Project. 20 minute video with study guide, 1996. Created especially for middle and high school age, it provides an excellent introduction to the science, ecology, and importance of coral reefs, as well as an overview of the serious environmental problems confronting them. Utilizing underwater footage shot on reefs worldwide, the video describes how reefs are formed, where they can be found, their importance to oceans and the human community, and the major natural and human-caused threats they face. $35.00

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Public Affairs Department
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Station 13519
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South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
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Miami, Florida 33199

South Florida Water Management District
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West Palm Beach, Florida 33406

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Coral Reefs

B. General Characteristics: Coral reefs are solid structures built from the remains of small marine organisms called stony (or hard) corals. Reefs cover about 100,000 square miles of the world’s shallow marine areas. Algae and other encrusting organisms help bind the sand and coral fragments together. Most reefs do not grow continuously but experience spurts of growth interspersed with quieter periods, which are sometimes associated with recovery from storm damage. E. Distribution of Reefs a. Stony corals can grow only in clear, sunlit, shallow water where the temperature is at least 64°F, and preferably 77°F. They grow best where the average salinity of the water is 36 ppt and there is little wave action or sedimentation from river runoff.