CORAL REEFS



By

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**What is a coral reef?**

* A coral reef is an underwater structure made from living organisms.
* Coral reefs are groups of tiny animals, plants and fish.
* Most coral reefs are built by stony coral.
* Reefs grow best in warm, shallow, clear, sunny and wavy waters.
* Wavy waters bring food, nutrients and oxygen to the reef. Waves prevent sediment from falling on the reef.
* A coral reef is an underwater garden.



**The three main types of reef are:**



Atoll Reef Fringing Reef Coral Reef

**Fringing reef** – directly attached to a shore, or borders it with a shallow lagoon – found in Hawaii

**Barrier reef** – reef separated from the mainland by a deep lagoon – found in Australia

[**Atoll reef**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atoll_reef) - a continuous barrier reef extends all the way around a lagoon without a central island – Pacific Islands

**What can be found in a Coral Reef?**

* Many species of Whales, dolphins and porpoises



* 1500 species of fish, eg: clown fish, snapper and many types of trout.



* 17 species of sea snake.
* 6 species of sea turtle, eg: green or leatherback turtles.



* Many saltwater crocodiles live in the warm waters, close to the reef
* 125 species of shark and stingrays
* 5 million species of mollusk, including giant clams and cone snails.
* Sea grasses are especially important because they provide shelter for young reef animals like lobster.



**Factors affecting the reefs/ Environmental threats**

* The climate – weather conditions
* Pollution / water quality
* Other fish disrupts food chains
* Fishing – anchors, nets and baits



* Shipping accidents
* Human – scuba divers and swimming



* Fishing

**The most famous Reef - The Great Barrier Reef**



* The Great Barrier Reef is the world’s largest Coral Reef.
* It’s located off the coast of Queensland, Australia.
* It’s made up of 2900 individual reefs.
* It’s approx 1200 miles long
* It can be seen from outer space.
* It’s the largest single structure made by living organisms known as “coral polyps”.
* It became a world heritage site in 1981.
* It’s one of the Seven Wonders of the World.
* It’s approx 20,000 years old.

**Class Questions**

1. **What is a Coral Reef?**
2. **What do Coral Reefs need to survive?**
3. **What are the 3 main types of reefs?**
4. **The Great Barrier Reef, is located where?**
5. **Name 3 factors that affect a coral reef?**

**Class Answers**

1.

It’s an underwater structure made from living organisms.

Sunlight and warm water

**3.**

Atoll, Barrier and Fringing

**4.**

Queensland, Australia

**5.**

Pollution

Fishing

Scuba Diving

Fishing Accidents

Weather

Other fish

Fishing Accidents

Weather

Other fish