

Disclaimer/s

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful.

Animations

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To enter slide show mode, go to the **slide show menu tab** and select either **from beginning** or **from current slide**.



All About...

Ocean Habitats

Oceans of the World



All About...

Ocean Habitats

Ocean Habitats

Here are some of the different types of ocean habitats found on Earth. Click on the images to learn more about them.

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Intertidal



Mudflat



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Kelp Forest



Coral Reef



Seagrass Meadow



Oyster Reef



Open Ocean



Salt Marsh



Tidewater Glacier

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Intertidal Habitats

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There are four zones in an intertidal habitat:

Spray zone – this is land which is occasionally splashed with water but is never fully covered by the ocean.

High intertidal zone – this is land which is covered only by the highest tides but stays out of the water most of the time.

Mid intertidal zone – this is land that is usually underwater but at low tide, it is open to the air.

Low intertidal zone – this is land which is mostly underwater and only dry at the lowest tides.

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land and in



Mudflat Habitats

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Mudflat habitats occur where silt and mud are brought in with the

This type of habitat has little plant life, but is still an important home to many types of marine life, including oysters, snails and cockles. The habitat is also a breeding ground for many different types of fish.



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Mangrove Habitats

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Mangroves are an essential habitat for many species of marine life, including mosses and algae that grow on the trees and animals, such as seabirds. The cover provided by the mangroves also creates a shaded shelter for many animals to nest and raise their young, such as seabirds.



Estuary Habitats

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Estuaries are places where freshwater rivers meet the saltwater seas.
Estuaries have some of the most biologically rich habitats in the world.
Plants, such as seagrasses and sea lavender, grow well in estuary habitats.



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Kelp Forest Habitat

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Kelp forests provide shelter and food for more than 1000 different types of plants and animals. Fish, snails, sea urchins and sea otters live within the kelp and other creatures, such as sea lions and whales, live beneath the kelp's canopy.

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Coral Reef Habitat

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Coral reefs are the most diverse of the marine habitats. Only around
Corals themselves are living creatures. They are made up from lots of
tiny animals called polyps. These polyps grow over thousands of years.
Coral reefs are home to a wide variety of species, including sea turtles,
fish, seahorses, sharks, sponges, shellfish and starfish.



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Seagrass Meadow Habitat

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Seagrass meadows are home to many fish and shellfish species, many
Seagrass meadows also act as barriers for other habitats, such as coral reefs and coastal areas, as they absorb the force of waves during storms.



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Oyster Reef Habitat

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Oyster reefs are made from clusters of individual oysters, creating a natural barrier. Oyster reefs help to clean the water by filtering particles, which improves water quality. They also create barriers that protect areas from waves and stormy waters.



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Open Ocean Habitat

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Epipelagic ('sunlight') zone (surface to 200 metres deep) – there is enough light here for plants to grow.

Mesopelagic ('twilight') zone (200 – 1000 metres deep) – only a little light can reach here and there is less oxygen.

Bathypelagic ('midnight') zone (1000 – 4000 metres deep) – no light can reach here. The water is cold and there is high pressure.

Abyssopeagic ('abyss') zone (4000 – 6000 metres deep) – dark and cold. However, it is the largest environment for life on Earth, covering 83% of the world's oceans and seas.

Hadalpelagic ('trenches') zone (more than 6000 metres deep) – the deepest region of the ocean. Life here is specially adapted to the extreme dark and cold.



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Salt Marsh Habitat

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Salt marshes filter many types of nutrients, improving water quality for other marine habitats, such as bays and estuaries. They are also effective at absorbing rainwater, preventing flooding of nearby areas and protecting shorelines from erosion by acting as protection against rising tides.



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Tidewater Glacier Habitat

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If enough snow falls to flow out of the mountainous glaciers and into the sea, it is known as a 'tidewater glacier'. These types of glaciers. The fallen pieces of glacier act as a habitat for a number of species, including seals which use them for a place to have their young.



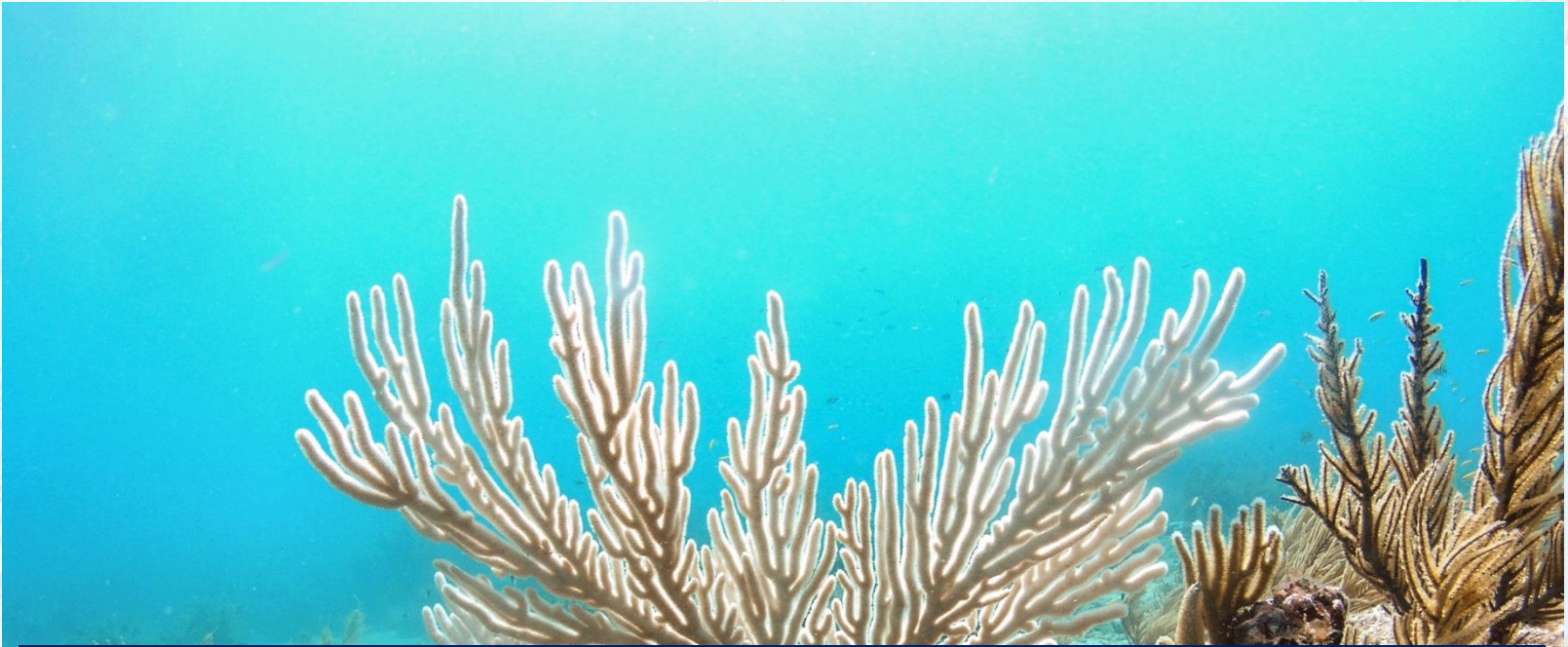
Threats to Ocean Habitats



Plastics that make their way into the ocean can be mistaken for food. Chemicals and pollutants can make their way into the water, making habitats toxic to species living in them. Oil spills and dumped sewage can make animals sick and cause them injury.



Threats to Ocean Habitats



Rising temperatures are also leading to the destruction of corals; as the temperature of the water rises, corals release the algae inside them causing their colours to fade. This is known as coral bleaching. If the temperature doesn't cool, then the corals won't let the algae back inside them and they will die.



Threats to Ocean Habitats



Overfishing can also have a massive impact on the ocean. According to By overfishing and reducing populations of some species of fish, the delicate balance of the food chain is upset, meaning that some species will starve while others may become unsustainably overpopulated.



