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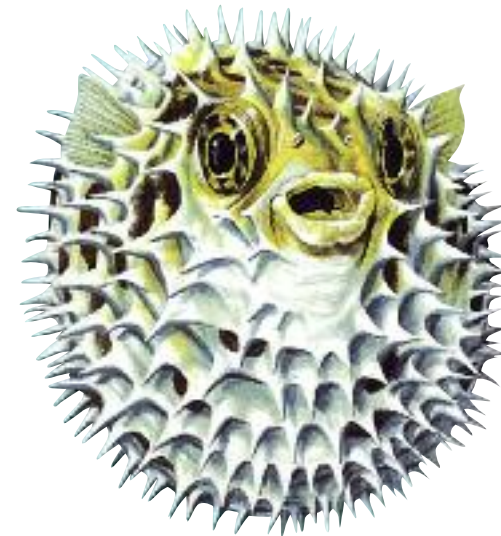
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see how we live

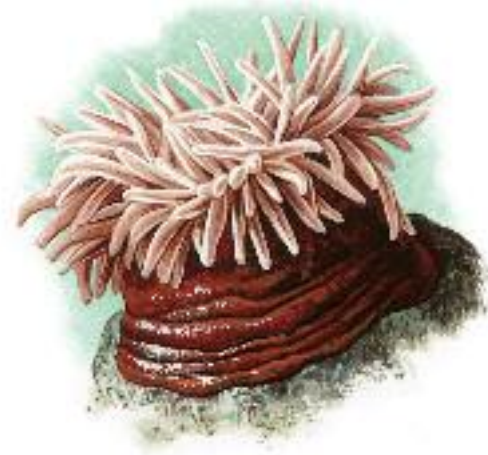
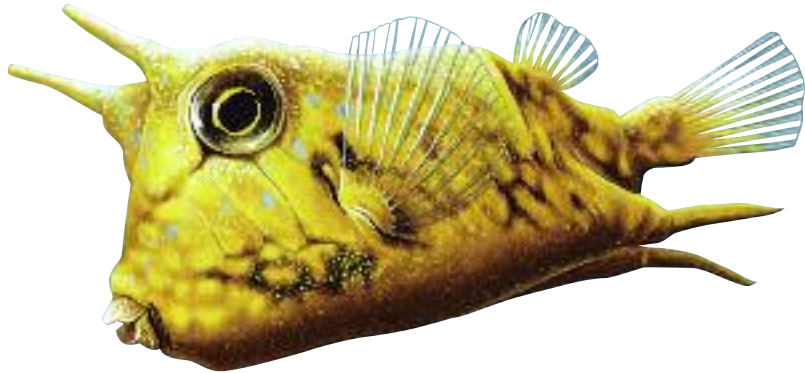
Ocean Creatures



 Orpheus

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Ocean creatures

The ocean waters are home to countless millions of creatures. There are fish, whales, dolphins, seals and turtles, of course, but also vast numbers of invertebrates—animals that do not have backbones. These include octopuses, lobsters, sea anemones, shellfish, jellyfish and many others. All us ocean-dwellers lead fascinating lives ...

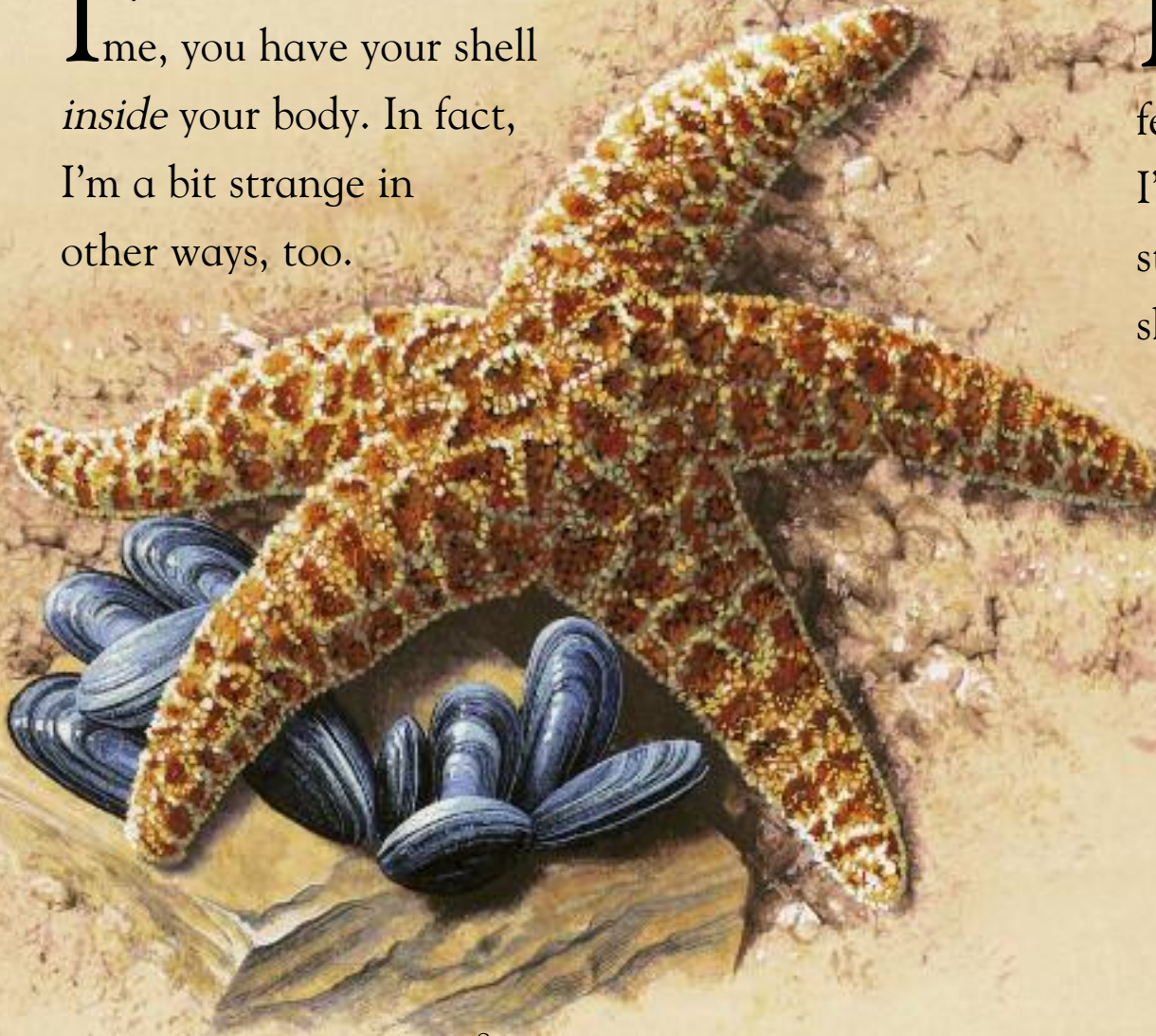
Who lives in the ocean?

We lobsters live on the sea bed in shallow water. We like hiding in small, dark places, like caves or under rocks.

I use my two giant claws for grabbing fish and shrimps, or for digging up clams and urchins. I can easily crush them.

I am covered from head to foot in a hard shell. It doesn't get any bigger when I grow, so I have to shed it when it gets too tight. I grow a new shell to replace it—simple!

If you're a starfish like me, you have your shell *inside* your body. In fact, I'm a bit strange in other ways, too.



I've got five arms, each with lots of tiny feet on them. My mouth is on my belly. I use my feet to prise open shells, like these mussels I've found. Once they are open, I push my stomach through my mouth and into the shells to feast on the soft, fleshy parts inside.



I may look like a pretty flower, but really I'm a deadly predator. My highly poisonous tentacles stun tiny fish—and keep my enemies away.



I fix myself to rocks on the seashore. When the tide goes out, I have to make sure I don't dry out. This I do by drawing in my tentacles. Now I look like a blob of jelly!



I am a sea urchin. I may look much more vicious than the sea anemone, but I am in fact a gentle creature. My spiny shell is only for protection. I spend my days feeding on algae (tiny underwater plants) that grow on the sea bed.





Watch out—this sea slug is poisonous! That's the message my bright colouring sends to any predator thinking of eating me. The poison comes from the sea anemones I like to feed on myself. I store their stinging tentacles on my back to use as defence.

We scallops are types of bivalve: animals that live inside two shells joined by a hinge. Most bivalves simply fix themselves to the sea bed. But we are different. We are very active creatures. We open and close our shells, which forces the water in and out and so pushes us along.

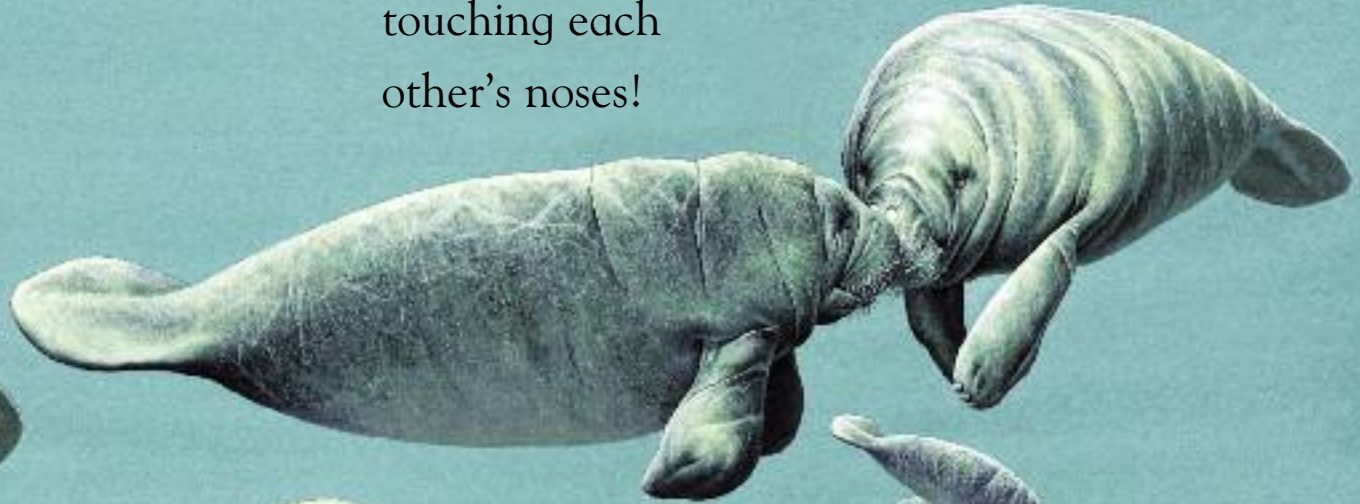


Where do manatees live?

Like whales, manatees are mammals that spend all their time in the water. You can find us swimming in warm, shallow ocean waters. We feed on sea grasses and other plants that grow on the sea bed.



We are very affectionate animals and often play games together. These two are even kissing by touching each other's noses!



A good scratch will scrape the barnacles off my skin ...

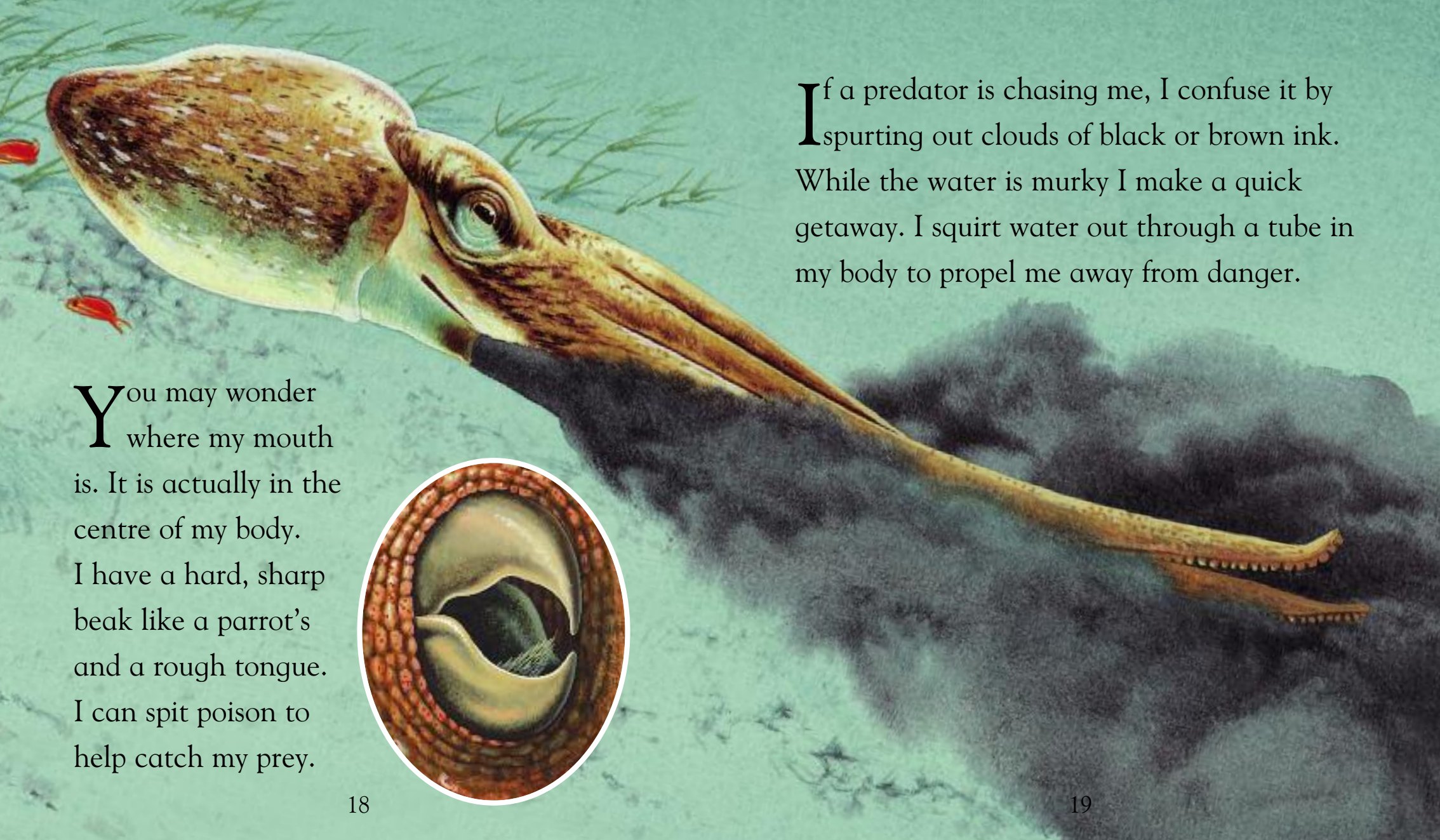


What does an octopus use its arms for?

I use my eight arms to walk along the sea bed, fight other octopuses and grasp my prey. Each arm has two rows of suckers for gripping on to those tasty fish or crabs that come a little too close ...



I am an unusually gifted animal! With my large brain I am the most intelligent of all invertebrates. I also have excellent eyesight and can see in colour—unlike most other sea creatures. And I am a master of camouflage. If danger threatens, I can instantly change the colour of my skin to match that of my surroundings.



If a predator is chasing me, I confuse it by spurting out clouds of black or brown ink. While the water is murky I make a quick getaway. I squirt water out through a tube in my body to propel me away from danger.

You may wonder where my mouth is. It is actually in the centre of my body. I have a hard, sharp beak like a parrot's and a rough tongue. I can spit poison to help catch my prey.

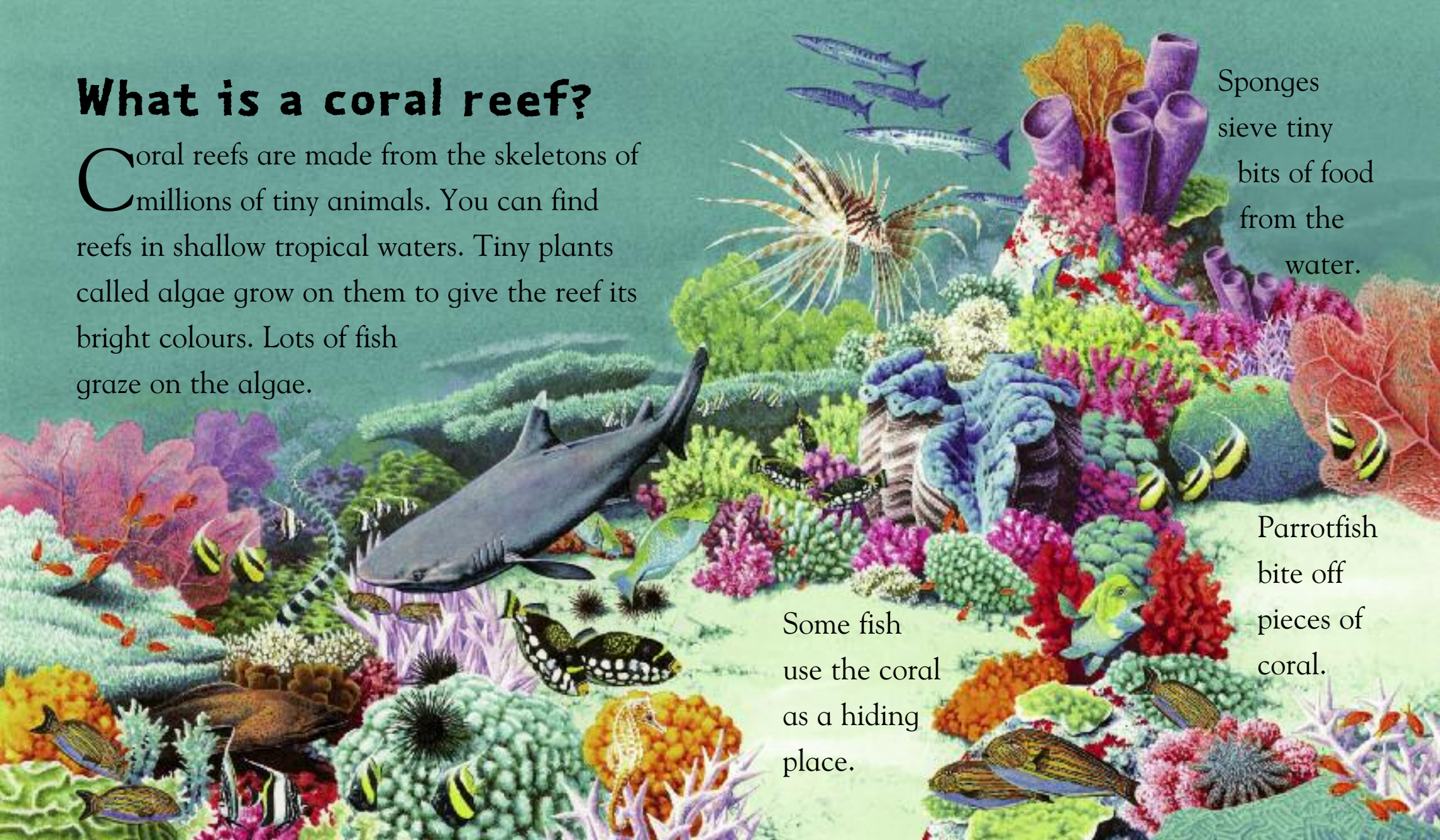
What is a coral reef?

Coral reefs are made from the skeletons of millions of tiny animals. You can find reefs in shallow tropical waters. Tiny plants called algae grow on them to give the reef its bright colours. Lots of fish graze on the algae.

Sponges sieve tiny bits of food from the water.

Some fish use the coral as a hiding place.

Parrotfish bite off pieces of coral.



How do fish defend themselves?

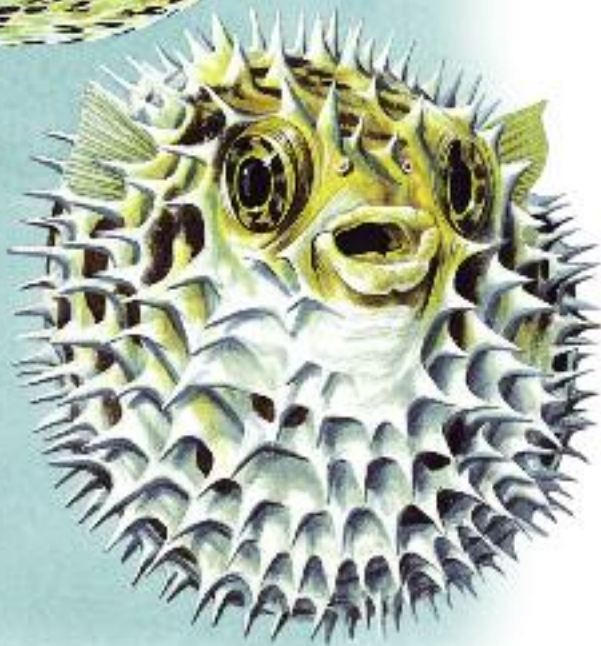
The ocean can be a tough place to live if you're a small fish. But some of us put up a fight. Take this stonefish on the right. If any predator comes too close, it will have to deal with a set of extremely poisonous spines. A cowfish like me is just as nasty: as well as horns, I've got a hard, boxy, poisonous skin.



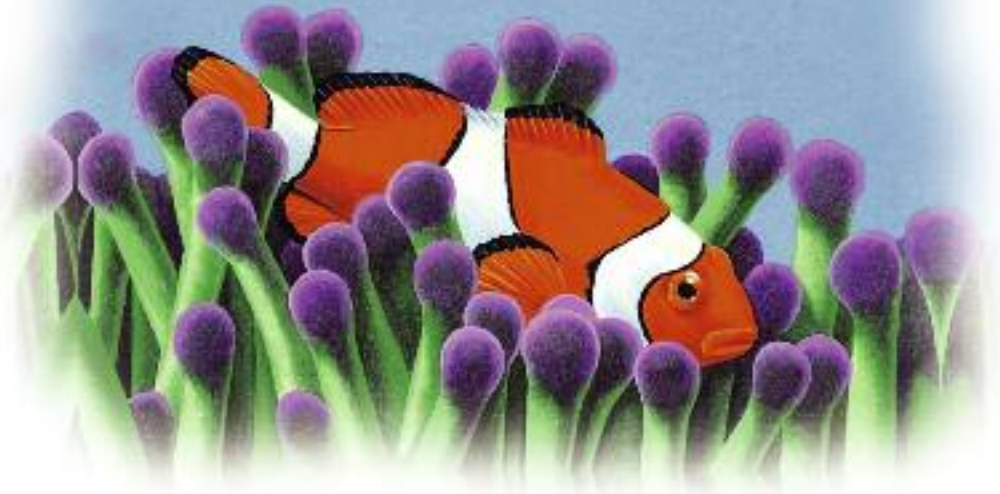
Attackers think twice before taking on me, a porcupine fish. When threatened, I swallow water and swell up to double my size.



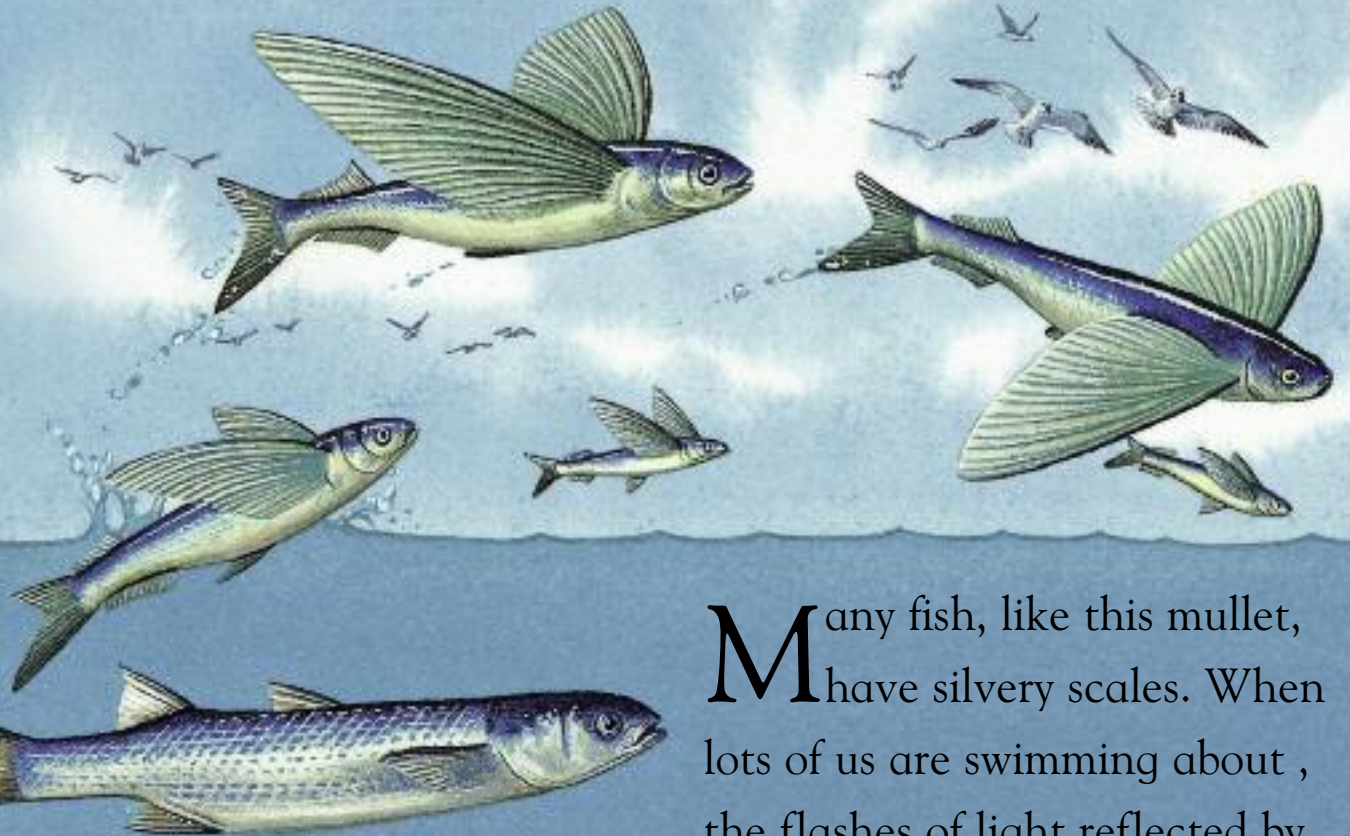
Now my spines are puffed out in all directions. And if that wasn't enough, I'm deadly poisonous as well!



Some fish rely on the protection of other sea creatures. You probably recognize me—I'm a clownfish. I stay close to the sea anemones that live on coral reefs. I am immune to the stings of their tentacles, but my predators are not so lucky. So that's exactly where I rush to hide when danger approaches.



We're not called flying fish for nothing! To escape our prey, we leap clean out of the water. Gliding through the air on our wing-like fins, it looks as if we're flying. When we splash back into the water, the danger is left far behind (though we need to watch out for birds ...)



Many fish, like this mullet, have silvery scales. When lots of us are swimming about, the flashes of light reflected by our scales often confuse predators.

Which sea creatures glow?



Sunlight doesn't reach down to where us deep-sea dwellers live, so many of us create our own light. This allows us to catch our prey and find a mate.



Some of us have a special light organ that we dangle in front of our mouths. This lures prey towards us ... and straight into our gaping jaws!

