



OCEAN HABITATS

Where Life Thrives!

WHAT IS AN OCEAN HABITAT?



An ocean habitat is a place in the ocean where **plants and animals** live.



A habitat gives animals **food, water, shelter, space, and safety**.



Different habitats have different **light, temperature, waves, and depth**.



Key question: What helps this animal survive in its habitat?

EXAMPLES OF OCEAN HABITATS

CORAL REEF



KELP FOREST



OPEN OCEAN



ROCKY SHORE



SANDY OCEAN FLOOR



DEEP SEA



HABITAT	CORAL REEF	OPEN OCEAN	DEEP SEA	ROCKY SHORE	SANDY BEACH	POLAR OCEAN
						
 LOCATION Where is it?	Warm, shallow waters near coasts in tropical and subtropical regions.	Far from land in the surface waters of the ocean.	Very deep parts of the ocean, below the sunlight zone.	Where land and ocean meet.	Shallow areas along coasts with sand.	In the Arctic and Antarctic regions.
 LIGHT How much sunlight?	 Lots of sunlight (clear, warm water)	 Lots of sunlight at the surface	 No sunlight (completely dark)	 Lots of sunlight (exposed areas)	 Lots of sunlight	 Low to medium (seasonal sunlight)
 WATER TEMPERATURE Typical range	 20–30°C (68–86°F)	 10–25°C (50–77°F)	 0–4°C (32–39°F)	 Varies a lot (5–20°C)	 15–28°C (59–82°F)	 -1–5°C (30–41°F)
 FEATURES What does it look like?	 Colorful reefs made of coral, with many nooks and crevices.	 Vast, deep water with waves and currents.	 Pitch black, high pressure, no plants, very deep.	 Rocks, cliffs, and tide pools. Waves crash here.	 Soft sand, gentle slopes, waves wash the shore.	 Cold waters with ice, icebergs, and pack ice.
 PLANTS & ANIMALS Who lives here?	Corals, sea anemones, colorful fish, sea turtles, starfish, sea urchins.   	Tuna, sharks, dolphins, sea birds, squid, plankton.   	Anglerfish, giant squid, lanternfish, deep-sea jellyfish.  	Seaweeds, barnacles, mussels, crabs, sea stars.  	Seaweed, clams, sand dollars, small fish, shorebirds.  	Penguins, seals, whales, krill, Arctic fish, sea ice algae.  
 FOOD SOURCES What do animals eat?	Algae, tiny animals (plankton), smaller fish and invertebrates. 	Plankton, small fish, squid, and other marine animals. 	Falling organic matter (from surface), small creatures. 	Algae, small invertebrates, plankton brought by waves. 	Plankton, small worms, shellfish, organic matter in the sand. 	Krill, plankton, small fish, sea ice algae. 
		Strong currents, finding enough food, avoiding predators. 	Extreme pressure, freezing cold, no sunlight, little food. 	Strong waves, changes with tides, drying out in the sun. 	Waves can bury animals, storms, limited shelter. 	Freezing cold, sea ice loss, long dark winters, limited food. 



CORAL REEFS

IMPORTANT HOMES FOR SEA LIFE

C Coral reefs are called the “rainforests of the sea” because they are full of life and support so many amazing creatures. ~



A HOME FOR MANY

Coral reefs provide shelter and a safe place for thousands of sea animals to live.

WHY CORAL REEFS ARE IMPORTANT

1. SHELTER & SAFETY



Reefs have nooks and crannies where fish and other sea creatures hide from danger and raise their young.

2. FOOD & NUTRITION



Reefs provide food for many animals, from tiny plankton to large fish and sea turtles.

3. SUPPORTS BIODIVERSITY



Coral reefs support about 25% of all marine life, with incredible variety of plants and animals.

4. COASTAL PROTECTION



Reefs act as natural breakwaters, protecting coastlines from strong waves, storms, and erosion.

5. HELP FOR PEOPLE



Reefs support fishing, tourism, and jobs. They provide food and income for millions of people.

6. MEDICINE & DISCOVERY



Reefs are a source of new medicines and help scientists discover more about our ocean.