



Fast Facts for the Pacific Coral Reef Aquarium

Coral reefs are unique ecosystems of plants and animals that are home to 25% of all marine life. It is estimated that many of the world's reefs will be destroyed or significantly damaged in the next 20 years.

General estimates approximate that 10% of the coral reefs around the world are already dead. Major threats include: bleaching and disease linked to an increase in sea temperature, water pollution, careless collection of coral specimens and sedimentation, when silt or sand from construction or mining projects muddies the water of a reef.

Did you know that the variety of life supported by coral reefs rivals that of the tropical forests of the Amazon or New Guinea?

The total area of the world's coral reefs amounts to less than .25% of the entire marine environment, yet some estimates place up to 2 million species living in, on and around them. Reefs form nurseries for about 1/4 of the ocean's fish including many commercially important species that could end up on your dinner plate any night of the week.

The United States has 10,540 square miles of coral reefs, about 85% of which are in the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii, American Samoa and the Mariana Islands. Coral reefs provide food security and income and are essential not only to ocean health but to human health and well-being as well. Coral reef organisms are being used today in treatments for HIV and cancer.

Numerous studies and projects are currently underway by organizations such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the United States Geological Survey to support effective management and sound science to preserve, sustain and restore valuable coral reef ecosystems.

Tank Specifications

Coral Reef Aquarium: A 382-gallon glass aquarium.

- Closed filtration system run by External Little Giant Pumps; Ocean Clear canister filter lighting system
- 2-4 400-watt 10,000 K metal halides lighting system
- Aquascape: 80 lbs. Fiji Boulder and 160 lbs. Haitian Live Rock

Inhabitants: Coral Reef Fish

■ Clarks Clownfish (*Amphirion clarkia*)

This clownfish, usually black with orange on its head, has three defined white stripes: one on the head, body and base of the caudal fin. This clownfish can grow to 5 inches.

■ Coral Beauty Angelfish (*Centropyge bispinosus*)

This Dwarf Angelfish has a deep royal blue head and body with an iridescent orange/yellow color. This fish tends to nip at stony and soft corals and grows to about 4 inches in length.

■ False Percula Clownfish (*Amphiprion ocellaris*)

Made famous by the movie *Finding Nemo*, the clownfish is now a household image. Clownfish have a symbiotic relationship with anemones, meaning that both benefit from

the association. Being immune to an anemone's sting, clownfish have a safe haven in the anemone and will defend the anemone from fish that may want to eat it.

■ **Lipstick Tang (*Naso lituratus*)**

Also called a Naso Tang, this fish needs a lot of room, growing to a maximum size of almost 18 inches! Nash Tangs are herbivores, feeding on algae all day long. Their favorite food is turf algae that grows in the reef's crevices.

■ **Lunar Wrasse (*Thalassoma lunare*)**

Also known as the Moon Wrasse, this is a colorful fish with dark blue-green coloring, pink markings on its face and fins and a bright yellow crescent on its tail. As with many species, males tend to have the most vibrant colorings.

■ **Yellow Tang (*Zebrasoma flavescens*)**

A common sight in the waters of Hawaii and the tropical Pacific, Yellow Tangs are algae grazers. Living either solitarily or in schools, these fish, like all tangs and surgeonfish, have razor sharp spikes at the base of their tails for defense.

Inhabitants: Coral Reef Invert Species

■ **Abalone (*Haliotis spp.*)**

This is a medium to large-sized edible sea snail that tends to hide by burying itself in the sand. The shell of an abalone has a convex, rounded to oval shape. The color of the shell varies. However, many have iridescent nacre (or mother of pearl) lining the inside of their shells.

■ **Carpet Anemone (*Stichodactyla sp.*)**

Coming in a variety of shades of green, blue and red, Carpet Anemones do not exhibit the long, flowing tentacles characteristic of a typical anemone. Though they are able to catch and eat small prey such as shrimps and small fish, most of their energy needs are met by photosynthesizing light like corals.

■ **Frogspawn Coral (*Euphyllia divisa*)**

Beneath all those pink and green tentacles, the Frogspawn Coral lays down branches of limestone skeleton to grow. Branches grow, widen and split, growing as two separate branches from then on. Our large colonies are composed of hundreds of branches, each with its own polyp on the end.

■ **Trumpet/Peppermint Coral (*Caulostrea echinulata*)**

This coral has trumpet-shaped polyps, which are closely packed together. This coral is usually grayish-green in color and likes medium to low-water movement.