# THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

The Great Barrier Reef is a beautiful place to visit, with thousands of marine life and plenty of amazing things to see!

The Great Barrier Reef is not in fact one single reef, but a system of about 3, 000 individual coral reefs and islands stretching from Cape York to Gladstone off the Queensland coast.

The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef in the world. It is 2, 000 kilometres long, and is 180 metres high in some places. It can be seen from outer space, and is considered to be one of the 7 wonders of the world.

Clown Fish

Angelfish

## LIFE ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF:

The Great Barrier Reef has been built over many millions of years by tiny animals called polyps. The Reef is home to a huge variety of fish and other sea creatures. Scientists have recorded Over 1500 kinds of fish live in the Great Barrier reef.

The smallest fish is called the Stout Infant Fish which is only 7 millimetres long, and the biggest is the whale shark which can grow up to 12 metres long! Here are some different species of fish that can be found in The Great Barrier Reef:

- Angelfish
- Butterfly Fish
- Cardinal Fish
- Clown Fish
- Damselfish
- Sharks
- Triggerfish
- Trout

The Great Barrier Reef is beautiful but also contains some of the deadliest animals in the ocean including:

- Box Jellyfish
- Blue Ringed Octopus
- Stone Fish

Whale Shark

Stone Fish

Blue Ringed Octopus

## DID YOU KNOW?

Sweetlip

The Great Barrier Reef is larger than the entire country of Italy put together.

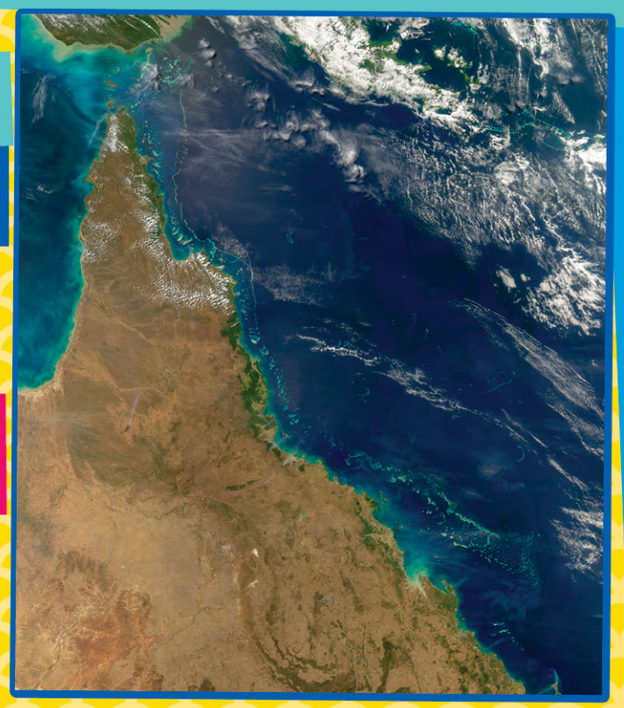
Astronauts can see the Great Barrier Reef from the moon.

Sea Horse

The Great Barrier Reef is the size of about 70 million football fields!

Recycling is a great way to help places like the Great Barrier Reef stay beautiful and its fish stay healthy.

The popular Disney/Pixar character Nemo is based on the Anemone Fish (also known as a Clown Fish) which can be seen all over the Great Barrier Reef!





## THREATS TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Even though the Great Barrier Reef is a marine park and is protected as it is listed as a world heritage site there are still threats to the reef because of the things that happen close by. Here are a few threats on the Great Barrier Reef and some tips on what you can do to help keep this beautiful reef, beautiful!

### SHIPPING:

Often large ships around the reef or oil spills can destroy large sections of the reef. Often, the quickest way for ships to transport Australian coal to places like India and China is from ports along the reef. The sea around the reef is far too shallow for the big ships so there have been threats of dredging (digging up sand) to make the sea deeper so that the ships can easily travel in and out of these ports. This could potentially choke our Great Barrier Reefs corals and sea grasses and potentially kill them.

### TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT:

When the sea is polluted by rubbish and soil is washed into it by excavation of and building on the land near the reef, the coral is affected because it can only grow in clear water.

Tourism means a lot of boats are coming in and out of the Reef, for people to see it, and to dive from the boats. Tourists and sightseers walking on the reef also kills coral.

Butterfly Fish

Blue Tang

Hammerhead Shark

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

No matter where you are in Australia, there are many things we can do to help look after the animals and marine life that live in the Great Barrier Reef and reduce what is called “Greenhouse Gases” in our environment.

### HERE ARE SOME GREAT TIPS ON HOW WE CAN ALL HELP TO PROTECT THE GREAT BARRIER REEF:

RECYCLE: Recycle whenever you can, don’t be a litterbug and if you see some rubbish on the ground (even if it’s not your’s) pick it up and pop it in the recycling bin

USE RE-USABLE BAGS: Next time you go shopping, invest in some re-usable bags instead of plastic bags.

DON’T PUT CHEMICALS OR RUBBISH DOWN THE DRAIN: When you dispose chemicals or rubbish down the drain, it has the potential to end up in our oceans & effect our reefs and marine life.

PLANT A TREE: Planting a tree is always a fantastic idea as they will take up carbon dioxide as they grow!