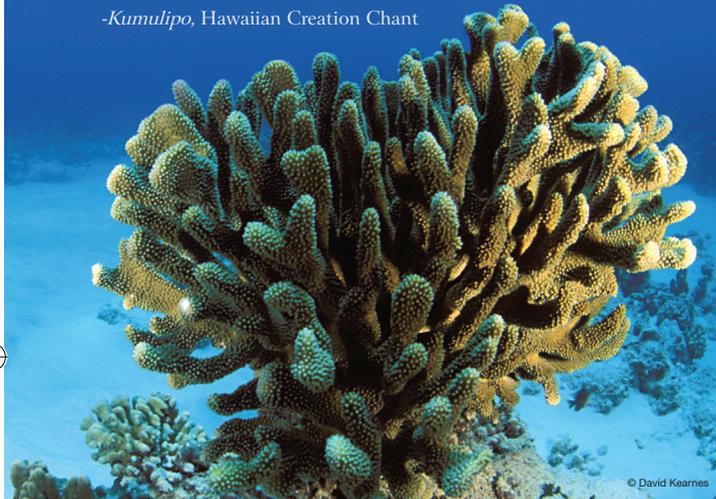


Hanau ka 'Uku-ko'ako'a, hanau kana, he 'Ako'ako'a, puka

Born was the coral polyp,
born was the coral...

-Kumulipo, Hawaiian Creation Chant



Coral reefs have been an important part of Hawaiian culture for many generations. As you take time to enjoy one of our most beautiful natural resources, keep in mind that the reefs are extremely fragile living organisms. With your help and care, we can continue to protect the reef for future generations to enjoy.

Malama I Ke Kai

Take care of our ocean.

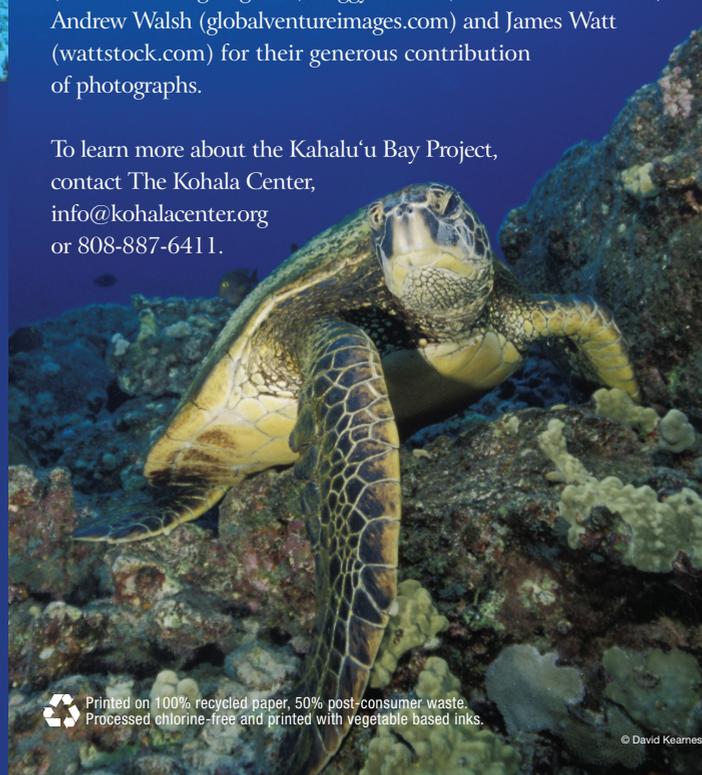
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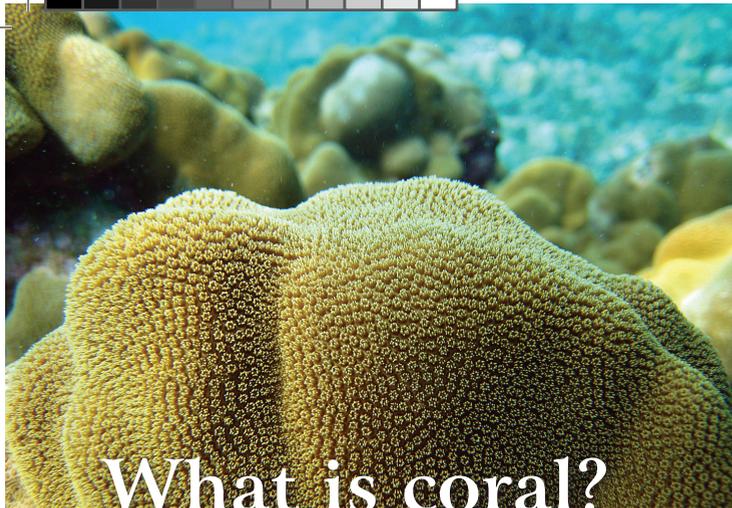
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To learn more about the Kahalu'u Bay Project, contact The Kohala Center, info@kohalacenter.org or 808-887-6411.

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Exploring and Protecting the Coral Reef at Kahalu'u Bay





What is coral?

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Protect our reefs.

© Ziggy Livnat

A coral is really a “city” of individual reef-building animals called polyps connected to each other by a thin layer of tissue. These soft-bodied animals, related to sea anemones and jellyfish, are just like any other marine animal—they eat, grow and reproduce.

Coral is alive and fragile.

As the coral polyps grow, they secrete a substance that hardens to form the rigid coral structure.



© NOAA

The large coral heads that you see around the reef are the result of hundreds of years of growth.

Coral is crucial.

Coral reefs are among the most diverse ecosystems in the world. Sometimes called the “rainforests of the sea,” they supply shelter and food to abundant species of marine life, protect



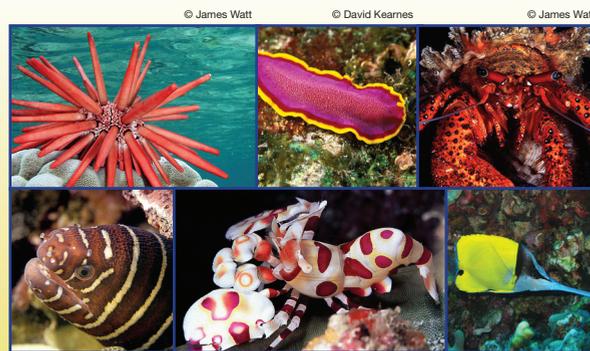
© Ziggy Livnat

beaches from erosion, and even provide for important scientific discoveries in medicine and human health.

From the earliest of times, Hawaiians have understood and honored the importance of living coral as the foundation for many other forms of sea life.

Coral is easily damaged.

Coral tissue is easily damaged when touched, scraped or stood upon. These coral reefs are extremely delicate and rare. Their very existence is threatened, not just at Kahalu‘u Bay, but the world over. Please continue our Hawaiian traditions by respecting the living corals.



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The coral reefs of Hawai‘i are home to an estimated 5,000 animal species, with approximately one-fourth of these species not found anywhere else in the world.

E malama I na ko‘a ke kai

Protect our coral reefs.

HERE ARE FIVE EASY WAYS YOU CAN HELP PROTECT THE LIVING REEF:

AVOID STANDING ON OR TOUCHING CORAL.



© Ziggy Livnat 07

Touching or standing on coral will damage or kill the coral polyps and the reef they construct. To adjust your mask during snorkeling, or to rest, please find sandy or rocky bottom on which to stand. Also, be aware of your fins so that you do not accidentally kick corals.

DO NOT FEED THE FISH.



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Fish play an important role in keeping the reef clean through what they eat. Feeding the fish disrupts their natural behavior. Some fish become aggressive, others get sick.

APPLY WATERPROOF SUNSCREEN 15 MINUTES PRIOR TO ENTERING THE WATER.



© Andrew Welsh

Give the sunscreen time to absorb before entering the water. This helps protect your skin as well as reef life from the oily residues sunscreen leaves in the water.

DO NOT DISTURB THE TURTLES.

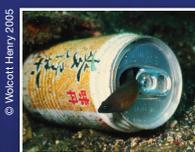


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The green sea turtle feeding and resting at Kahalu‘u Bay is an endangered species, so please keep your distance. Make sure your actions don’t chase them away, so that others may have the opportunity to experience these animals too.

Note: Under both Federal and Hawai‘i State laws it is illegal to harass or harm sea turtles.

THROW AWAY YOUR TRASH.



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Trash left on the beach ends up in the ocean and harms sea life.

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