

The Great Barrier Reef — Knowledge Organiser

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Key facts

- The Great Barrier Reef lies off the north-east coast of Queensland.
- It is the largest living structure on Earth and can be seen from space.
- It stretches over 2,000 kilometres.
- It is built by tiny animals called coral polyps over thousands of years.

Key vocabulary

- Coral — tiny animals (polyps) whose skeletons build the reef.
- Polyp — a single coral animal.
- Coral bleaching — when stressed coral turns white and may die.
- Marine — to do with the sea.

Life on the reef

The reef is home to over 1,500 kinds of fish, hundreds of corals, turtles, dolphins, sharks and giant clams — earning it the nickname 'the rainforest of the sea'.

Threats and protection

Warmer oceans cause coral bleaching, and pollution harms the reef. Scientists and Traditional Owners work to protect it. Caring for the reef matters for the whole planet.