

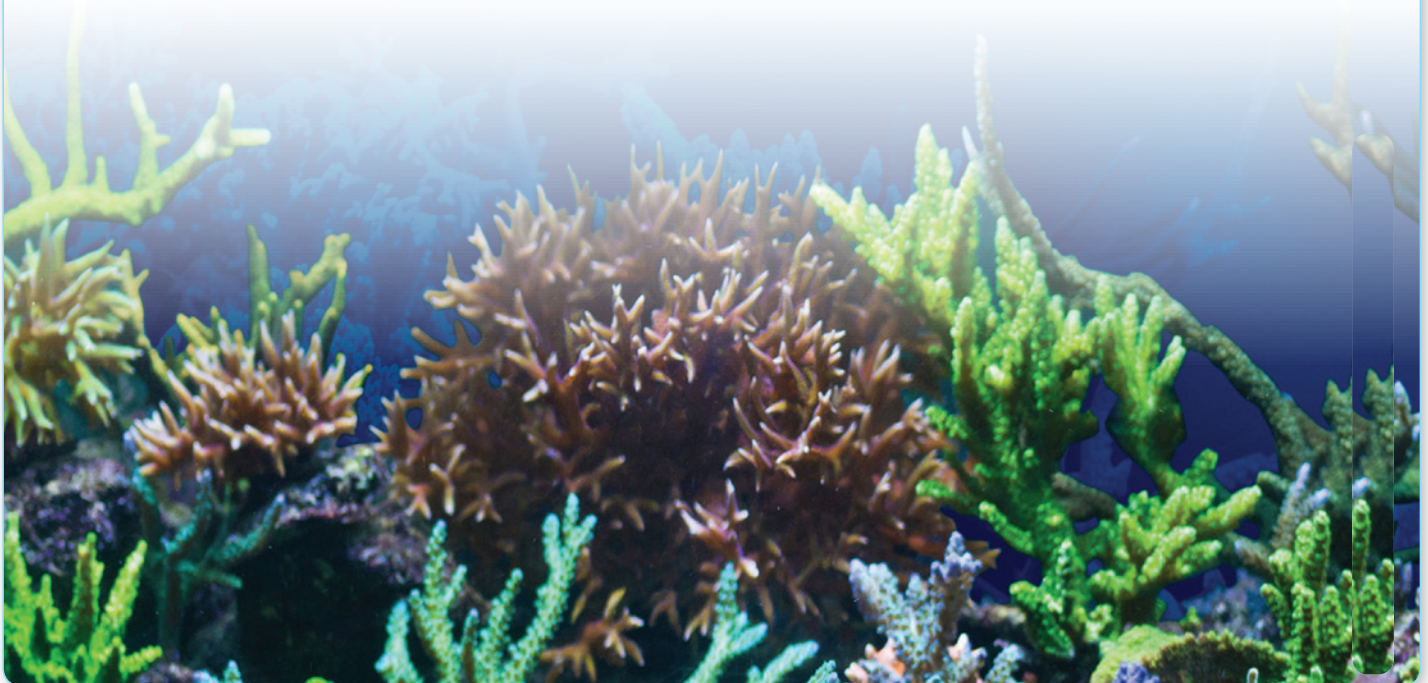
CLOSE READING

Help Save the World's Coral Reefs

by Paige Kelley, Marine Biologist

(Genre: Editorial)

- 1 There is no organism living beneath the surface of the ocean more spectacular than the coral reef. But, sadly, these magnificent structures are slowly disappearing. Indeed, coral reefs are threatened with extinction. Hope is not lost, however. There are things we can all do to help save coral reefs.
- 2 A coral reef is a gigantic colony of coral. Coral are very small marine animals that have hard shells. After the animal dies, the shell remains. Small plant life like algae and moss grow on these skeletal remainders. Sand, dirt, and other sediment also collect on the reef. Slowly, over time, the reef grows.
- 3 Coral reefs can be made up of many different kinds of coral. They may vary in size, shape, and color. Coral reefs are some of the most beautiful and colorful natural phenomena on the planet. They can grow to be quite large, too. The Great Barrier Reef near Australia is about 1,600 miles long.
- 4 Coral reefs are sometimes called the “rainforests of the sea” because they are home to a large and varied number of species. They play an important role in the ocean ecosystems of the world. For example, they provide both a home and a food source for many small marine animals.



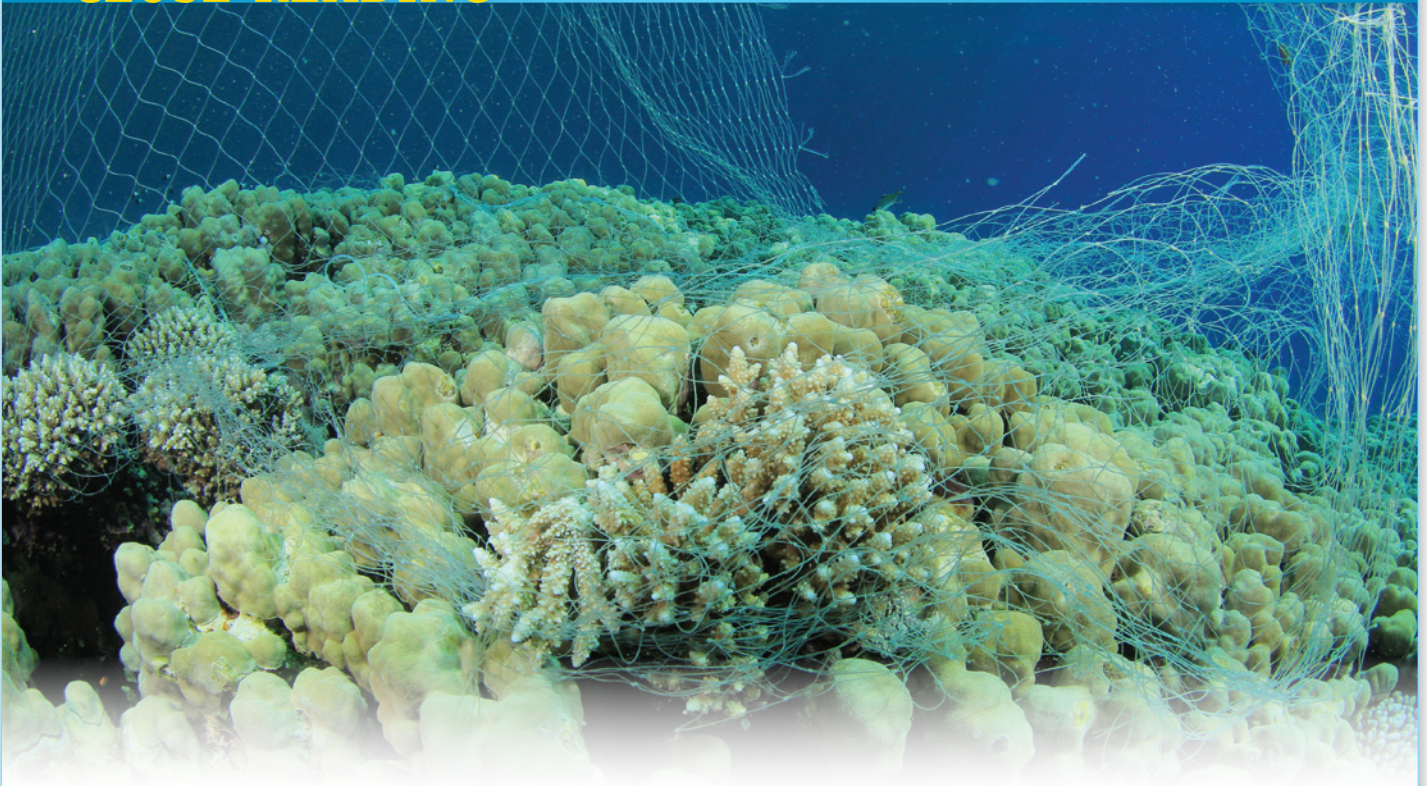
CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

Coral Reefs in Danger

- 5 Yet, like so many other species of marine animal, coral reefs are in great danger.
- 6 What exactly is endangering our beloved coral reefs? The answer is a lethal combination of natural and human-made activities.
- 7 There is no doubt that coral reefs are natural targets for underwater predators. Certain fish and other marine life are known to feed on the small marine animals that live there. Also, the connective tissue that enables the reef to grow in size is soft and tasty.
- 8 Other threats to coral reefs, however, can be traced to human activity. There is a widely observed phenomenon called “bleaching,” in which the coral reefs lose their color and turn white.
- 9 Bleaching occurs when the coral reject and expel the tiny organisms they feed on. These miniscule morsels, which are a kind of algae, are tinted gold.
- 10 Why do the coral spit out their food? We in the scientific community are not yet totally sure. It may be due to rising ocean temperatures and an increase in the acidity of ocean water—its levels of acid. Global warming is causing the temperature rise; human pollution is behind the rise in acidity.
- 11 Scientists who study global warming estimate that, in future years, ocean temperatures will continue to rise. As a result, coral bleaching could occur every single year. Some studies have already shown that in isolated areas, bleaching is happening every *month*.
- 12 The rapid rise of the oceans’ level of acidity has another potential toxic effect. Many scientists are concerned that the material the coral reefs are made of could dissolve, weaken, and completely break apart.



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- 13 Two more threats to coral reefs are caused by humans: tourism and overfishing. Everyone agrees that coral reefs are gorgeous. Tourism companies are making money off tours of coral reefs.
- 14 When humans scuba dive along a coral reef—or worse, touch one—they disturb the organism’s habitat. The algae the coral feed on, for example, may be swept away.
- 15 Overfishing is a problem, too. Many communities depend on commercial fishing for their survival, so fisheries fish for great volume. But because so many fish live near coral reefs, removing large numbers can disturb the fragile habitat of a coral reef.
- 16 The methods fisheries employ are destructive. Nets are dragged through the water. The nets gather hundreds of fish, but destroy a reef in the process.
- 17 What can be done? What are the solutions? As I’ve suggested, working with commercial fisheries is an important step. Let’s find fishing techniques that protect coral reefs and allow fisheries to sustain their communities.
- 18 Interestingly, a land issue—the fight to save rainforests—is giving us ideas. Reforestation is being used to help rescue rainforests. For this reason, there has been similar talk in the marine biology community about trying to regenerate, or regrow, coral reefs.
- 19 Coral reefs are beautiful to look at, and they are an essential part of ocean ecosystems. These precious organisms are on the verge of extinction. We must work together to save them.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

Defending My Right to Fish

(Genre: Letter to the Editor)

- 20 I read Paige Kelley's opinion piece in last month's issue with dismay. I realize it is the current fashion to blame large commercial fisheries for the problems facing coral reefs, but her article goes too far. As the owner of a commercial fishery, I must defend myself and my colleagues in the industry.
- 21 First of all, the term *overfishing* was originally used by the fishing industry to increase awareness over the issue. That the term has been stolen by the scientific community and then used to place blame on us is offensive.
- 22 No one is more concerned with overfishing in our open waters than the entire commercial fishing industry. Ms. Kelley's opinion piece should have acknowledged that.
- 23 Further, my company not only employs hundreds of people in the community of Middletown, but it provides both supermarket and restaurants with fresh seafood for consumers to enjoy. Our vital role in the livelihood of our community has been unfairly ignored. I look forward to receiving an apology from Ms. Kelley.
- Sincerely,
Michael E. Simmons, Owner
Middletown Fishing, Inc.

Comprehension Check

- Which of the following is NOT a domain-specific word?
 - structure
 - coral reef
 - ecosystem
 - algae
- What type of word is *bleaching*, as used in the editorial?
 - an academic word
 - a word the author made up
 - a word that shows the author's point of view
 - a domain-specific word

CLOSE READING

3. What is the overall text structure of "Help Save the World's Coral Reefs"? Think about the text structures you have learned, such as cause/effect and problem/solution. What words helped to signal the type of text structure? Explain the reasoning behind your answer and cite text evidence.

4. Analyze how the points of view of Paige Kelley and Michael E. Simmons are similar and different. Think about their opinions, but also consider the topics they write about. Cite specifics in your answer.
