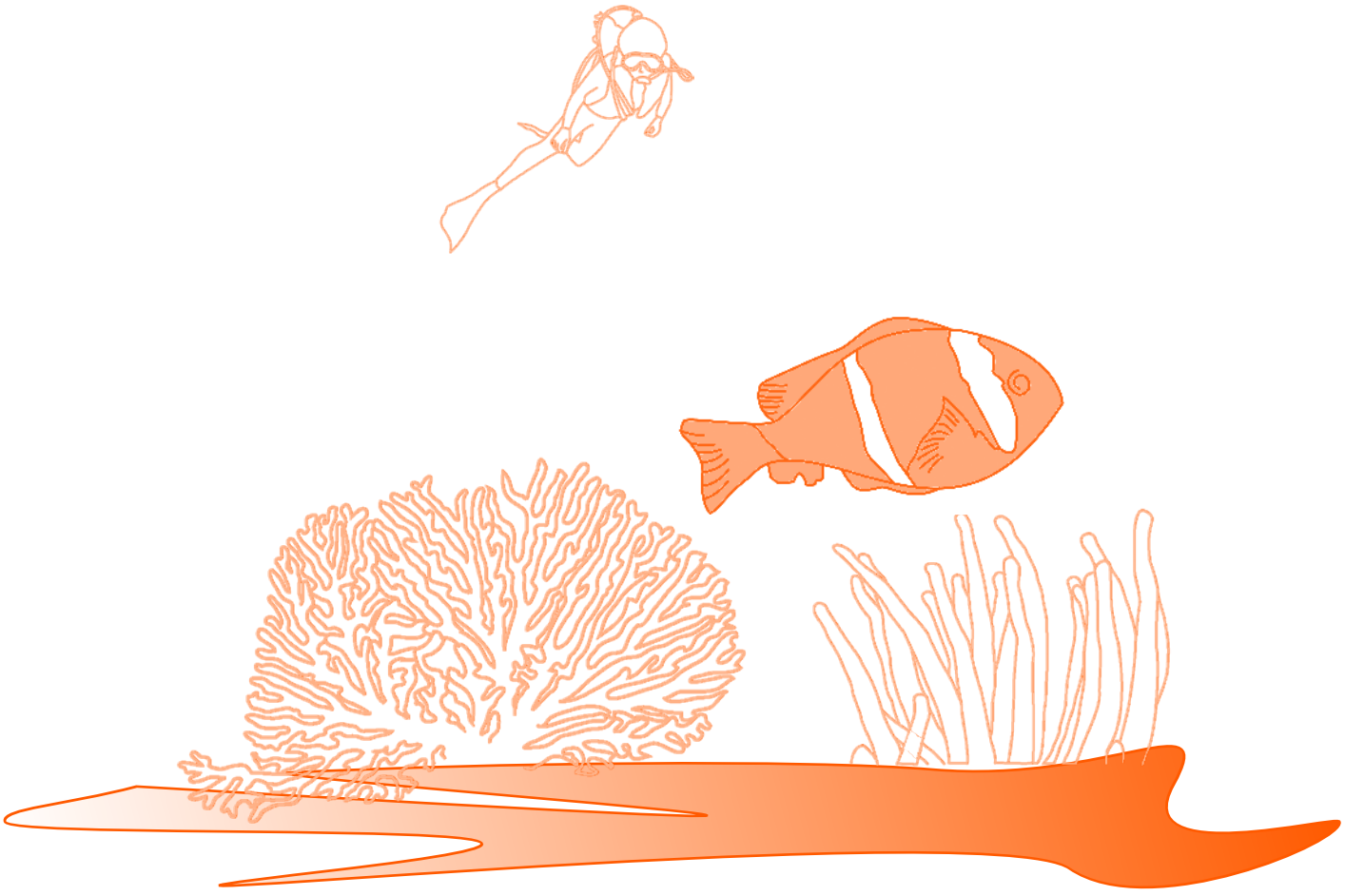
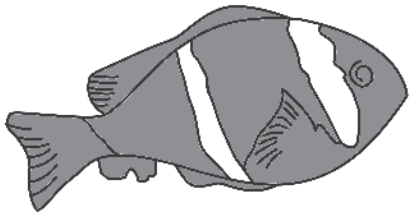
Coral Reef Activity Book



Coral Reefs...
...for health, for wealth, for life

Did you know...

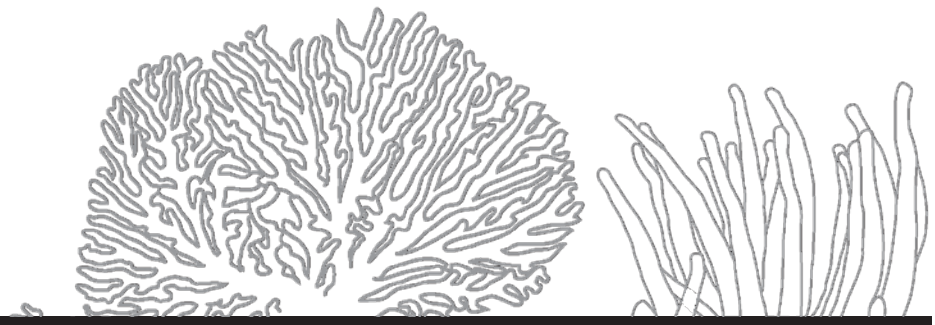
Coral reefs can be found in all tropical areas of the world. Corals can also be found in deep cold oceans.



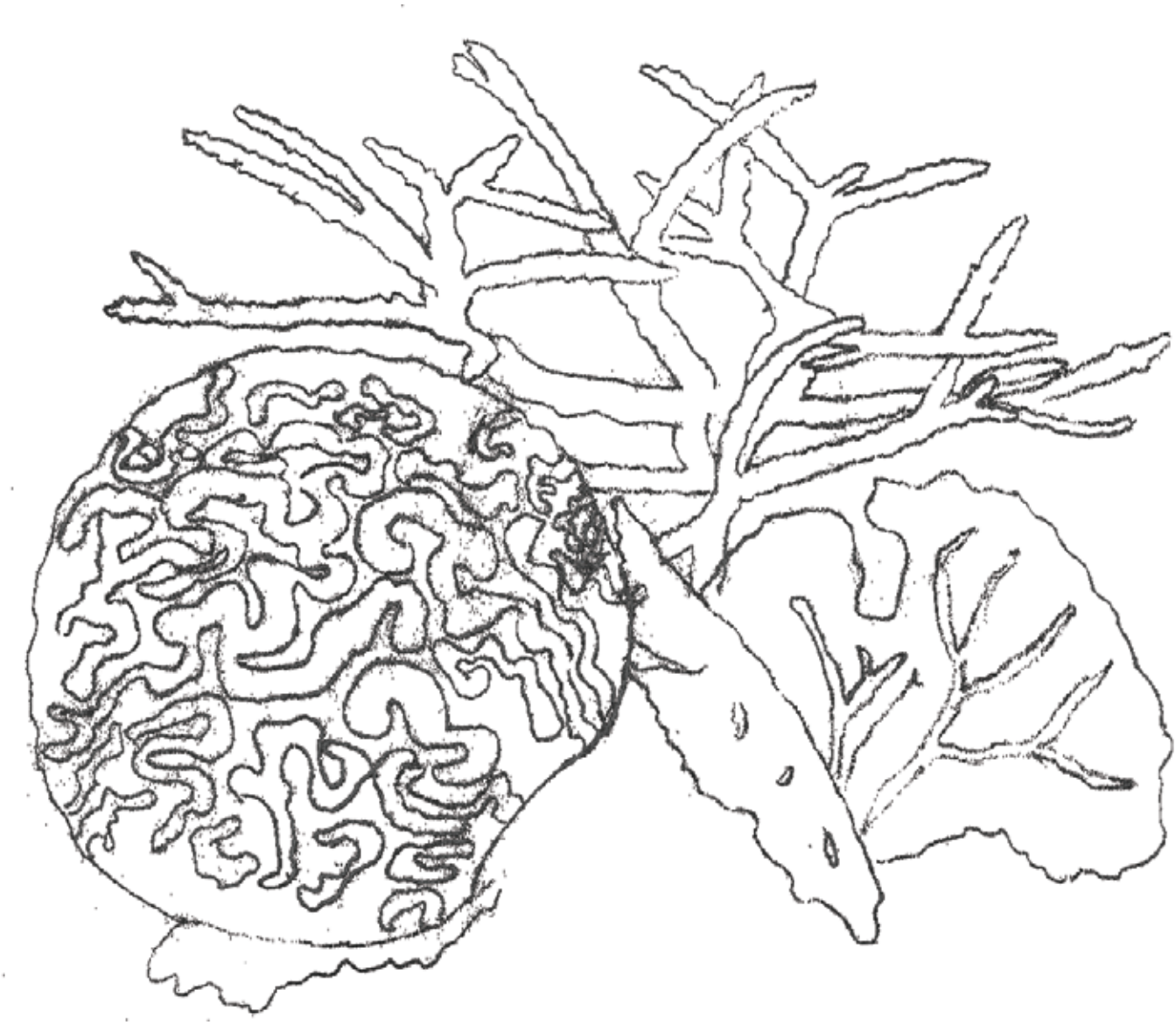
Most corals grow very, very slowly... it can take hundreds to thousands of years for a reef to form.

Coral reefs can be large or small. The Great Barrier Reef in Australia is over 1,200 miles long.

Coral reefs are some of the oldest ecosystems on the planet.

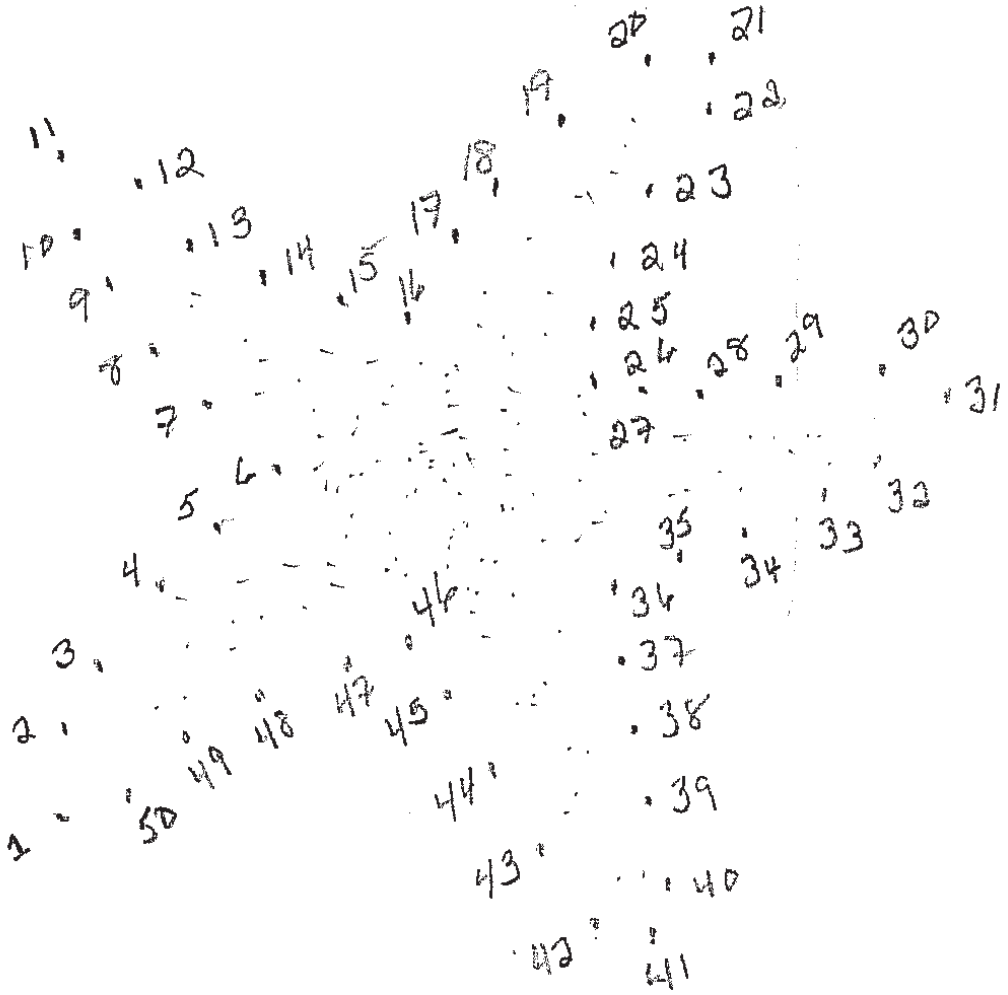


Color Me!



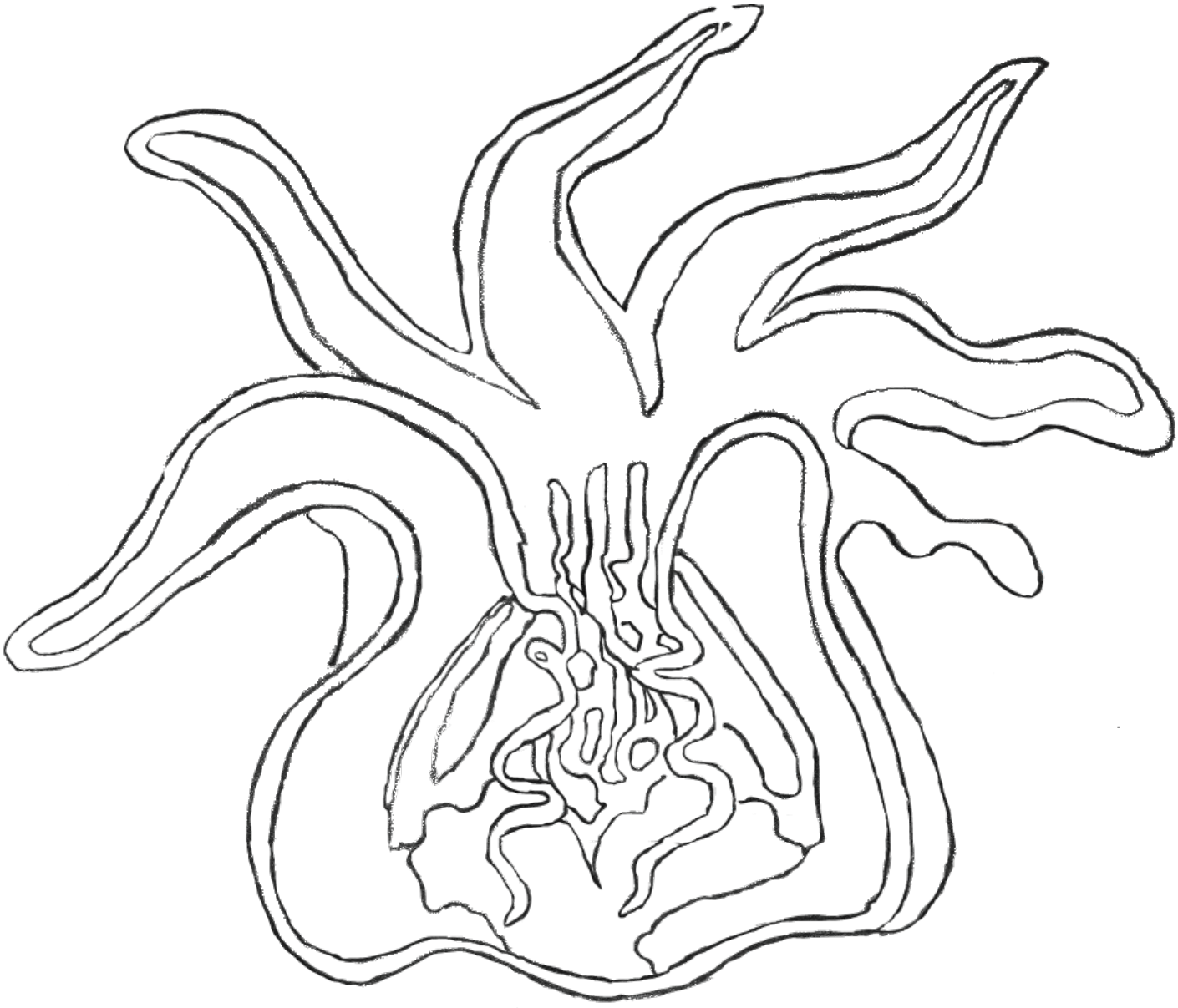
There are thousands of species of coral, some named for their colors, others named for their shapes. In this picture are a brain coral, a staghorn coral, and a seafan. Can you guess which one is which?

Connect the dots



Sea Stars have a strange way of eating. When they find something tasty, they can push their stomachs outside of their body and digest their food right there! Once they're finished, they pull their stomach back inside... until the next meal.

Color Me!



Coral animals (polyps) are often protected by hard skeletons that form many different shapes. Large areas of coral are called coral reefs, and these occur in warm shallow seas.

Word Search

Can you find these coral words?

S	A	E	Z	O	O	P	L	A	N	K	T	O	N	R
T	O	C	O	R	A	L	R	E	E	F	E	O	R	O
O	K	P	O	L	Y	P	R	D	E	A	T	S	A	A
N	O	L	X	O	T	L	C	G	A	M	L	N	R	O
Y	S	P	A	W	N	I	N	G	N	S	L	T	T	M
S	M	T	N	E	M	A	T	O	C	Y	S	T	N	N
P	H	O	T	O	S	Y	N	T	H	E	S	I	S	E
A	A	T	H	O	R	S	E	L	K	H	O	R	N	B
W	T	A	E	N	E	E	I	S	S	A	F	N	A	A
N	O	B	L	E	A	C	H	I	N	G	T	L	B	R
I	L	L	L	N	T	E	N	E	Z	R	C	G	R	R
N	L	E	A	N	E	M	O	N	E	S	O	P	A	I
G	E	T	E	M	P	E	R	A	T	U	R	E	I	E
D	I	V	E	R	S	E	A	N	I	M	A	L	N	R
D	I	V	E	R	S	E	A	F	A	N	L	R	A	L

Words are found down and across:

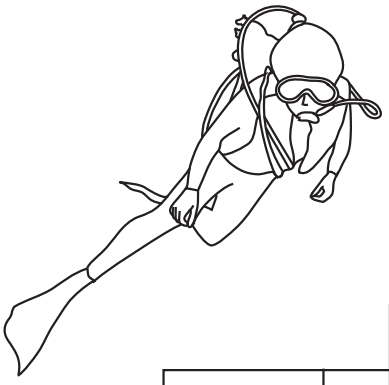
Zooxanthellae
Coral reef
Anemone
Zooplankton
Polyp
Photosynthesis
Animal
Stony
Nematocyst
Elkhorn
Table
Spawning
Diverse
Bleaching
Temperature
Brain
Soft coral
Sea fan
Atoll
Barrier

Color Me!

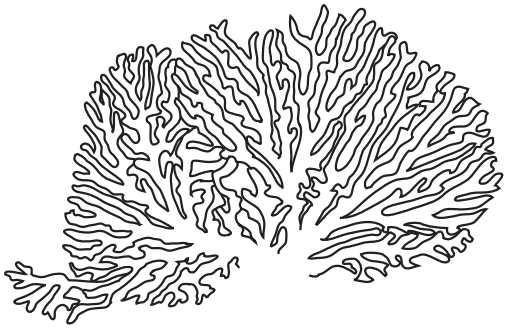
Several species of fish spend part or all of their lives in association with sea anemones. The clownfish does not stray far from its anemone. This lets the fish avoid being eaten by other fish by hiding in the anemone's stinging tentacles. Clownfish have a special mucus coating that protects them from the anemone's stinging cells.

Maze

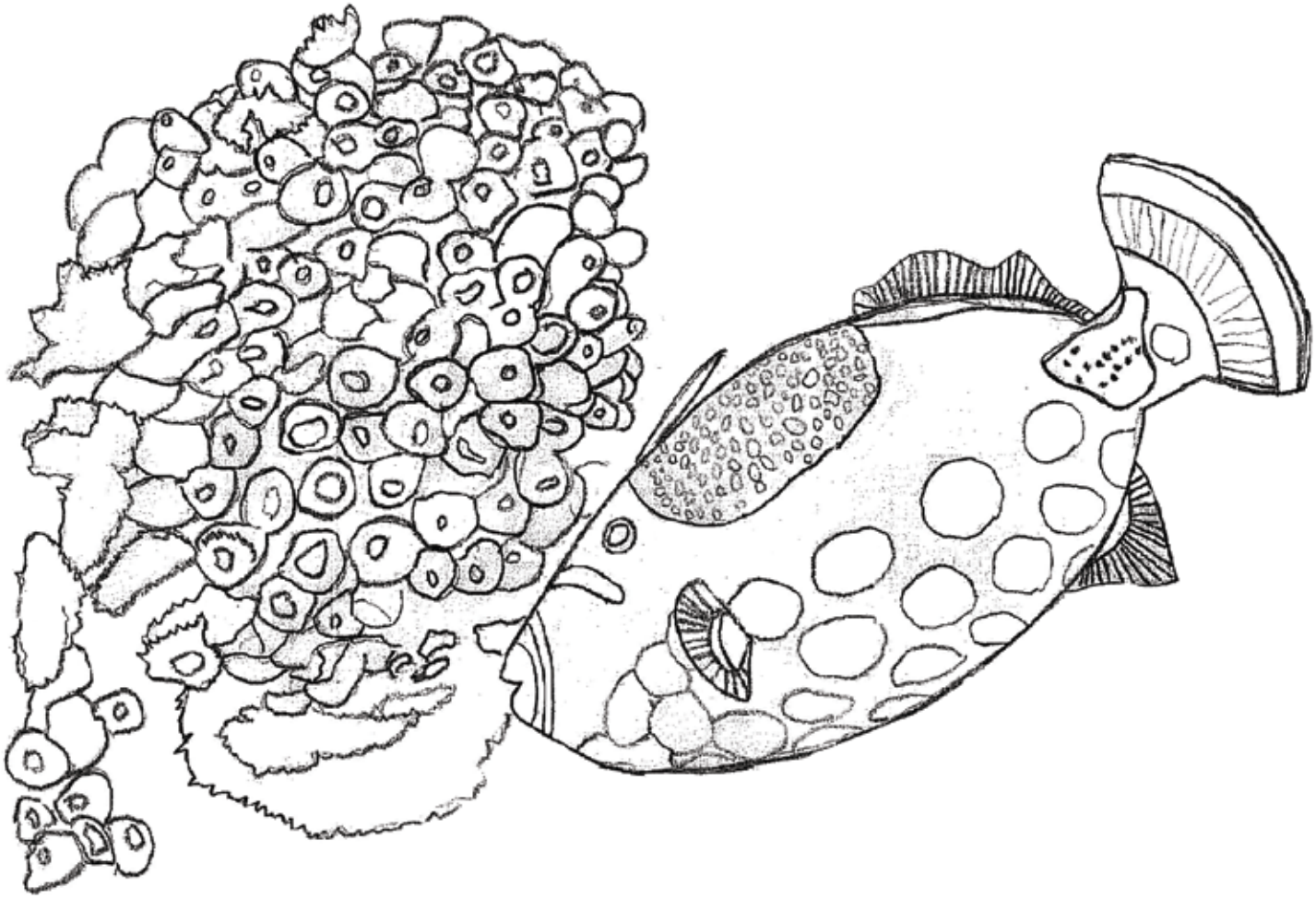
Can you help the scuba diver find the sea fan?



When diving
or snorkeling take only
pictures, leave only bubbles.
Do not touch marine life.



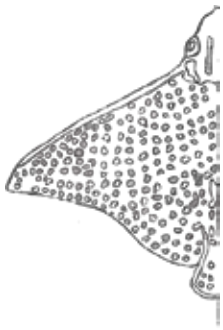
Color Me!

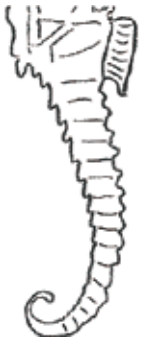


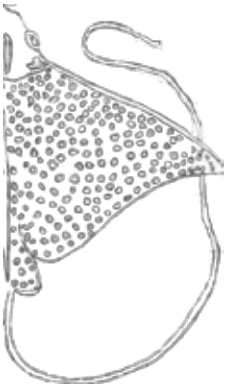
Many reef fish are very colorful, like this clown triggerfish. Spots and stripes break up the body shape and make it hard for their enemies to find them. This is called disruptive coloration. Other reef fishes have "false eye spots" that help them confuse predators.

Match the animals!

Draw a line from half an animal on the left to the other half on the right. See what Sea Horses, Sharks, Tangs, and Eagle Rays look like.







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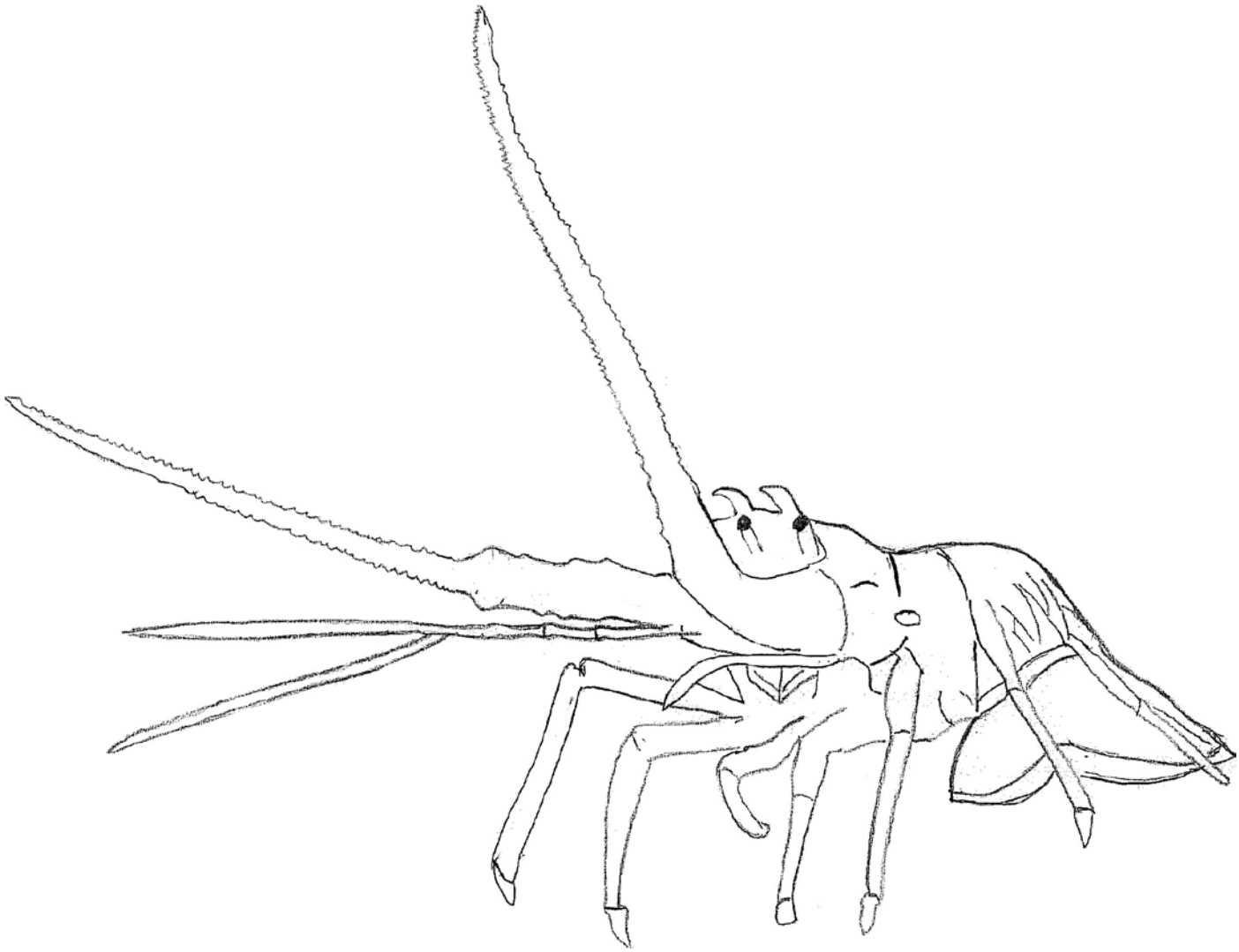
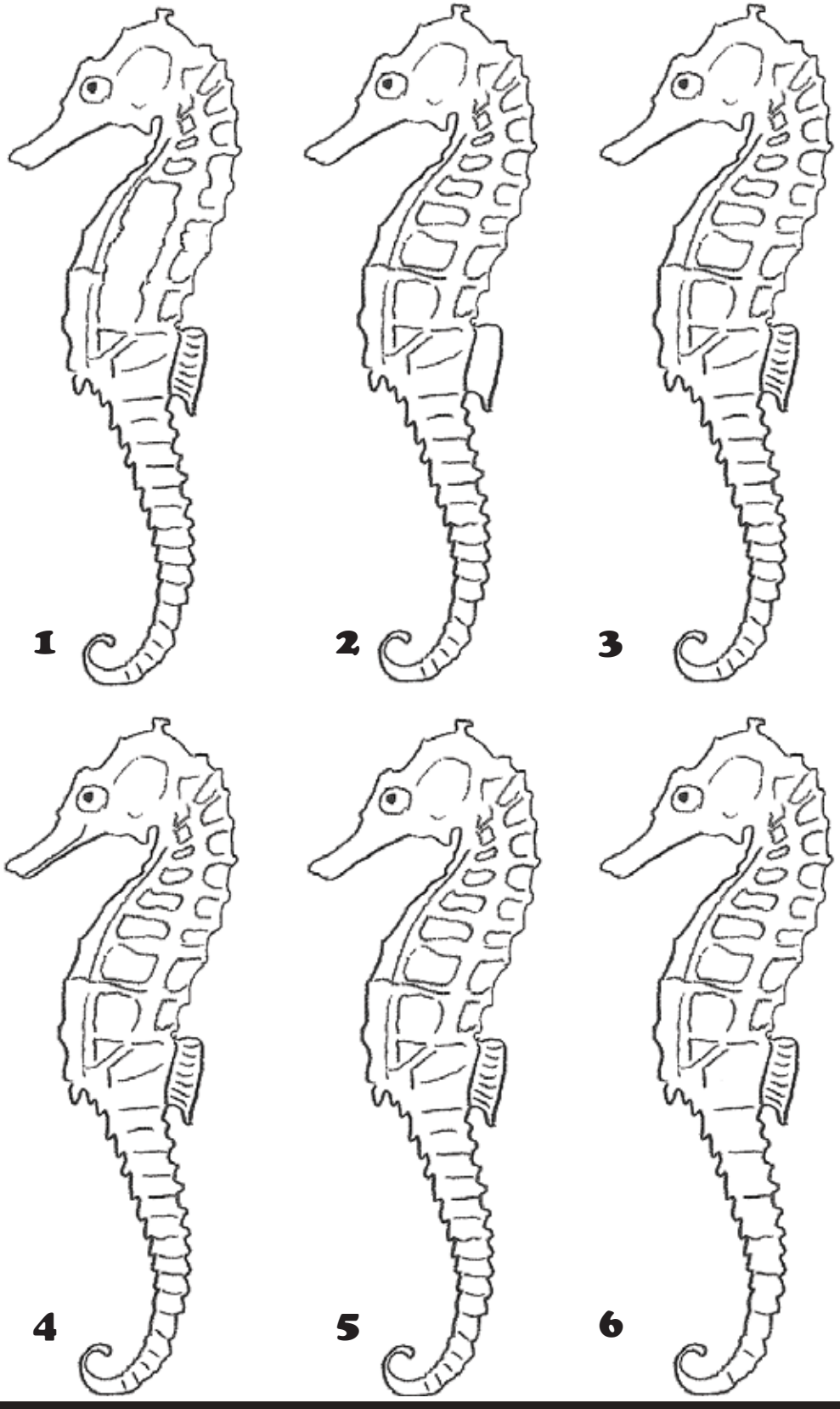


The Spiny lobster found in the Caribbean is different from the Maine Lobster that most people eat in restaurants. The Spiny lobster does not have claws, but uses sharp spines for protection.

Match the Sea horses

Which two are the same?



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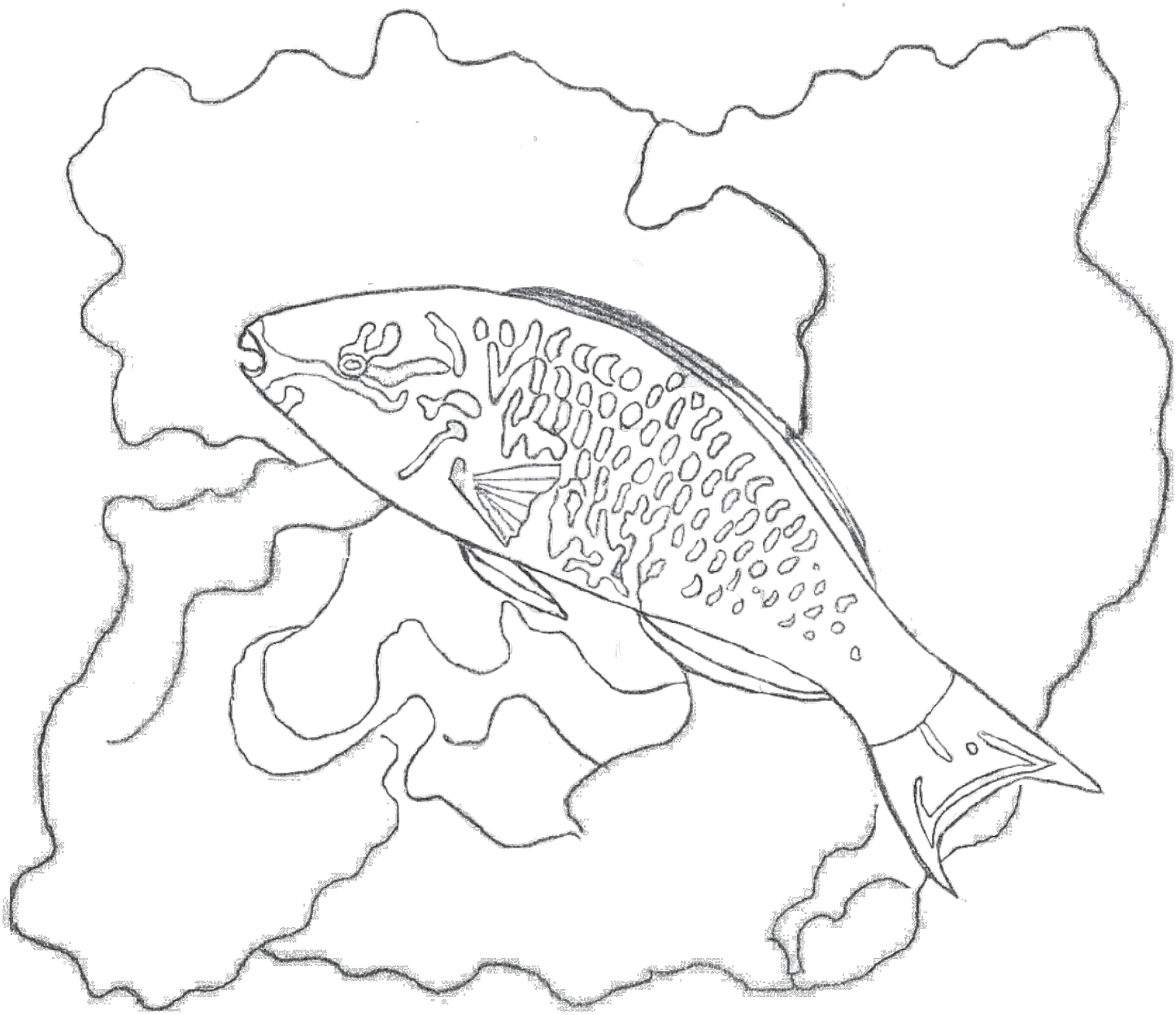
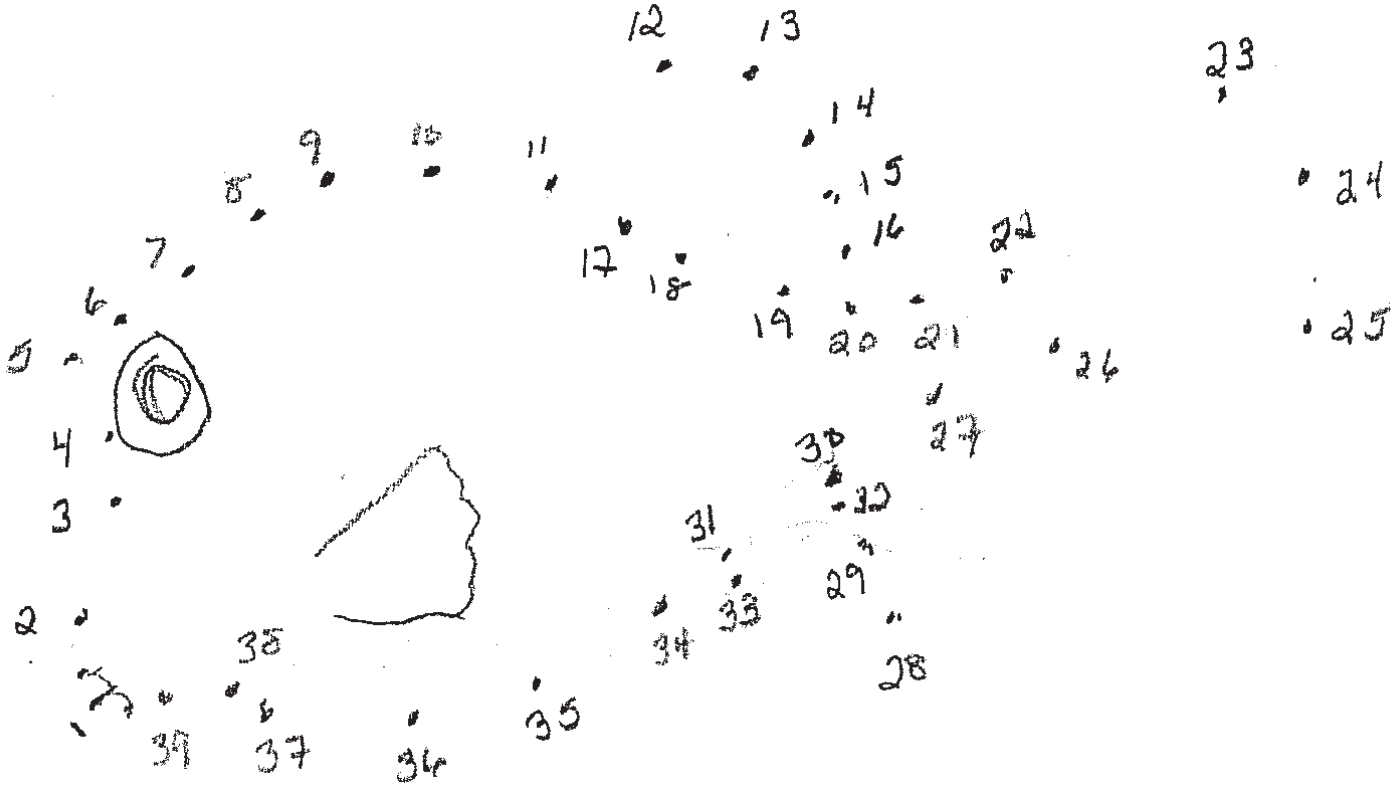


Parrotfish are named for their bright colors and strong beak-like jaws, used to bite off chunks of coral. They like to eat the plants (algae) that grow on corals. Parrotfish have a special grinding plate in their throat which they use to grind up the coral's hard skeleton. When they are finished, all that is left is fine sand.

Connect the dots



Boxfish are covered with a bad-tasting slime, which protects them from being eaten.

Color Me!

Coral reefs are in danger of disease and possible disappearance due in part to human activities.

A reef is like a busy city. More creatures live on coral reefs than in any other habitat in the ocean. Each animal and plant on or around the reef has a job to keep the ecosystem healthy. How many different animals can you count on this reef?

Word Search #2

Can you find these coral reef words?

C	L	Y	H	L	R	B	F	N	L	P	M	F	W	I
R	E	E	F	S	H	A	R	K	P	N	P	O	O	B
A	H	L	D	H	G	R	G	H	D	W	G	O	R	D
B	I	L	H	M	O	R	A	Y	E	E	L	D	M	P
S	P	O	N	G	E	A	N	G	E	L	F	I	S	H
N	R	W	R	R	R	C	A	R	P	S	L	V	U	R
I	R	T	F	O	W	U	A	E	C	E	L	E	D	F
N	O	A	Y	T	A	D	T	L	O	A	H	R	S	A
L	Y	N	T	R	E	A	O	D	R	U	M	S	A	F
Y	W	G	L	O	B	A	L	W	A	R	M	I	N	G
G	R	O	U	P	E	R	L	E	L	C	A	T	Y	E
B	A	R	R	I	E	R	Y	R	S	H	S	Y	M	N
Y	S	W	E	C	F	R	I	N	G	I	N	G	A	A
A	S	W	R	A	M	W	A	O	I	N	Y	E	Y	B
J	E	W	E	L	R	Y	A	F	L	R	I	M	O	A

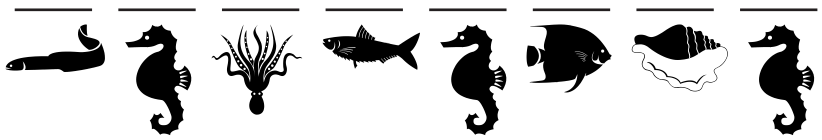
Words are found down and across.

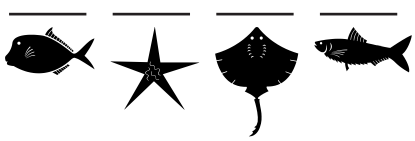
Food
Diversity
Fringing
Barrier
Atoll
Global warming
Moray eel
Reef shark
Crabs
Corals
Yellow tang
Tropical
Angelfish
Deep coral
Sea urchin
Worms
Wrasse
Sponge
Barracuda
Grouper
Drum
Jewelry

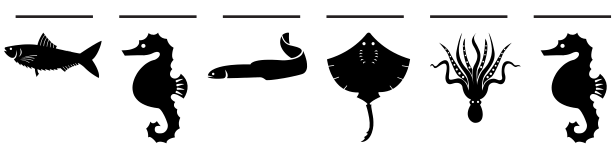
Secret Code

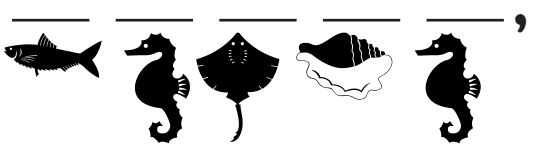
Even if you live far from the ocean, your actions impact coral reefs around the world. Find out how you can make a difference by decoding the secret message below.

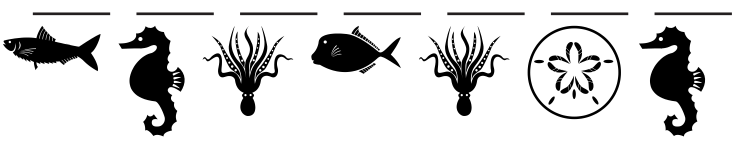
A =
O =
C =
R =
D =
S =
E =
T =
H =
U =
L =
Y =





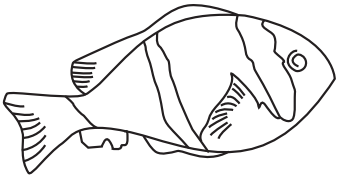


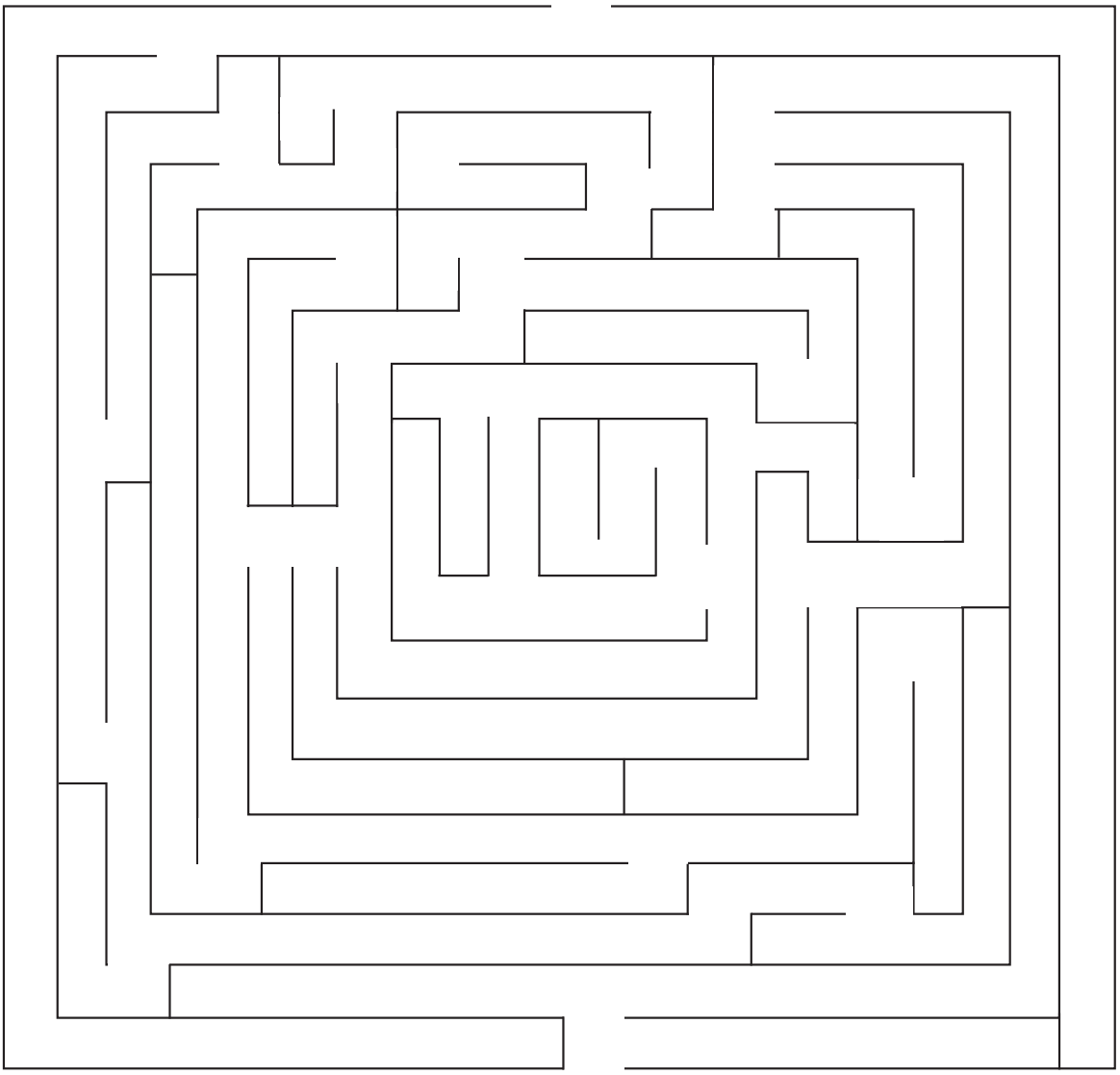


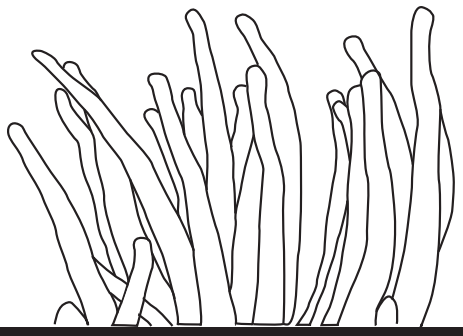


Maze

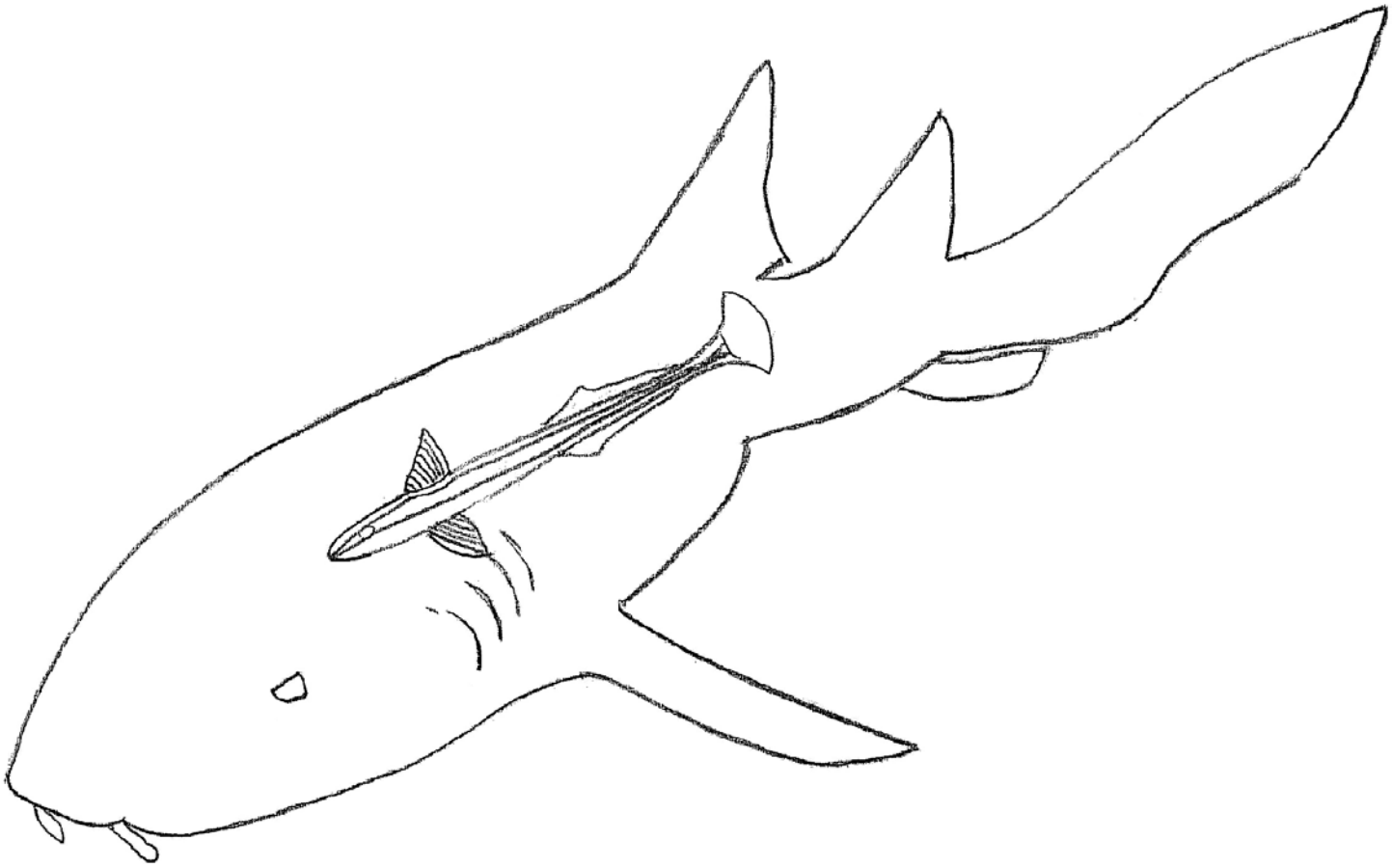
Can you help the clownfish find his anemone?







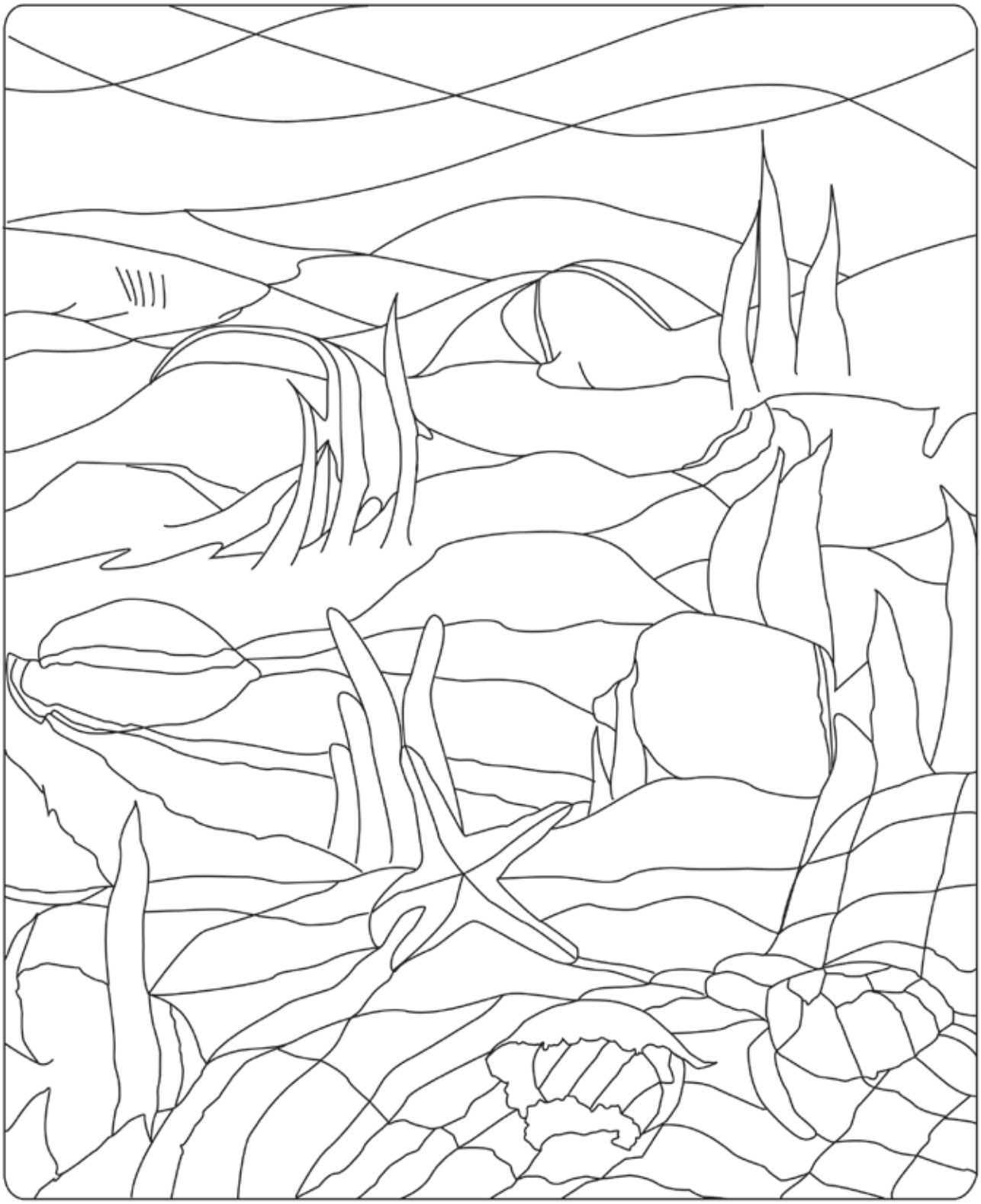
Color Me!



Nurse sharks, unlike most pelagic (open ocean) sharks, do not continuously move to stay alive. They are commonly found sitting on the ocean floor in and around coral reefs. They are active at night, and use the long barbels next to their mouths to sense and touch potential prey. The remora is a fish commonly found swimming alongside or attached to large fish or sharks, eating scraps of food missed by their host.

Hidden animals

Can you find the ten animals in this picture?



Mad Lib

1. _____ Day of the Week
2. _____ Town
3. _____ First name
4. _____ Animal
5. _____ Ocean name
6. _____ Friends first name
7. _____ Color
8. _____ Ocean animal
9. _____ Celebrity's name
10. _____ Color
11. _____ Object
12. _____ Action
13. _____ Place
14. _____ Size
15. _____ Color
16. _____ Ocean animals (plural)
17. _____ Color
18. _____ Shape
19. _____ Animal
20. _____ Size
21. _____ Action
22. _____ Color
23. _____ Your name
24. _____ Machine
25. _____ Action

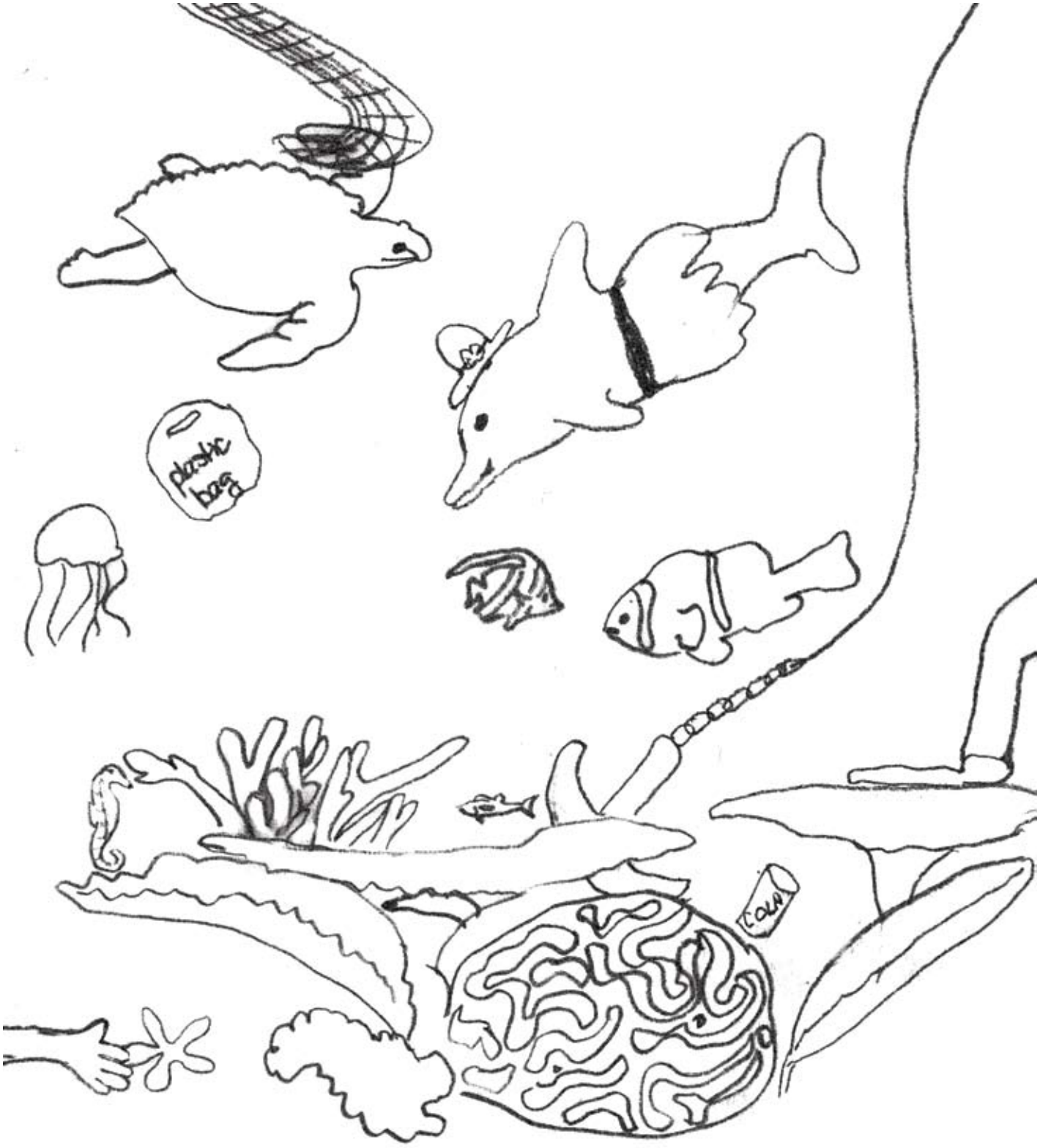
On _____(1), I went to the Aquarium in _____(2) with _____(3) and last night I had the strangest dream. I dreamt I was a _____(4) in the _____(5). My friend _____(6) was a _____(7) (color) _____(8)! We ran into _____(9), the starfish who asked if we wanted to take a ride in a _____(10) submarine to see a _____(11). We _____(12) to the sub and in no time we were at a part of the ocean we had never seen…a coral reef! It looked like a _____(13) city, but underwater with _____(14) _____(15) _____(16). We saw a _____(17) _____(18) _____(19), sea turtles, and a really _____(20) shark _____(21). I couldn't believe my eyes! I was going to take a piece of _____(22) coral back home to prove I'd been there, but _____(9) said "Stop _____(23)! It is very important that when you visit the ocean you take only pictures and leave only bubbles. You can harm the reef by touching it or leaving trash. When you get home, tell all your friends how nice it is here and that we can help protect the ocean together." Suddenly, my _____(24) sounded and I _____(25), but I remembered _____(9) 's words and couldn't wait to start helping protect coral reefs and the ocean.

Marine Debris

Draw a line from the type of debris (trash) to the time it takes to decompose (go away) in the marine environment.

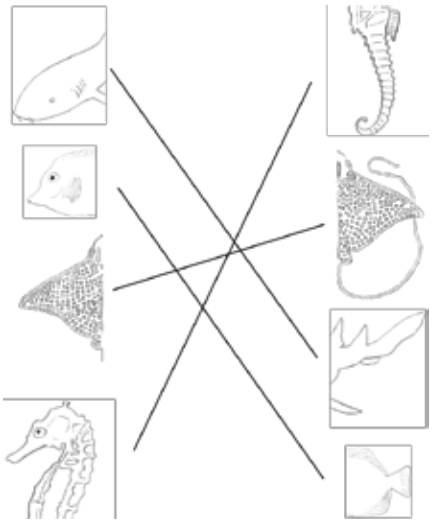
plastic bottle		200 years
apple core		400 years
plastic 6-packing		6 weeks
wax milk carton		450 years
aluminum cans		3 months
newspaper		2 months

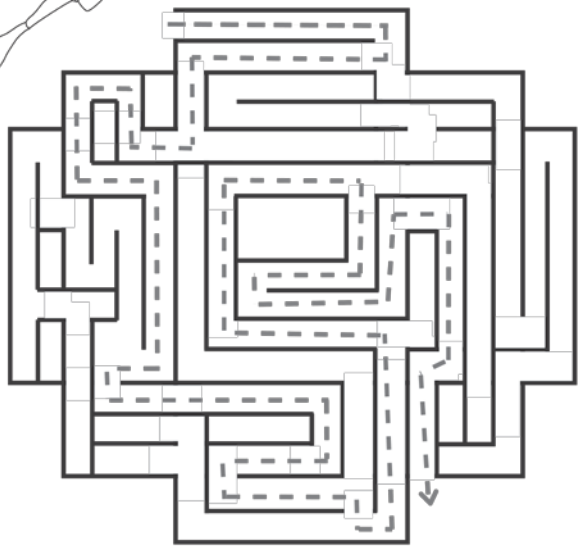
Can you find the 8 things wrong in this picture?



Answers

C L Y H L R B F N L P M F W I
R E E F S H A R K P N P O O B
A H L D H G R G H D W G O R D
B I L H M O R A Y E E L D M P
S P O N G E A N G E L F I S H
N R W R R R C A R P S L V U R
I R T F O W U A E C E L E D F
N O A Y T A D T L O A H R S A
L Y N T R E A O D R U M S A F
Y W G L O B A L W A R M I N G
G R O U P E R L E L C A T Y E
B A R R I E R Y R S H S Y M N
Y S W E C F R I N G I N G A A
A S W R A M W A O I N Y E Y B
J E W E L R Y A F L R I M O A



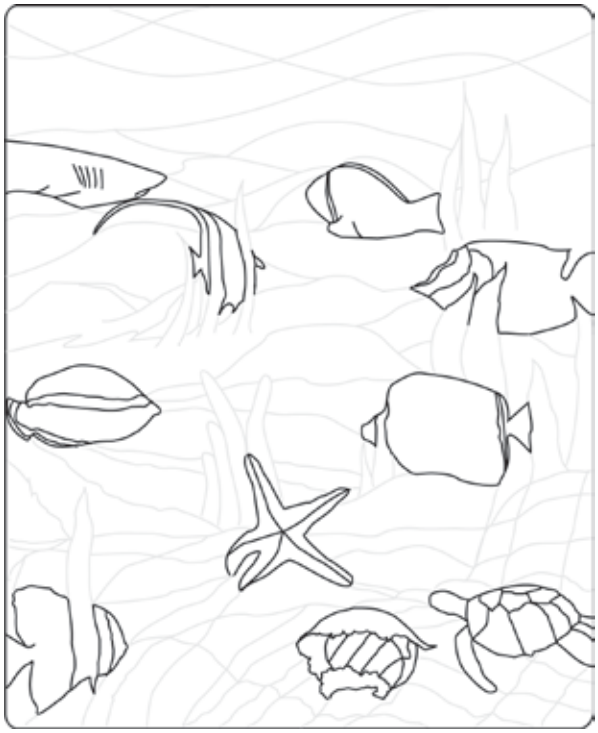


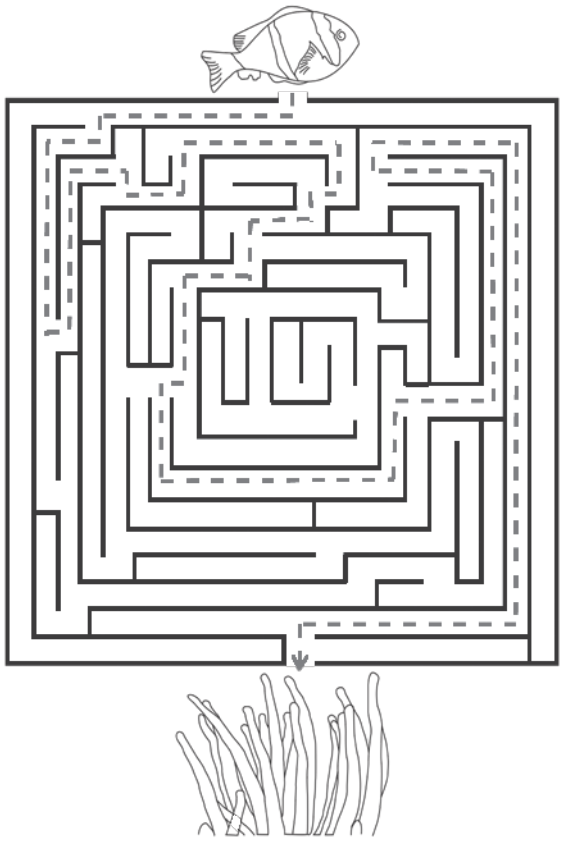
S A E Z O O P L A N K T O N R
T O C O R A L R E E F E O R O
O K P O L Y P R D E A T S A A
N O L X O T L C G A M L N R O
Y S P A W N I N G N S L T T M
S M T N E M A T O C Y S T N N
P H O T O S Y N T H E S I S E
A A T H O R S E L K H O R N B
W T A E N E E I S S A F N A A
N O B L E A C H I N G T L B R
I L L L N T E N E Z R C G R R
N L E A N E M O N E S O P A I
G E T E M P E R A T U R E I E
D I V E R S E A N I M A L N R
D I V E R S E A F A N L R A L

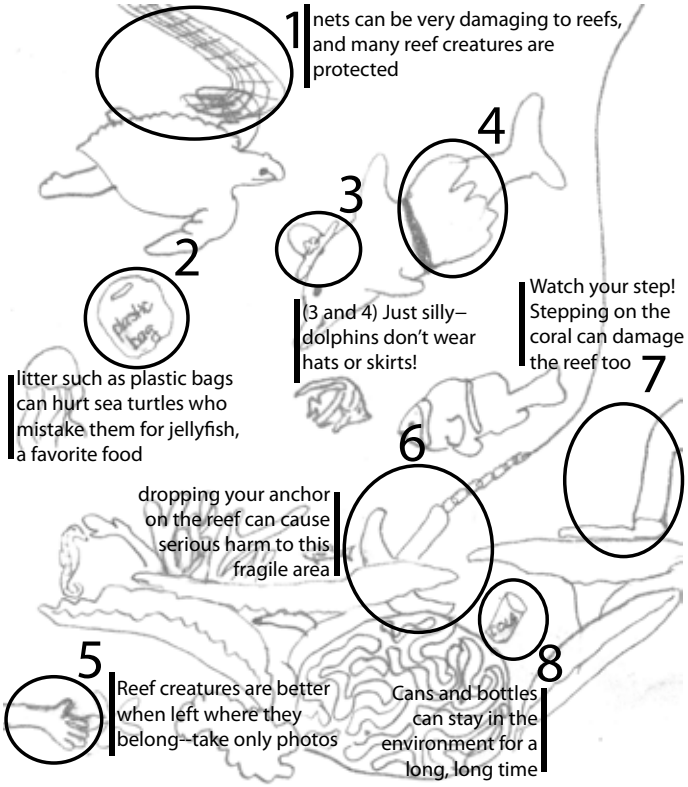
Sea horse match: #'s 3 and 5 are the same

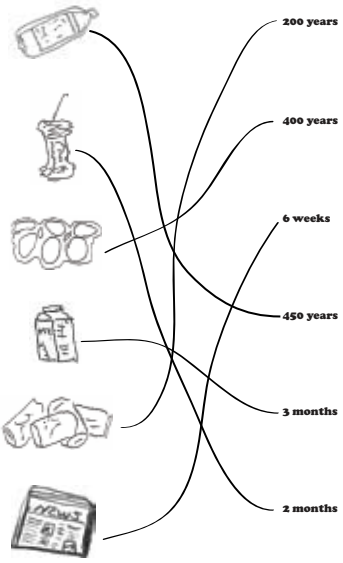
Secret Code: Decrease your trash, reduce, reuse, recycle

More Answers









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