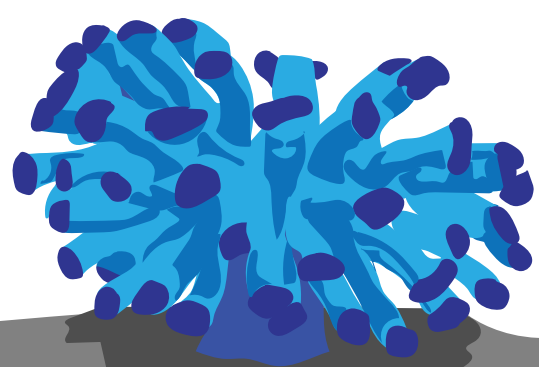


# AQUARISTS CAN HELP SAVE CORAL REEFS

## CORALS IN THE HOBBY

Thanks to improvements in aquarium technology and a very large (and continuously growing) knowledge base, it is now possible to bring the reef into home aquariums. There are hundreds of different varieties that are readily available and can be easily kept and cared for. So many of the species you see in the aquarium trade would not be available without successful coral culturing.



All nine *Euphyllia* species would be endangered in the wild, if not for the efforts of coral culturing.

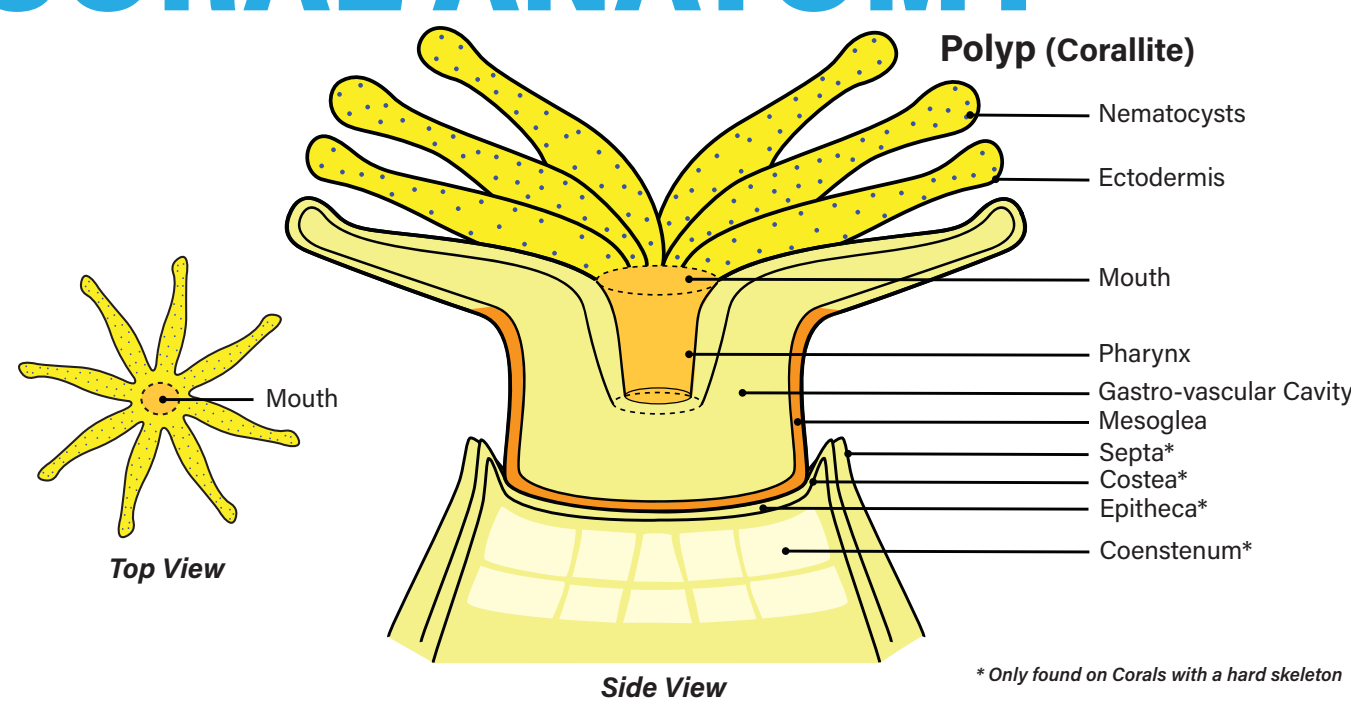
## CULTURED CORALS

There are two different types of cultured corals, aquacultured and maricultured. These methods are the wave of the future for the aquarium industry and for coral reef conservation.

Aquacultured corals are raised in tanks and other man made systems. They are grown in artificial conditions so they are more adapted and therefore easier to care for in home aquariums. Through selective cultivation a variety of colors, not often found in nature, are more readily available in the hobby.

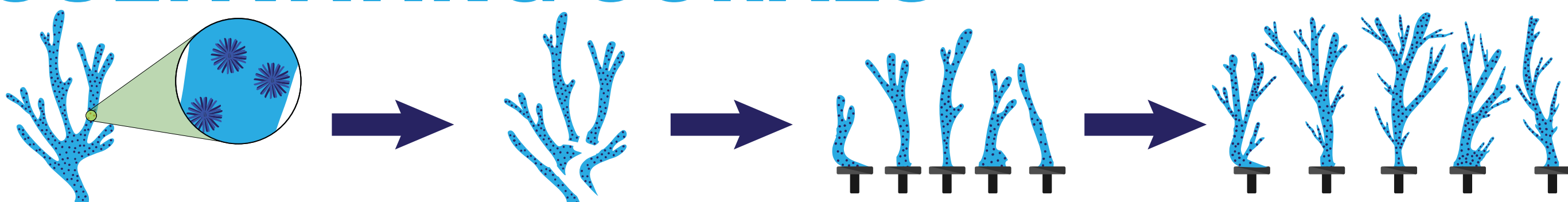
Maricultured corals are grown from fragments on man made structures in the ocean separate from natural reefs. A portion of the colonies are selected for the hobby, and the rest are replanted on reefs or cultivated for the next generation of maricultured corals.

## CORAL ANATOMY



Often confused with plants, corals are actually animals. Each polyp of a coral has a mouth, digestive and vascular system. They also have a symbiotic algae that lives within their tissue. The algae photosynthesize producing food, which is then transferred to the polyp. This food provides nutrients that the coral needs to grow.

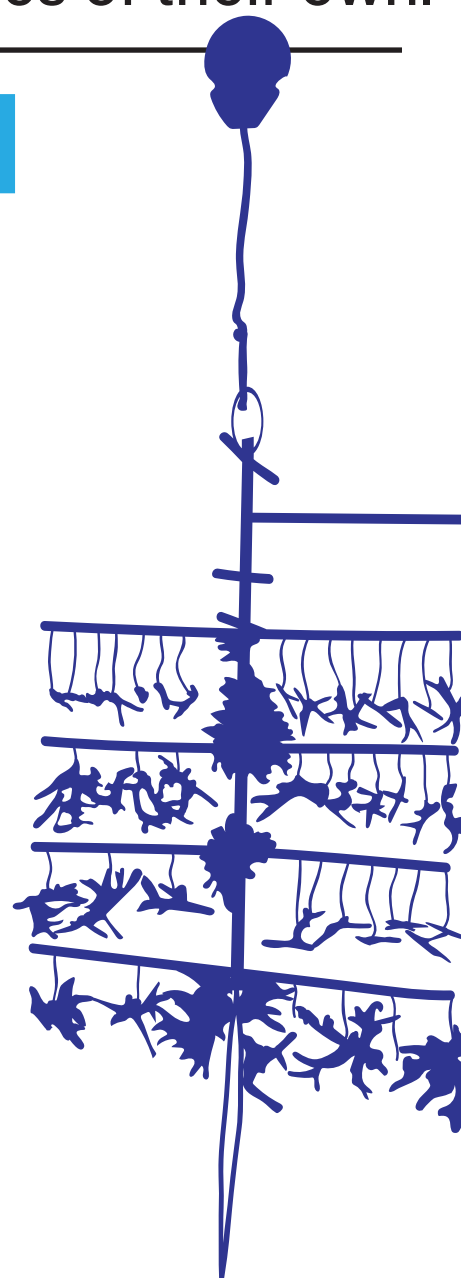
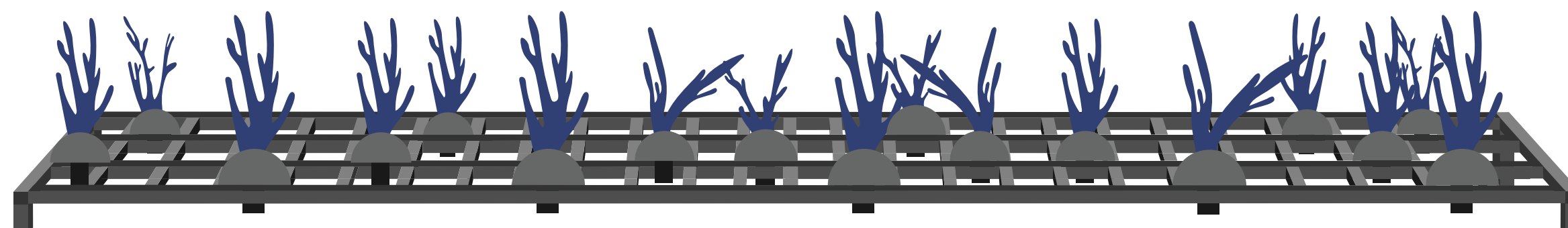
## CULTIVATING CORALS



Thousands of individual polyps, connected by a simple membrane, make up a parent coral colony. Due to the fact that polyps are individual animals, they can be isolated for propagation. This isolation process is known as coral fragging, in which specialized tools are used to detach a polyp or groups of polyps from the parent colony. Over time these coral fragments will grow into colonies of their own.

## RESTORATION & CONSERVATION

Local economies depend on natural reefs. They provide an incentive for communities to sustain and grow corals. Global efforts are being employed to partner with local organizations to provide resources needed to mariculture corals successfully. Many of these efforts would not be possible without the knowledge gained through aquaculturing and mariculturing corals in the aquarium industry. The same processes that are used in culturing corals for the hobby are also used in restoring the reefs. As maricultured corals are being grown out on man made structures, they provide additional habitats for local marine life as well as economic value by being available for the trade. By selecting maricultured and aquacultured corals in home aquariums, hobbyists help support coral conservation efforts.



**CORAL TRIANGLE**

Indian Ocean | Pacific Ocean

**OVER 600 OF THE WORLD'S CORAL SPECIES CAN BE FOUND IN THE REGION**

At 6 million square kilometers, The Coral Triangle is the most biodiverse marine area in the world. It economically supports more than 120 million people. There are 15 endemic coral species that are only found within this range.

**CARIBBEAN SEA**

Gulf of Mexico | Pacific Ocean

**HOME TO 14% OF THE WORLD'S CORAL REEFS**

The Caribbean Sea, at a size of 2.75 million square kilometers, has the richest coral diversity in the Atlantic Ocean. Due to laws and regulations there is no wild collecting of stony corals in the area. Coral conservation groups are working to restore critically endangered species such as *Acropora cervicornis* and *Acropora palmata*.

**GREAT BARRIER REEF**

Arafura Sea | Coral Sea

**SIX BILLION DOLLARS GENERATED ANNUALLY FOR LOCAL ECONOMIES**

The Great Barrier Reef is composed of 2900 individual reef systems and spans 344,400 square kilometers making it the only living network visible from space. It is recognized as one of the seven natural wonders of the world and is home to over 400 hard and soft coral species.

## REEF BUILDING CORALS

*Acropora*, *Montipora*, and the Brain Corals are keystone species that serve as the base habitats for all reef animals. These three types of corals, referred to as the reef building corals, form the largest and most predominant colonies on the reef. Through aquaculture and mariculture efforts these corals are being replanted and regrown in their natural habitats.

