

LIFE IN A Coral Reef





Table of Contents

The Coral Reef Biome	4
The Climate	8
The Plants	12
The Animals	16
The Great Barrier Reef	20
Glossary	22
To Learn More	23
Index	24

The Coral Reef Biome



Coral reefs are among the world's most colorful **biomes**! Many beautiful plants and animals live there.



Tube-shaped animals called **coral polyps** build up reefs over time. They grow hard **skeletons** and attach to those of dead corals.



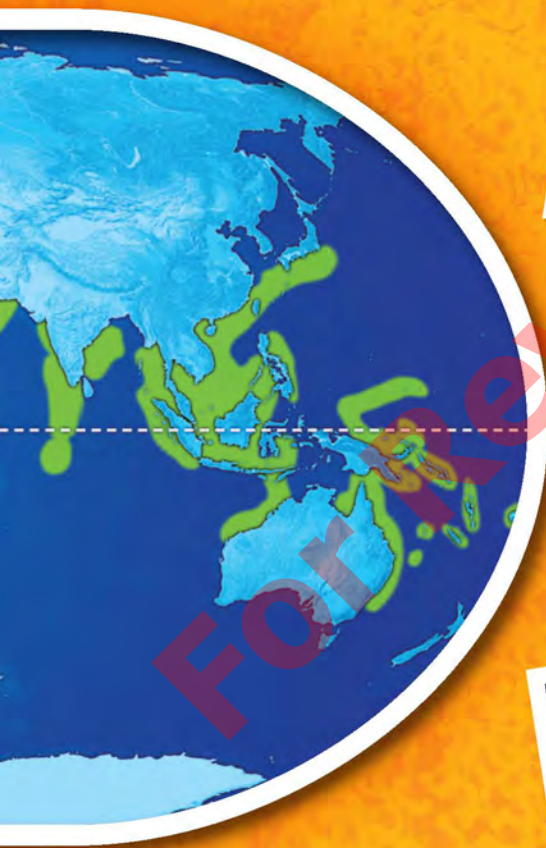
coral polyps

Most coral reefs lie in the warm **tropics**. There are three main types of tropical reefs.

tropical coral reefs = 



Fringing reefs stretch along shores. **Barrier** reefs are farther out. Ring-shaped **atolls** rise from sunken islands.



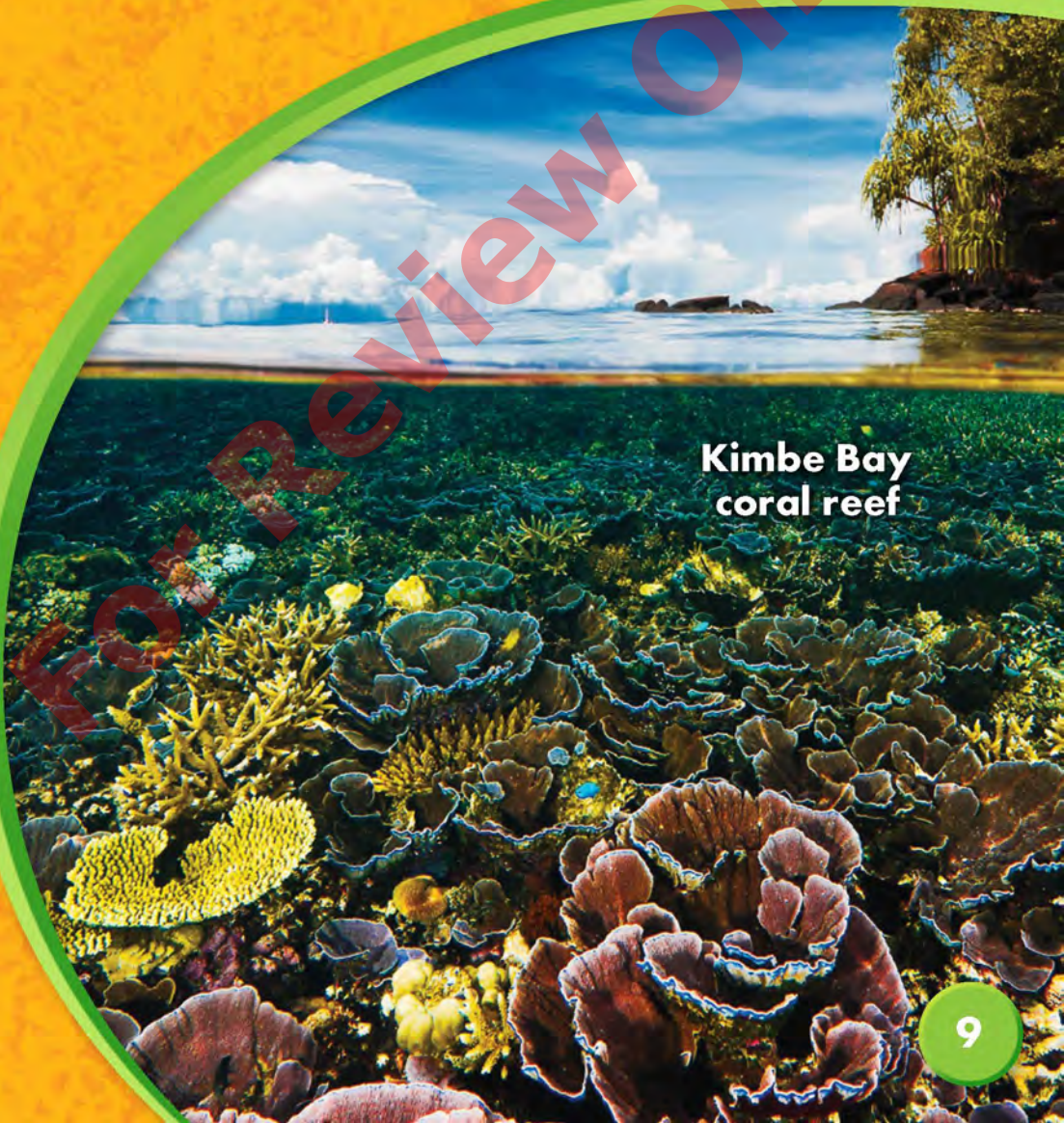
The Climate

Red Sea
coral reef



Tropical coral reefs have a warm **climate**. The sun shines through the clear, shallow salt water.

Water temperatures usually stay between 65 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit (18 and 29 degrees Celsius).



**Kimbe Bay
coral reef**