

Coral Reefs

Coral reefs are among the most bio-diverse habitats on our planet. They are composed of a huge variety of organisms and are extremely complex. However, many coral reefs are in decline due to global warming, ocean acidification, as well as negligent development of buildings. Snorkeling and diving can be great ways to experience reefs, bringing positive tourist influence to help locals and nonlocals care about keeping them healthy. However, divers and snorkelers can harm coral reefs if they are not careful and aware of their surroundings.



<http://www.redorbit.com/media/uploads/2012/06/science-062012-004-617x416.jpg>

Issues Divers Cause:

Divers can severely affect reefs without realizing it. Issues a diver can cause include the following...

- Damaging reef life by kicking, grabbing, or walking on it, as well as stirring up sediments, which ends up settling on the coral.
- Using sunscreen that is not ocean and coral reef safe can be toxic to reef organisms.
- Littering and / or polluting the environment by dropping things or by not being careful.



<http://scene7.targetimg1.com/is/image/Target/14552051?wid=480&hei=480>



http://www.bigistanddivers.com/happy_new_diver_kona_hawaii_DSD.jpg

How You Can Help!

- Be aware of your surroundings when diving.
- When observing the wildlife, leave space between the organisms and you. Allow the wildlife to feel comfortable and unthreatened by your presence.
- Be aware of anything you may have in pockets or around your wrists so that you can make sure it won't fall off and end up polluting the ocean.
- Use products that are safe for a reef environment such a sunscreen from "Streams 2 Seas".
- Spread the word! Educate your friends and family on how to properly respect the marine environment when diving.

Great Websites With More Information

Streams2seas.com

- Gives alternative sunscreens and lotions that are safe for a marine environments

www.reefresilience.org

- Gives examples of how tourism and recreational scuba can harm the reefs if people are not careful

Right-tourism.com/issues/marine-activities/coral-damage

- Explains what coral damage is and how it can negatively impact the environment



http://www.zicasso.com/sites/default/files/styles/original_scaled_down/public/cleanup/sampletrip/Australia_Great_Barrier_Reef_Tour_Coral.jpg



http://l.telegraph.co.uk/multi-media/archive/00678/diver-404_676902c.jpg



[http://www.eaglespalace.gr/files/final/9_experiences/8_4_diving/inner_galler](http://www.eaglespalace.gr/files/final/9_experiences/8_4_diving/inner_gallery/diving_5.jpg)

Affecting Reefs

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