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Pristine coral reef discovered off coast of Tahiti

24th January, 2022



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Marine biologists have unearthed a spectacular coral reef off the coast of Tahiti in the South Pacific. The 3km-long reef lies at a depth of 30 metres. The scientists believe the array of corals and ocean vegetation contains previously undiscovered marine species. They have already found hundreds of rose-shaped coral, some of which measure over two metres in diameter. Deep-sea diver Alexis Rosenfeld said he was stunned when he came across the reef. He wrote: "It was magical to witness giant, beautiful rose corals which stretch for as far as the eye can see. It was like a work of art." Scientist Laetitia Hedouin said: "It's a very healthy reef. In the middle of the biodiversity crisis, this is very good news."

Scientists say the location of the Tahiti reef means it is in pristine condition. Most of the world's reefs are in warmer waters. This makes them prone to the bleaching effects of global warming. Tahiti's reef is deep enough to protect it from bleaching. There is still sufficient sunlight at 30 metres for coral to grow and reproduce. UNESCO said: "We think that deeper reefs may be better protected from global warming." It believes the Tahiti reef is "one of the most extensive healthy coral reefs on record". It added that more mapping of the deep ocean needs to be undertaken. It said: "We know more about the surface of the Moon or the surface of Mars than the deeper part of the ocean."

Sources: aljazeera.com / cbsnews.com / newscientist.com

Writing

More money should be spent on ocean research than on space research. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

marine biologists / coral / reef / South Pacific / species / rose / magical / good news / Tahiti / pristine / bleaching / global warming / mapping / deep ocean / Moon / Mars

True / False

- 1) The newly-found coral reef is 30km long. T / F
- 2) The scientists say they have found dozens of new marine species. T / F
- 3) A diver said it was magical to see giant rose-shaped corals. T / F
- 4) A scientist said the discovery could end the biodiversity crisis. T / F
- 5) The Tahiti reef has been damaged by bleaching from the sun. T / F
- 6) The article says there is enough sunlight for life to reproduce in the reef. T / F
- 7) UNESCO said there was a need to map more of the ocean. T / F
- 8) UNESCO said we know more about Mars than about the deep ocean. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. unearthed | a. conducted |
| 2. spectacular | b. discovered |
| 3. stunned | c. substantial |
| 4. witness | d. susceptible |
| 5. crisis | e. astounded |
| 6. pristine | f. impressive |
| 7. prone | g. immaculate |
| 8. protect | h. critical point |
| 9. extensive | i. safeguard |
| 10. undertaken | j. observe |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about Tahiti?
- c) How beautiful are coral reefs?
- d) What do you know about bleaching from global warming?
- e) Should we spend more money on ocean research than space research?
- f) What do you know about Mars?
- g) Is it more important to know about Mars or our oceans?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

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Phrase Match

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| 1. | biologists have unearthed | a. | marine species |
| 2. | the array | b. | extensive healthy coral reefs |
| 3. | previously undiscovered | c. | crisis |
| 4. | stretch for as far as | d. | condition |
| 5. | In the middle of the biodiversity | e. | a spectacular coral reef |
| 6. | it is in pristine | f. | sunlight at 30 metres |
| 7. | This makes them prone | g. | Mars |
| 8. | There is still sufficient | h. | of corals |
| 9. | one of the most | i. | to the bleaching effects |
| 10. | the surface of | j. | the eye can see |

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you know about marine biology?
- b) What do you know about coral reefs?
- c) How important is the discovery of the coral reef?
- d) Why are coral reefs important?
- e) Would you like to be a marine biologist?
- f) What do you think of scuba diving?
- g) Have you ever witnessed anything magical?
- h) What is the biodiversity crisis?

Spelling

- 1. Marine otbiigsols
- 2. unearthed a pclteaucrsa coral reef
- 3. the rryaa of corals and ocean vegetation
- 4. marine csesiep
- 5. It was cgalmai to witness
- 6. In the middle of the iibesvrydoti crisis
- 7. it is in resnippet condition
- 8. nerop to the bleaching effects
- 9. iiffecstnu sunlight
- 10. grow and rpueeocdr
- 11. the most sevtieex healthy coral reefs
- 12. needs to be ruedntkaen

Answers – Synonym Match

1. b	2. f	3. e	4. j	5. h
6. g	7. d	8. i	9. c	10. a

Role Play

Role A – Coral Reefs

You think coral reefs are the best things about oceans. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least appealing of these (and why): fishing, sunsets or marine life.

Role B – Fishing

You think fishing is the best thing about oceans. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least appealing of these (and why): coral reefs, sunsets or marine life.

Role C – Sunsets

You think sunsets are the best things about oceans. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least appealing of these (and why): fishing, coral reefs or marine life.

Role D – Marine Life

You think marine life is the best thing about oceans. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least appealing of these (and why): fishing, sunsets or coral reefs.

Speaking – Oceans

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about oceans at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Sailing
- Colour
- Tides
- Marine life
- Coral reefs
- Fishing
- Beaches
- Sunsets

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	T	4	F	5	F	6	T	7	T	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.