

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD'S GREATEST NATURAL WONDER





APPENDIX

GLOSSARY

abyssal depths from 4000 to 6000 m (13,123 to 19,685 ft) below sea level

anemones or sea anemones most species are column-shaped polyps with an adhesive foot at the base and tentacles at the 'mouth' end

beche-de-mer sea cucumber, a delicacy (fresh or dried) in Eastern and Southeast Asian cuisines

bi-valves molluscs whose bodies are enclosed by two shells—for example, oysters and clams

bioluminescence the production of light by a living organism

biomass biological material from living or decomposing organisms

bommies an outcrop of rock and coral

bryozoans lace coral

ciguatera a form of food poisoning caused by eating reef fish contaminated with toxins produced by micro-organisms called dinoflagellates

cilia tiny hair-like projections on the surfaces of some organisms

cnidarian animals an enormous group of animals that possess specially modified cells called nematocysts, or stinging cells. This group includes sea jellies, anemones, sea whips, zooanthids, corallimorphians, stinging hydroids, hard corals and soft corals

commensal an organism that benefits from living with another organism without harming or benefiting it

coral bommie see Bommie

coral coring drilling and removing a core sample from coral for research purposes

coralline resembling coral

crystalline resembling crystal

culvert drain

cusped ribbon reefs ribbon reefs that form a triangular elongated growth

detrital feeders or detritivores organisms that feed off decomposing plants and animals

diatomaceous earths the fossilised remains of a type of hard-shelled algae called diatoms; they are used for, among other things, filters, cat litter and pest repellents in gardens

families, genera and species all plants and animals are classified according to the family they belong to; they are then subdivided into genera (plural for 'genus') and again into species—for example, the humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) is a member of the Balaenopteridae family (that is, baleen whales, which have baleen plates for filtering food from water, rather than teeth), and it also belongs to the genus *Megaptera*, and to the species *Megaptera novaeangliae*

flotsam is floating wreckage from a ship or its cargo

Foraminiferans are the most common marine plankton species

foram sand sand made up of the tiny shells of single-celled organisms called foraminifera

free-living organism one that is not directly dependent on another

organism for survival—for example, sharks swim freely and depend only on other organisms for food

gamete a cell that fuses with another cell during fertilisation; in organisms that reproduce sexually, one gamete may be the ovum or egg and the other the sperm

gastropods are a class of molluscs, including sea snails, whelks, abalone, conches and periwinkles

glaciation ice age characterised by lower temperatures and the advance of glaciers

guano the urine and faeces of birds, cave-dwelling bats and seals that is used as a garden fertiliser

heathlands areas of low-growing shrubs where the soil is too poor to support the growth of trees

humic substances major organic constituents, usually in soils

hydrographer someone who charts a body of water by measuring its depths, tides and currents, usually to establish a safe passage for shipping

hydroids cnidarian feather-like animals with stinging capsules

interstitial spaces the gaps between matter, such as the gaps between grains of sand

invertebrate animal species without a backbone

jetsam is a part of a ship, or its associated equipment or cargo that is deliberately cast overboard to lighten the load if the ship finds itself in distress

K-T Extinction the period when dinosaurs became extinct about 65 million years ago—'K' stands for the Cretaceous Period and 'T' for the Tertiary Period

leeward is the direction downwind from the point of reference

macroalgae seaweeds

microbes single-celled organisms, including viruses and bacteria, that cannot be seen without a microscope

nematocysts stinging capsules in cnidarian animals, such as jellyfish

ooze fine mud on the sea floor that is full of decaying life forms

ooze dwellers those organisms that live off the ooze on the sea floor

operculum little lid or 'trapdoor' used by such gastropods as sea snails to close the opening of its shell

plankton or planktonic organisms any (usually microscopic) animals, plants, algae or bacteria that drift in the ocean

proboscis usually refers to the nose or snout in vertebrate animals, or to a long protruding part on an invertebrate

rain shadow a dry area on the lee side of a mountain range

runoff excess water from rain flows off the land into rivers and, ultimately, into the sea

sedges a family of flowering plants that look like grasses or rushes

sedimentation the build-up of silt and sediment against a barrier

semi-terrestrial organisms, such as sand crabs, that do not live entirely on land

shoals sandbanks or sand bars

strandline the high water mark on a beach where waves deposit flotsam and jetsam

substrate mud, rocks or sand at the bottom of a marine environment

synaptid referring to tentacles at the end of a sea cucumber which it cannot retract into the body cavity

terrestrial living on land, rather than in the sea

thalli vegetative tissue of some organisms such as algae, fungus and lichens—for example, seaweed may look as if it has branches or stems and leaves but marine biologists class the whole organism as a thallus

turf algae algae that grow in turf-like structures

vertebrate animal species that have a backbone or spinal column

water column any vertical body of water, from the sea floor to the surface

watershed a mountain range, ridge or peak that separates water catchment areas

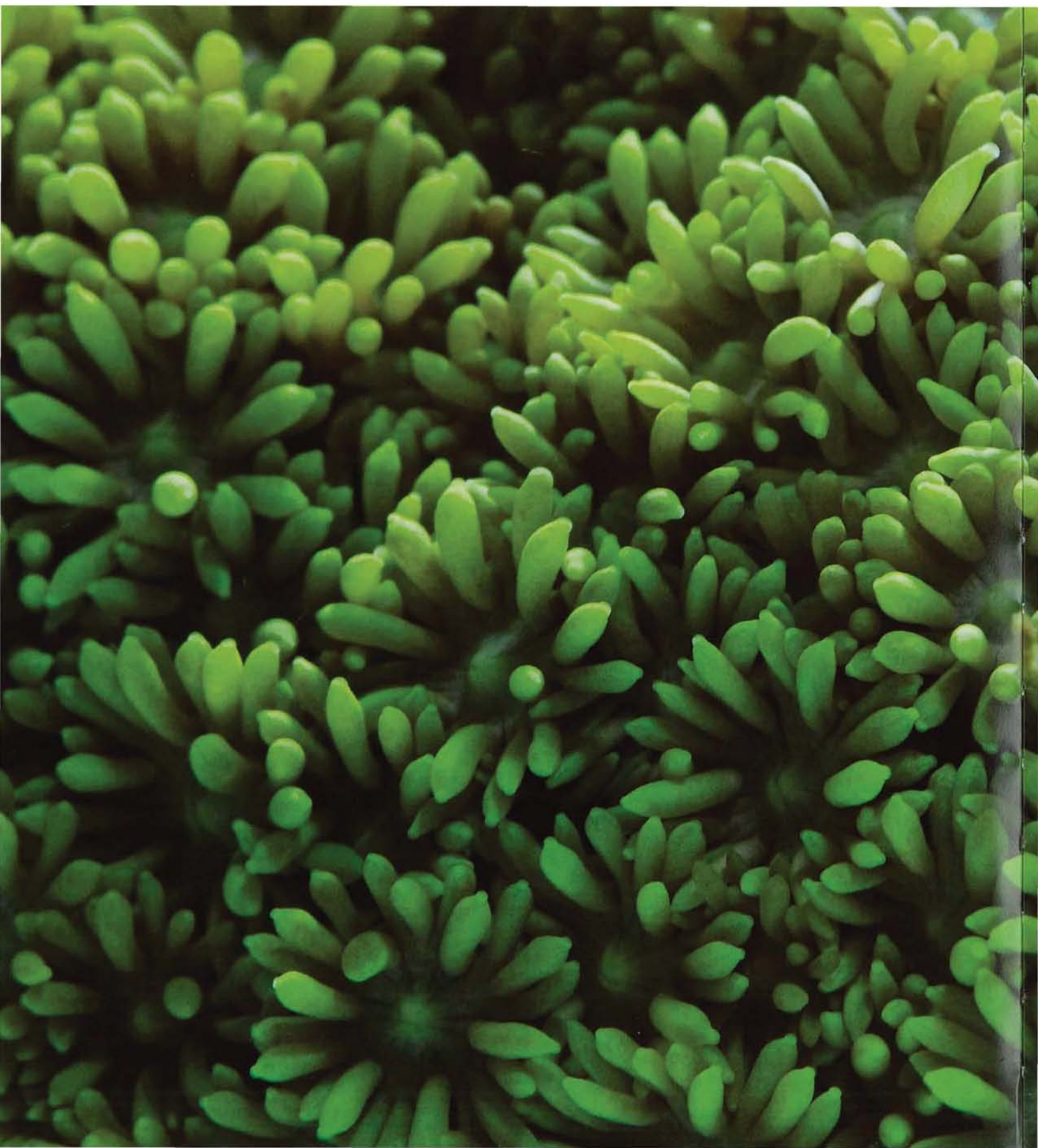
zooplankton small floating aquatic animals

zooxanthellae microscopic algae that live in the tissues of coral polyps

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USEFUL INFORMATION

General information

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
(GBRMPA), Go to: www.gbrmpa.gov.au

Queensland Marine Parks,
Go to: www.derm.qld.gov.au

Camping

For permits and information,
Go to: www.derm.qld.gov.au

For information on Torres Strait Islands
camping, contact The Torres Strait
Regional Authority, Go to:
<http://www.tsra.gov.au/>

Fishing

To report suspected emergency and animal
diseases, phone the Emergency Animal
Diseases Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888.

To report suspected exotic plant pests, phone
the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

To report out-of-place shark equipment or
trapped marine animals, phone the Shark
Hotline on 1800 806 891.

To report illegal fishing activities, phone
the Fishwatch Hotline on 1800 017 116.

To report your catch of tagged fish, phone
the Tagged Fish Hotline on 1800 077 001.

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the late Isobel Bennett, who was Australia's leading authority on the intertidal organisms found on our coasts. She also wrote nine books, kept William Dakin's *Australian Seashores* book alive long after his death (ultimately as first author) and taught hundreds of students the excitement of our seas and reefs. She was awarded an MSc (the first honorary one from the University of Sydney), a DSc (Honours, University of New South Wales) and an AO for her contributions to marine science. One of the first women to join an expedition with Australian Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE)—to Macquarie Island—Bennett also had several species of animals and orchids named after her. She made numerous visits to the Great Barrier Reef from as early as 1954 onwards, and wrote the first definitive book on the Great Barrier Reef. She was a stunning inspiration to many.

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info@murdochbooks.com.au

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