

Animals, Plants, or Mineral?
All Animals. Just a bit peculiar
looking.

Coral Reef Clip art and Information Cards

Anemones

Coral

Sea Fan

Sponges

Sea Anemone



Sea Anemone

Anemones are animals in the Anthozoa, flower-like animals, class. Not only are these beautiful creatures animals, but they are carnivorous (meat-eating) animals. Their diet consist of fish, animal plankton, and small crustaceans. They have a mouth and a digestive system. The mouth is surrounded by stinging tentacles which paralyze and push the prey into its opening.

The clownfish is immune to the anemone's poison and will often live in its protective tentacles. Anemones also interact with the hermit crab. The anemone will attach itself to the shell of the crab, offering the crab protection from predators. The anemone benefits from both the clownfish and the crab by eating the food scraps they leave.

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Coral

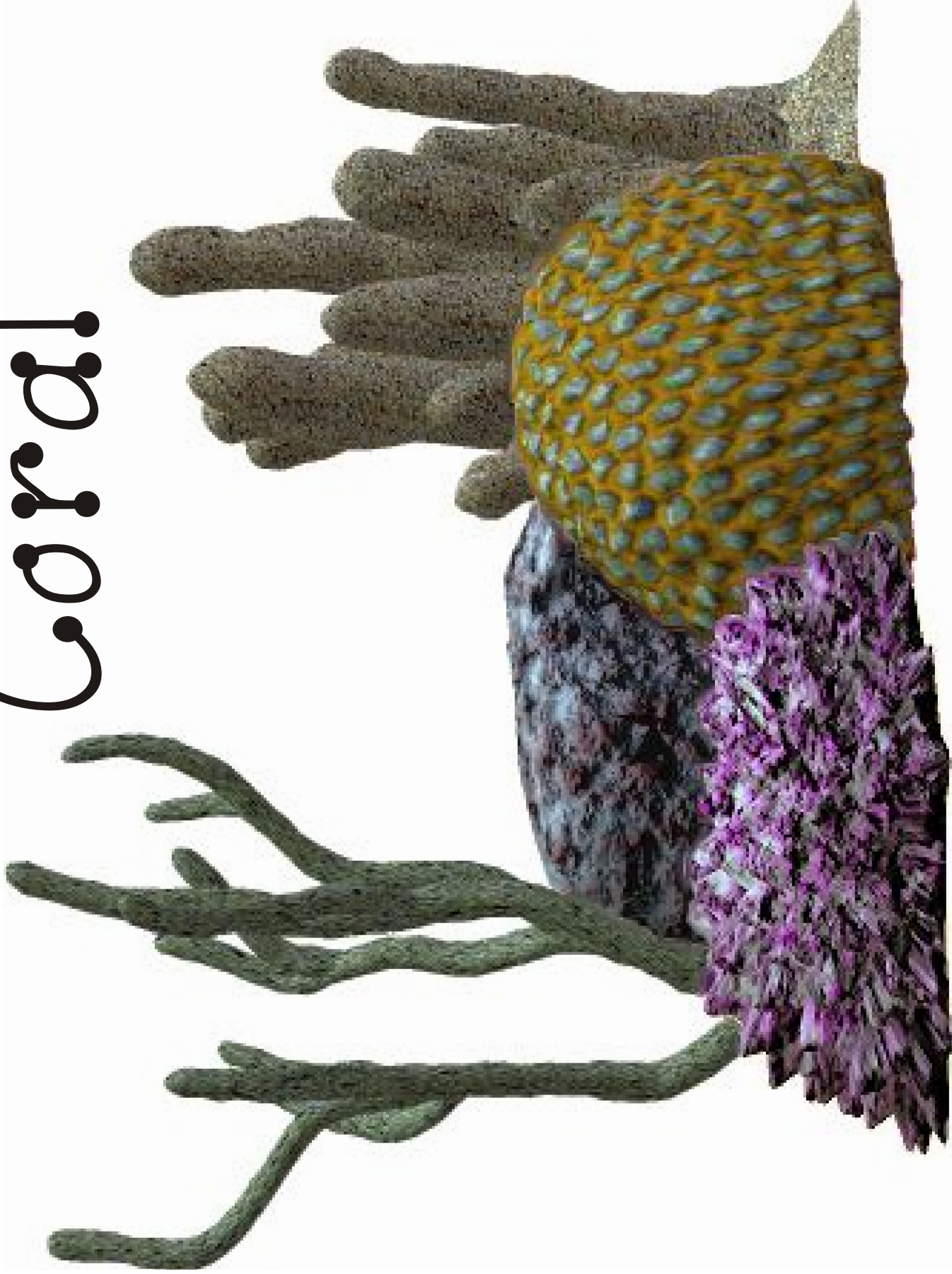
Corals belong to the phylum Cnidaria. An individual coral is called a polyp. These are nonmoving animals who will only move if it necessary. All cnidarians have special stinging cells. The tentacles around a coral's mouth contains these cells, and the coral uses this poison in its tentacles to paralyze its prey. It then continues to use its tentacles to push the prey into its mouth.

There are over 6000 species of coral. Some of these animals look like plants, while others look like stone. The stony corals build reefs in the sea which are homes to almost one fourth of the ocean's life. Stony corals have hard outer skins. When the polyps die, the stony skins remain, and new coral attaches to them. These habitat reefs are important to the survival of many of the ocean's creatures.

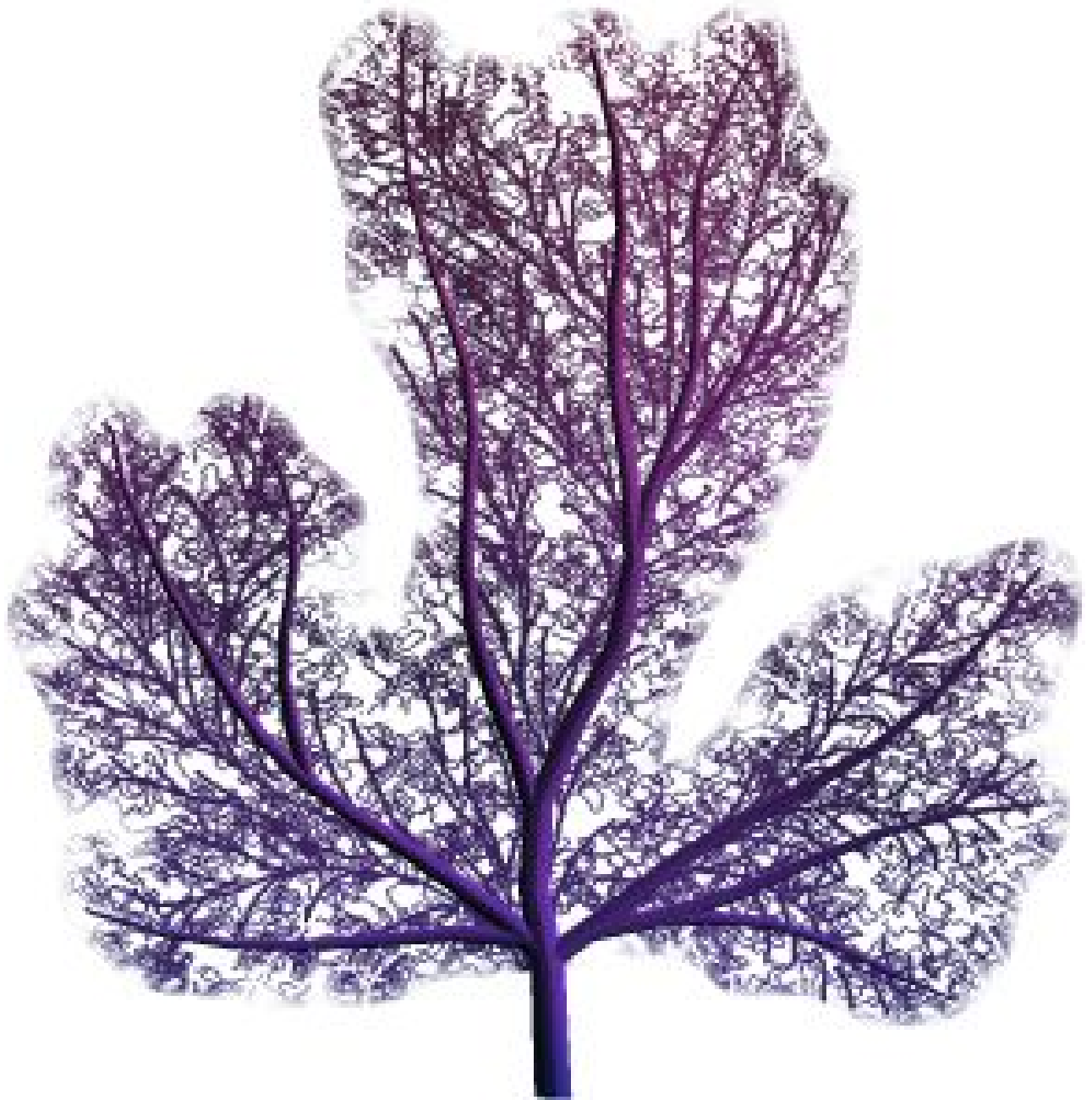
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Coral



Sea Fan



Sea Fan

This fluffy sea feather is actually a colony of small sea creatures living along the branches of a central skeleton. The Gorgonin, a horny flexible skeleton covered with tissue, supports the branches which host the many polyps living on it. The individual polyp has 8 tentacles, making it in the subclass of soft coral, Octocorallia. The polyps feed from animal plankton that drifts across them. Like most coral, they are connected by their internal digestive tissues, gastrodermis, and the tissue between that and the epidermis. This allows food consumed by individual polyps to sustain the entire colony.

There are 500 species of Sea Fans. They come in purples, reds, yellows, and oranges. Unlike a lot of other corals that attach to hard surfaces, the Sea Fan digs itself into the sand or mud on the ocean bottom.

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Sponges

Sponges are animals of the Porifera (pore bearing) phylum. They have no organs, but instead have colonies of special cells to perform the functions required for feeding and nourishment. Sponges are filter feeders. They filter water through their porous surface. The filtered water flows out of the opening, the osculum. Choanocytes are cells of the interior wall. Each of these cells has a flagellum which pumps the water through the sponge. Another type of cell absorbs the food and transports it the nutrients to other sponge cells. The cells of a sponge all work together, and some will even change functions when needed. If a living sponge is cut into pieces, the cells will reform into another sponge.

Most bath and kitchen sponges are synthetic or made of a plant product as the loofa. However, the skeleton of some sponges are made of a soft protein, spongin, which is used as a bath sponge.

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Sponges

