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Glossary

abyss
A layer of the ocean between 4000–6000 m deep.

adaptation
A change in an organism that allows it to better suit its environment.

algae
A simple, plant-like organism that does not have ordinary roots, stems or leaves and grow in water.

annelid
Worms that have bodies made up of rings or segments.

aquarium
A glass container in which plants and aquatic animals are kept, or a building made up of numerous aquariums.

aquatic
Living in, growing in, or happening in water.

arthropod
An invertebrate that has jointed limbs, a hard shell and a segmented body, such as a crab or insect.

bioluminescent
A creature or plant that creates its own light.

cnidarian
An aquatic invertebrate that has stinging tentacles, such as a sea anemone or jellyfish.

consumer
An animal that eats plants (producers) or other animals (prey) for food.

coral
A hard, rock-like substance made by polyps as an external skeleton. Large coral islands or reefs can form in warm seas.

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crustacean
An arthropod with a hard shell and several pairs of legs, such as a crab, lobster or shrimp.

current
The continuous flow of water in a particular direction.

diversity
Variability among living organisms.

echinoderm
A marine invertebrate with normally five equal body parts arranged around its centre, such as a starfish or sea urchin.

fish
A cold-blooded aquatic vertebrate that has a scaly body, gills, fins and a tail.

food chain
A series of living things that depend on each other as a source of food.

habitat
A natural environment where animals and plants live.

invertebrate
An animal with no backbone, such as an arthropod or crustacean.

mammal
A warm-blooded vertebrate, the female of which gives birth to live young and feeds them milk.

marine
Of or relating to the sea.

mollusc
An invertebrate with a soft body that is usually protected by a hard shell, such as a snail or octopus.

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ocean
A very large area of sea. There are five oceans on the planet: Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Arctic and Southern (Antarctic).

oceanography
The scientific study of the oceans and everything in them.

organism
An individual animal, plant, fungus or bacteria.

pollution
The damage caused to an environment when toxic or harmful substances are introduced.

polyp
A small marine invertebrate that has a tube-shaped body and stinging tentacles around its mouth.

predator
An animal that kills and eats other animals for food.

prey
An animal that is hunted by other animals for food.

producer
An organism, such a green plant, that creates its own food.

reef
A long line of rocks, coral or sand that form just below the ocean's surface.

reptile
A cold-blooded vertebrate that breathes air, lays eggs and is covered in scales, such as a snake or turtle.

sea anemone
A carnivorous marine animal that looks like a colourful plant. It clings to rocks and stings small fish with its tentacles.

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sea urchin
A small marine echinoderm that has a hard, round, spiny shell.

seaweed
A brown, green or dark red plant that is made up of algae and grows in or next to the sea.

sonar
Specialist equipment found on ships that uses sound waves to measure water depth and to find the position of underwater features, such as rocks or shoals of fish.

species
A group of animals or plants that share the same characteristics and can breed with each other.

specimen
An individual animal or plant that can be used for scientific study or display.

submarine
A streamlined ship that can travel underwater for long periods of time.

tide
The rise and fall of the oceans that is caused by the gravitational pull of the Sun and the Moon. There are usually two high tides and two low tides each day.

tropical
When the weather is hot and humid, or when something exists between the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer.

vertebrate
An animal with a backbone, such as a mammal, reptile or fish.

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