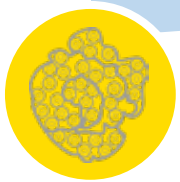




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Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Our Collaborators



# Identification of CITES-listed live stony corals in the aquarium trade

i



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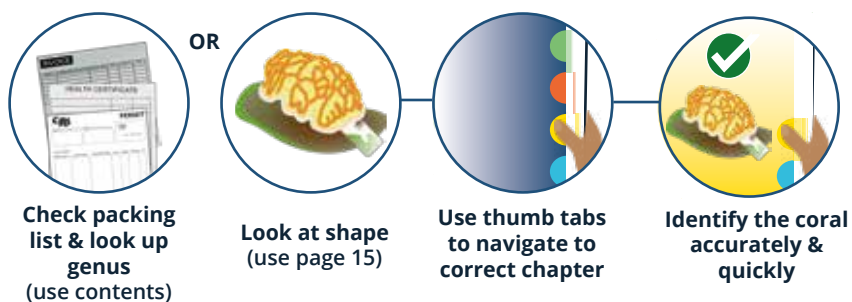
**Reviewed by:** Prof Dr Bert W. Hoeksema

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## How to use this guide

This guide aims to promote the identification of live stony corals in the international aquarium trade by customs inspectors. It is designed to support visual inspection processes currently undertaken in both exporting and importing countries.

During inspection and verification of coral shipments, users can begin the inspection process with either a list of taxa from the packing list and accompanying CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) permit(s) or, if taxa in the shipment are not listed, users can navigate the guide based on the shape of the coral being examined (see below).



Each coloured chapter has an overview describing where similarly shaped genera are featured or highlight other possible issues such as retracted tentacles. Users can use overview pages on each coloured chapter to try and identify corals they are unable to see on the packing list or if they are unable to categorise shape easily.

### **! Potential limitations using this guide**

This guide provides a general reference for the identification of live stony corals commonly seen in trade and uses nomenclature accepted by CITES at the time of publication. Therefore, the taxonomic status and names of species may differ from what is published elsewhere and could change following publication of the guide. This guide should therefore not be used as a definitive source of taxonomic reference for stony corals.





## CONTEXT PAGES

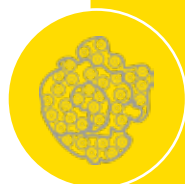
Introduction	1 - 2
Mariculture	3 - 4
Shipments: red flags	5 - 6
CITES	7 - 8
Global trade of live coral	9 - 10



<b>FLESHY POLYPS</b>	17 - 20
<i>Euphyllia</i>	21 - 22
<i>Heliofungia</i>	23 - 24
<i>Catalaphyllia</i>	25 - 26
<i>Dendrophyllia</i>	27 - 28
<i>Tubastraea</i>	29 - 30



<b>BRANCHING</b>	41 - 44
<i>Acropora</i>	45 - 46
<i>Pocillopora</i>	47 - 48



<b>ENCrustING (larger polyps)</b>	53 - 56
<i>Acanthastrea</i>	57 - 58
<i>Blastomussa</i>	59 - 60
<i>Lobophyllia</i>	61 - 62
<i>Australomussa</i>	63 - 64
<i>Symphyllia</i>	65 - 66
<i>Diploastrea</i>	67 - 68
<i>Moseleya</i>	69 - 70
<i>Favia</i>	71 - 72
<i>Favites</i>	73 - 74



<b>ENCrustING (smaller polyps)</b>	97 - 100
<i>Leptoseris</i>	101 - 102
<i>Pachyseris</i>	103 - 104
<i>Lithophyllon</i>	105 - 106
<i>Pavona</i>	107 - 108
<i>Astreopora</i>	109 - 110
<i>Cyphastrea</i>	111 - 112



<b>SOLITARY AND FREE-LIVING</b>	127 - 130
<i>Trachyphyllia</i>	131 - 132
<i>Scolymia</i>	133 - 134
<i>Cynarina</i>	135 - 136
<i>Acathophyllia</i>	137 - 138
<i>Fungia</i>	139 - 140

Watch list _____	11 - 12
Visual glossary _____	13 - 14
Coral grouping by chapter _____	15 - 16
About this guide _____	147

<i>Duncanopsammia</i> _____	31 - 32
<i>Physogyra</i> _____	33 - 34
<i>Plerogyra</i> _____	35 - 36
<i>Alveopora</i> _____	37 - 38
<i>Goniopora</i> _____	39 - 40

<i>Seriatopora</i> _____	49 - 50
<i>Stylophora</i> _____	51 - 52

<i>Goniastrea</i> _____	75 - 76
<i>Montastraea</i> _____	77 - 78
<i>Oculophyllia</i> _____	79 - 80
<i>Platygyra</i> _____	81 - 82
<i>Caulastrea</i> _____	83 - 84
<i>Galaxea</i> _____	85 - 86
<i>Pectinia</i> _____	87 - 88
<i>Echinophyllia</i> _____	89 - 90
<i>Echinopora</i> _____	91 - 92
<i>Mycedium</i> _____	93 - 94
<i>Oxypora</i> _____	95 - 96

<i>Leptastrea</i> _____	113 - 114
<i>Turbinaria</i> _____	115 - 116
<i>Porites</i> _____	117 - 118
<i>Montipora</i> _____	119 - 120
<i>Psammocora</i> _____	121 - 122
<i>Merulina</i> _____	123 - 124
<i>Hydnophora</i> _____	125 - 126

<i>Cycloseris</i> _____	141 - 142
<i>Herpolitha</i> _____	143 - 144
<i>Polyphyllia</i> _____	145 - 146

# Introduction

Stony corals are traded internationally, typically as live specimens for the aquarium market and dead pieces for the curio trade. Other coral products including rocks, fragments, and sand are also traded as they form important components of a home or public reef aquariums.

## UNIDENTIFIABLE TO GENUS LEVEL

**Coral rock** is hard consolidated material, >30 mm in diameter, formed of fragments of dead coral and which may also contain cemented sand, coralline algae and other sedimentary rocks.

**Live rock** tends to be large pieces (greater than 1 kg) that harbour live specimens of non-CITES listed invertebrates and coralline algae and are therefore shipped 'wet'. Clean coral rock is left to dry out prior to transportation so that it is free from live resident species and is shipped dry. Trade in coral rock where the genus cannot be readily determined is currently reported as 'Raw' coral at the higher Order level as 'Scleractinia' and in kg.

**Substrate** is the term given to smaller pieces of coral rock that can be used to transport attached invertebrates (species not included in the CITES Appendices), such as soft corals or sea anemones transported in water in the same way as live corals. Coral rock is not identifiable to the level of genus but is recognisable as Scleractinia. The definition excludes specimens defined as dead coral.

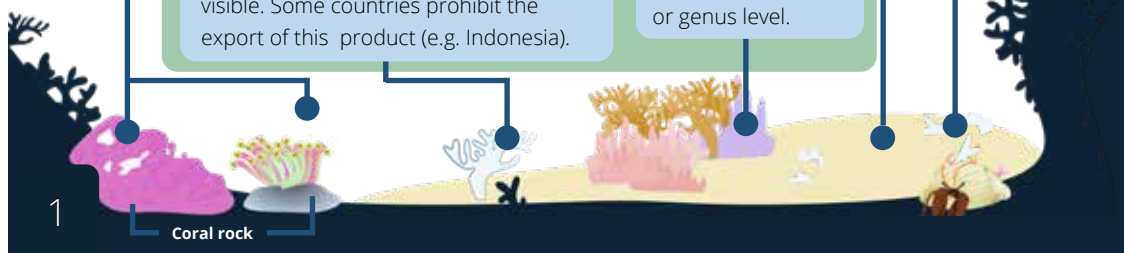
**Coral fragments** (including gravel and rubble) are unconsolidated fragments of broken finger-like dead coral and other material between 2 and 30 mm, measured in any direction.

**Coral sand** is material consisting entirely or in part of finely crushed fragments of dead coral no larger than 2 mm in diameter and which may also contain, amongst other things, the remains of Foraminifera, mollusc and crustacean shell, and coralline algae. Not identifiable to genus level.

## IDENTIFIABLE TO GENUS LEVEL

**Dead coral pieces** of coral that are dead when exported, but that may have been alive when collected, and in which the structure of corallites (the skeleton of the individual polyp) is still intact and visible. Some countries prohibit the export of this product (e.g. Indonesia).

**Live coral** includes coral pieces that are transported in water and should be identified to species or genus level.



## Trade of live stony corals

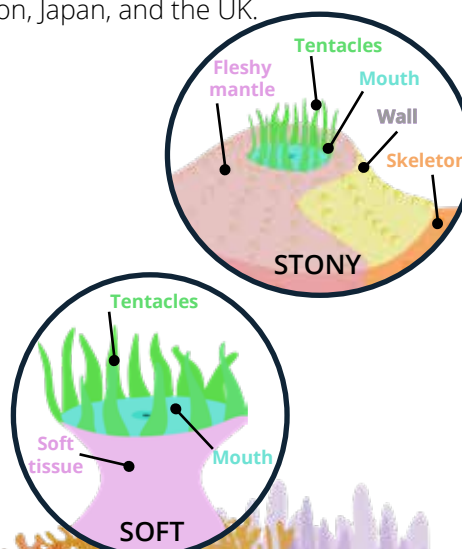
Of all the marine species listed in CITES, stony corals (*Scleractinia* spp.) are traded in the highest quantity, and are one of the most highly traded commodities globally overall, with living corals in demand for public and home aquariums. There are over 1680 stony coral species worldwide, and over 500 species have been recorded in trade. However, identification to species and even genus level can be extremely difficult, except for a few distinguishable taxa.

**This visual guide to stony corals in trade aims to:** increase awareness of live corals that are highly traded or that have international trade restrictions and provide guidance on the visual signs which can help distinguish maricultured\* specimens from those that are 'wild-sourced' in support of legal and sustainable trade.

Most live coral in international trade is 'wild-sourced', collected by hand from reef ecosystems in source countries, such as Indonesia and Australia. However, exports of maricultured coral (Source Code 'F\*\*') have increased steadily since 2003, 99 % of which has been exported by Indonesia, the world's largest exporter of live coral. The USA is the major importer of corals, followed by the European Union, Japan, and the UK.

### ! Stony corals vs soft corals

Stony corals, also known as hard corals, produce a rigid skeleton made of calcium carbonate. They form the building blocks of coral reef ecosystems. Soft corals do not produce a rigid calcium carbonate skeleton and are non-reef building corals. They are mostly colonial but appear as a single organism, resembling plants. Currently, international trade in all stony coral is regulated by CITES, whereas trade in most soft coral is not. *See comparison of coral polyps (right).*



\* for information on mariculture see page 3.

\*\* for information on Source Codes see page 8

# Mariculture

Mariculture is the propagation of corals, usually in 'nurseries' on the sea floor. Small pieces of wild-collected coral can be detached from the parent, or new individuals can 'bud' from the parent to produce new individuals which are then allowed to grow. The newly grown individuals can then be fragmented, creating a source or 'mother' stock for maricultured corals that are traded under Source Code 'F\*'.



A piece of coral is removed from a wild colony to become the 'mother' stock. Fragments are then removed from the 'mother' stock and attached to artificial bases (usually made of concrete), along with an identifier tag.

***In Indonesia, the collection of mother stock is regulated through a permit and quota system. Corals in trade tend to be at least second generation.***



The small, mounted fragments are then attached to platforms or tables in inshore waters where they are allowed to grow until they reach a marketable size, or can be fragmented again.

***In Indonesia, coral farms are required to undergo three audits; a feasibility audit before the farm can be established, a species addition audit to assess how the farm plans to produce a new species, and a regular biannual audit to monitor ongoing activities and compliance.***



## Indonesian tag properties

Properties of and information included on Indonesian tags for maricultured corals:

- Made from strong, tamper-proof material
- Tag shape can vary as they are developed by companies
- Code should be simple enough to be understood by field officers



Inspection office code    Export company code    Propagation year    Species code    Propagation sequence code    Sequence number

01	04	06	Actsp.	02	0001
1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12

Propagation month



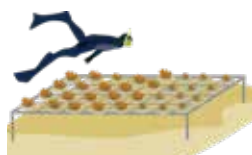
## When to use this guide

This coral guide can support the identification of corals in trade at several stages along the supply chain which are summarised below.



### Collection and holding

Pieces of live coral are collected from coral reefs for direct export as 'wild-sourced' coral or for use as mother stock in mariculture operations.



### Farming

Live coral is maricultured at farms before export either from 'wild-sourced' or existing mother stock.



### Export

Live coral is held at exporter facilities prior to packing for international transport in line with CITES import and export permits.



**MORE EFFICIENT and ACCURATE INSPECTIONS**



### Import

On arrival, shipments of live coral are inspected or validated before entry is permitted by the importing country.



**MORE EFFICIENT and ACCURATE INSPECTIONS**



### Retailers

When approved for entry, live coral may move through consolidators, wholesalers and/or retailers to reach the final point of sale.



### Final customer

Live coral will find its way into home or public aquariums in importing countries, purchased from retail stores or online.

# Shipments: Red flags



Verification and inspection processes for managing CITES-listed live corals in trade will vary between different exporters and importers. However, there are several indicators or 'red flags' which may signal a shipment requires further investigation.

1

**Small shipments**

The cost of transporting live coral in water is high, so small shipments that comprise few, low-value taxa can indicate that a business is conducting a 'test' to see how thoroughly a shipment is inspected before sending a higher-value illegal package.

2

**Damaged packaging**

Shipments of live coral are highly valuable and therefore packaging must be of high quality to ensure that welfare standards are met, and that the coral arrives in good condition. Damaged or careless packaging can signal a larger issue.

3

**Disorganised contents**

Rapid inspection processes limit the length of time corals spend in transportation conditions. Established exporters will ensure that the contents of shipments are well ordered to speed up import checks.

4

**Concealed packaging**

Paper (e.g. newspaper) can be positioned between two plastic specimen bags to absorb excess seawater, however paper or other material can also be used to obscure the view of the coral within.

5

**Poor labelling**

Clear, high-quality labelling will speed up import checks and is common practice for established businesses. Illicit traders may use poor-quality labelling.

6

**Inconsistency**

Inconsistencies between the packing lists, CITES permits, box labels and the contents can indicate a bigger issue with the legitimacy of a shipment's contents. Examples of counterfeit documents have also been detected.

# CITES

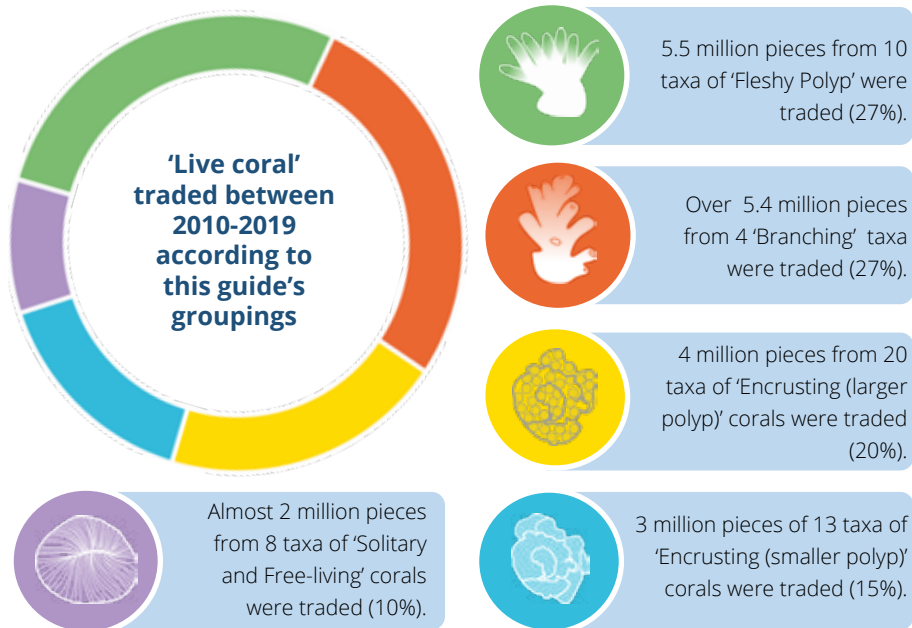


CITES is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to make sure that international trade in specimens of species listed in its Appendices are regulated appropriately, so as not to threaten their survival in the wild. Trade must be legal, sustainable, and traceable.

## **i** How can we calculate how much coral is traded?

Each Party (States and regional economic integration organizations) is required to submit an annual report on its CITES trade, containing a summary of information on; the number and type of permits and certificates granted, the States with which such trade occurred, the quantities and types of specimens, and the names of species as included in CITES Appendices I, II and III (CITES.org).

Trade data submitted to CITES by the Parties are entered into the CITES Trade Database managed by UNEP-WCMC. This enables monitoring of the levels of international trade in all taxa included in the CITES Appendices.



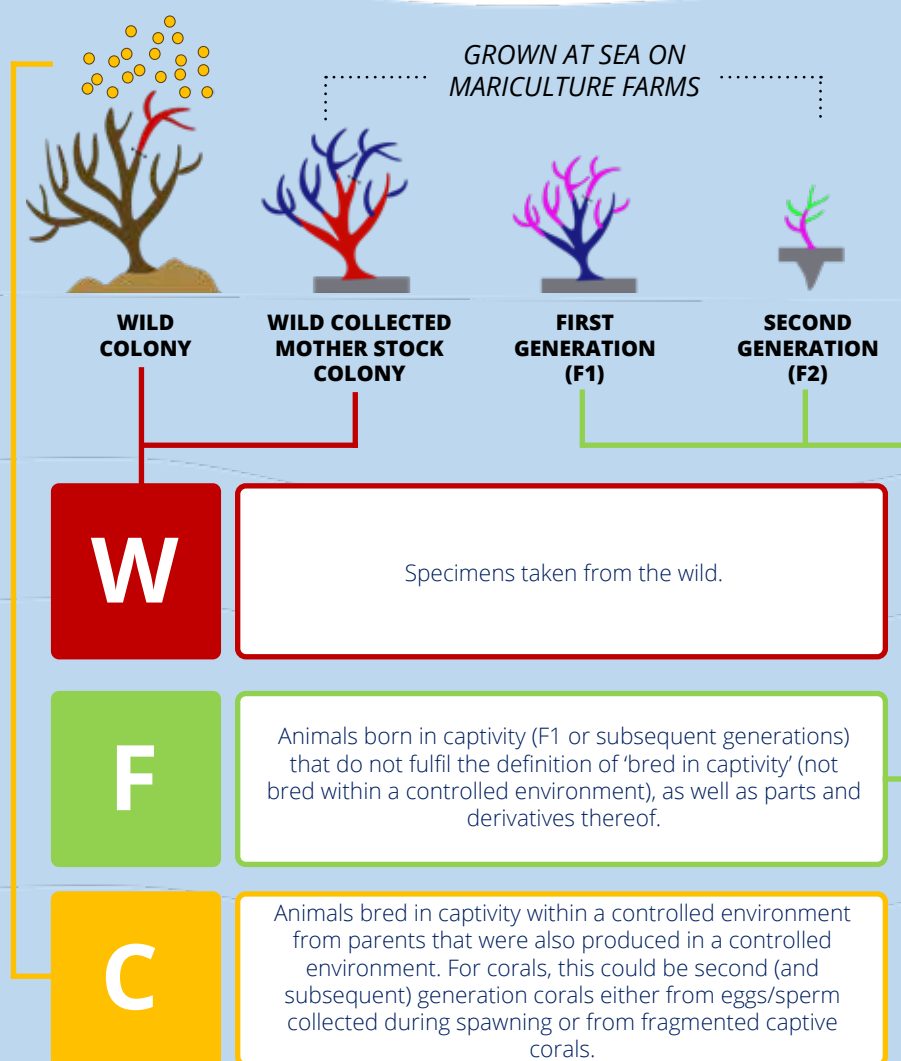
Trade data for stony corals including where they came from can be easily explored using the **CITES Wildlife TradeView tool**  
<https://tradeview.cites.org/en/taxon>.



SCAN ME

## CITES Source Codes

CITES Source Codes should be used on all CITES permits and certificates, to inform Parties about the management system used to produce the specimens. For example, CITES Source Codes indicate whether a specimen was sourced from the wild or produced in captivity.





# Global trade of live coral

Global trade in all stony corals should be managed through the CITES permitting system. For some taxa, regional, national, or domestic CITES regulations exist and additional restrictions or suspensions can be placed on trade. For example, some Parties have a CITES suspension on all trade of listed species imposed on them. In addition to these, some Parties themselves do not permit the export of wild or live specimens.



CITES suspensions and regulations can change. **For current CITES suspensions visit:**  
<https://cites.org/eng/resources/ref/suspend.php>



SCAN ME



**For a UK list of current import suspensions visit:**  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/cites-uk-import-suspensions-negative-opinions/cites-uk-import-suspensions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cites-uk-import-suspensions-negative-opinions/cites-uk-import-suspensions)



SCAN ME

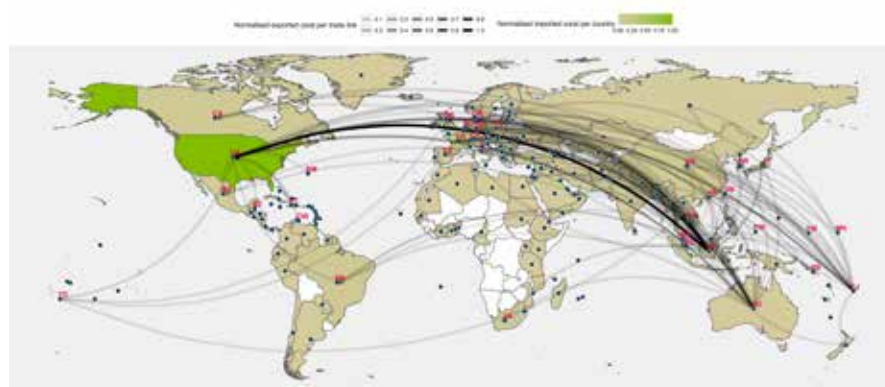


**For an EU list of current import restrictions visit:**  
<https://speciesplus.net/>



SCAN ME

Between 2010 and 2019, the **top exporters** of stony corals were Indonesia (12.5 million pieces), Australia (5.1 million pieces), Fiji (2.9 million pieces) and the Solomon Islands (million pieces). The **top importing** countries in the same period were the USA (9.1 million pieces), France (2.3 million pieces), UK (1.5 million pieces), Germany (1.9 million pieces) and Japan (0.8 million pieces).



**Trade network map showing top 20 importing and exporting countries of stony coral (all Source Codes\*) and their international connections.**

## ! Considerations for live corals in trade

Corals can have growth rates, market values, and trade volumes that vary between taxa, which can affect the likelihood of mislabelling maricultured coral (specimens were wild collected), especially where the import of 'wild-sourced' specimens is restricted. Below we show how these considerations have been categorised in a traffic light system based on available information. The icons shown below are used on individual genus pages as a quick reference.



**Growth** is categorised as fast, medium and slow using the Indonesian Star System developed by the mariculture industry.

- **Fast growth** (\*) corals that can grow to a marketable size in 3 - 6 months (e.g. *Acropora* spp. *Hydnophora* spp.)
- **Medium growth** (\*\*) corals that can grow to a marketable size in 8 - 12 months (e.g. *Dendrophyllia* spp. *Euphyllia* sp.)
- **Slow growth** (\*\*\*) corals that can grow to a marketable size in more than 12 months (e.g. *Catalaphyllia jardinei*, *Platygyra* spp.) and are more likely to have low production quotas.



**Total global export volumes** (reported by exporters) were derived for each genus (or species where species-level recording is required) using data available on CITES Wildlife Tradeview for the period 2010-2019.

- **Low export levels** were defined as global export levels less than 100,000 pieces
- **Medium export levels** were defined as global export levels between 100,000 and 500,000 pieces
- **High export levels** were defined as global export levels over 500,000 pieces.

UK IMPORT  
PRICE

£2-\$20

UK IMPORT  
PRICE

\$21-\$99

UK IMPORT  
PRICE

OVER \$100

























**Price (in US \$)** was calculated using the declared price per piece or polyp on shipment records entering the UK in 2018 and 2019 from representative samples, as well as personal communication with traders. Traffic lighting of the price was based on maximum values, but the range (lowest and highest price) is also shown on individual genus pages.

- **Low import price** was defined as between \$2-\$20
- **Medium import price** was defined as \$21-\$99
- **High import price** was defined as over \$100.

## Watch list



Watch list taxa may be subject to current or previous trade suspensions or other restrictions, or they may be slow-growing, have a high value, or are traded in high volumes.

	<b>Catalaphyllia</b>	
	<b>SLOW GROWTH</b> 100-500,000 pieces Global data 2010-2019	
		
		<b>UK IMPORT PRICE</b> \$21-\$99
	<b>Duncanopsammia</b>	
	<b>NOT CULTURED</b> 100-500,000 pieces Global data 2010-2019	
		
		<b>UK IMPORT PRICE</b> >\$100
	<b>Euphyllia</b>	
	<b>MEDIUM GROWTH</b> 100-500,000 pieces Global data 2010-2019	
		
		<b>UK IMPORT PRICE</b> >\$100
	<b>Heliofungia</b>	
	<b>MEDIUM GROWTH</b> 100-500,000 pieces Global data 2010-2019	
		
		<b>UK IMPORT PRICE</b> \$21-\$99
	<b>Plerogyra</b>	
	<b>SLOW GROWTH</b> 100-500,000 pieces Global data 2010-2019	
		
		<b>UK IMPORT PRICE</b> \$21-\$99

**Blastomussa**



**MEDIUM GROWTH**  
8-12 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019

UK IMPORT PRICE  
\$21-\$99

\$2 \$40

**Hydnophora**



**FAST GROWTH**  
3-6 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019

UK IMPORT PRICE  
\$2-\$20

\$6 \$18

**Acanthophyllia**



**NOT CULTURED**  
Not currently maricultured in Indonesia

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019

UK IMPORT PRICE  
>\$100

\$8 \$270

**Cynarina**



**SLOW GROWTH**  
>12 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019

UK IMPORT PRICE  
\$21-\$99

\$9 \$80

**Scolymia**



**MEDIUM GROWTH**  
8-12 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019

UK IMPORT PRICE  
>\$100

\$8 \$200

**Trachyphyllia**



**SLOW GROWTH**  
>12 months to culture

**HIGH EXPORT LEVELS**  
Over 500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019

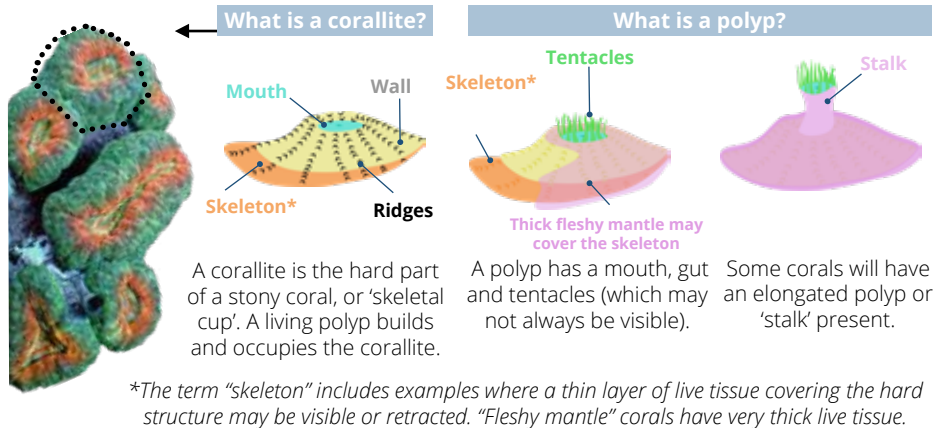
UK IMPORT PRICE  
\$21-\$99

\$2 \$70

# Visual glossary

This visual glossary explains some important definitions used in this guide.

## Corallite properties

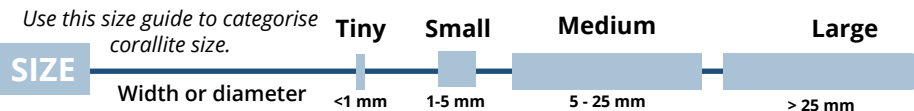


## CORALLITE SHAPE AND SIZE

Corallite shape is categorised using mouth shape and wall separation. These two features are a continuum but are grouped into Cerioid (circular/oval mouth, shared walls), Plocoid (circular/oval mouth, separate walls), Phaceloid (circular/oval mouth, elongated separate wall), Meandroid (lobed/valley-shaped mouth, shared walls) and Flabello-meandroid (lobed/valley-shaped mouth, separate walls). In some genera there may be multiple corallite shapes.

		Wall separation			EXAMPLES		
Mouth shape	Shared Wall		Separate Wall	Elongated Wall	CERIROID	PLOCROID	PHACELOID
	Circular	CERIROID		PLOCROID			
		PLOCROID		PHACELOID			
	Oval						
	Lobed	MEANDROID		FLABELLO-MEANDROID			
	Valley				MEANDROID	FLABELLO-MEANDROID	

Use this size guide to categorise corallite size.



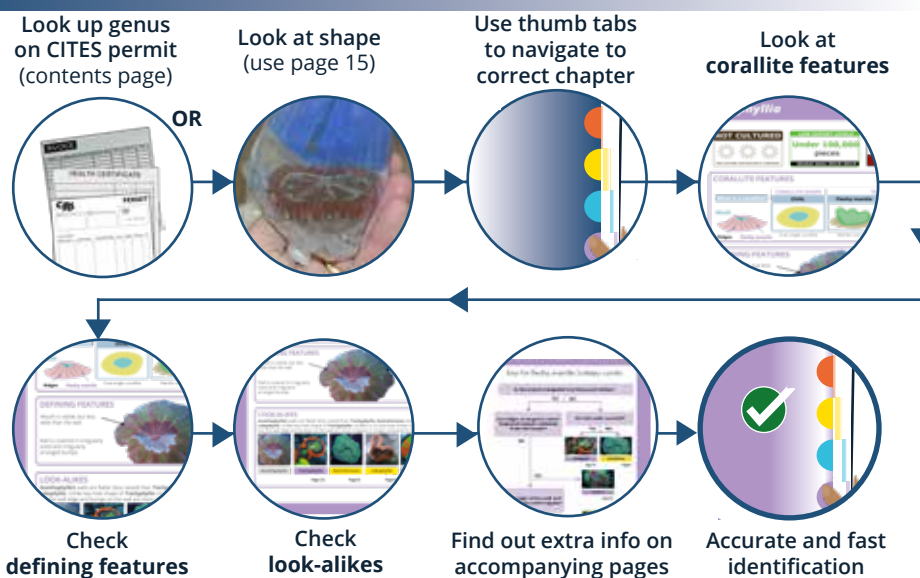


## SKELETAL/WALL TEXTURES

There are many different textures on the hard skeleton and/or corallite walls that can be visible in trade and can be used to help identify stony corals.



## Working example



# Coral grouping by chapter

This simple key will help beginners categorise coral groups and lead the user to the correct chapter more quickly and efficiently. These chapters reflect forms seen in trade and may not be consistent with traditional taxonomic groupings of wild corals. This simplification aims to improve the use of the guide in practical, time limited trade inspections.



Large fleshy tentacles and polyps are visible?

**YES**

**NO**



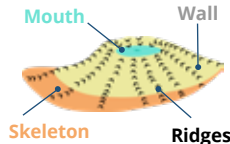
Are there branches or finger-like structures and a narrow stem attachment to the base?

**YES**

**NO**

What is a corallite?

see page 13



Is the coral encrusting with corallites larger than 10 mm?

**YES**

**NO**



Is the coral solitary (single polyp) or free-living?

**NO**

**YES**



**Colour should not be used for identification**

The colour of coral in the wild and trade varies and cannot be used as a reliable characteristic for identification/differentiation between taxa.

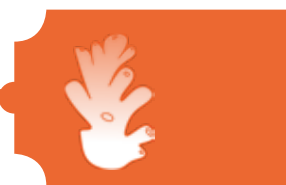
**! Coral groupings in this guide are not taxonomic**

The grouping of corals in this guide is not based on scientific taxonomy, but by the shapes recognisable in trade. Where a genus of coral has multiple growth morphologies, a key is provided at the start of each chapter to help you find the correct page for the coral you are identifying.

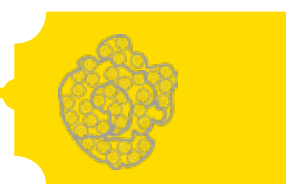
**FLESHY  
POLYPS**



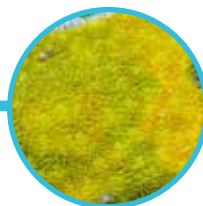
**BRANCHING**



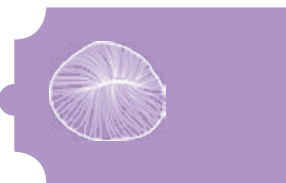
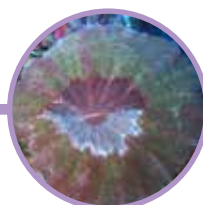
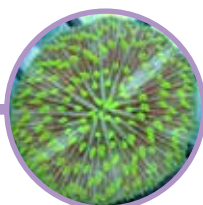
**ENCRUSTING  
(LARGER POLYPS)**



**ENCRUSTING  
(SMALLER POLYPS)**



**SOLITARY and  
FREE-LIVING**







# Fleshy Polyps

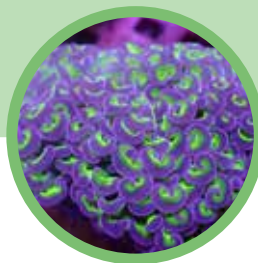
All corals may have tentacles and polyps that could be extended during the day. However, corals in this group have large, conspicuous fleshy polyps and tentacles that obscure the skeleton.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Fleshy polyp coral tentacles are similar to those of sea anemones which contain stinging cells and can filter-feed on passing plankton. Like sea anemones, coral polyps have a base or stalk, tentacles and mouth.

Most corals have their tentacles retracted during the day. Popular fleshy polyp corals in trade are sought after because their colourful tentacles can be seen all day in a controlled tank environment.

Aquarists may have a UV light or 'black light' that highlights iridescent zooxanthellae (symbiotic algae) present in the tentacles.





# Overview

## Featured fleshy polyp corals

All corals have fleshy tentacles. The corals in this chapter have tentacles that are rarely retracted and where other features may be obscured. ***This table of contents can be used to find the correct page during inspection, colour-coded by shape chapter. Use the tabs to locate the chapter and the page number to navigate to identification pages.***



*Euphyllia*

Page 21-22



*Heliofungia*

Page 23-24



*Catalaphyllia*

Page 25-26



*Dendrophyllia*

Page 27-28



*Tubastraea*

Page 29-30



*Duncanopsammia*

Page 31-32



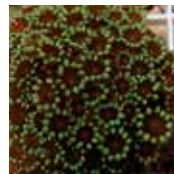
*Physogyra*

Page 33-34



*Plerogyra*

Page 35-36



*Alveopora*

Page 37-38



*Goniopora*

Page 39-40



## Be aware of retracted tentacles

A colony with completely retracted tentacles may look like one of the other coral shape groups. Fleshy polyps may be retracted in transit and not be visible (see below).



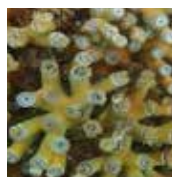
*Euphyllia*



*Heliofungia*



*Catalaphyllia*



*Duncanopsammia*



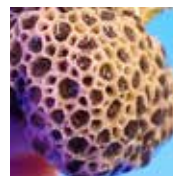
*Tubastraea*



*Physogyra*



*Plerogyra*



*Alveopora*



*Goniopora*



## Detecting false mariculture

- 1 Growing edge**  
Healthy growing edge established on the artificial base, no fresh cuts or glue present.
- 2 Artificial base properties**  
Artificial base and mariculture tag has biofouling of marine life e.g., calcareous algae.
- 3 Established growth**  
No cut polyps, healthy growth onto the artificial base (e.g., *Goniopora*) or from the canopy (e.g., *Euphyllia*).

**! Biofouling of artificial base and no new cuts**

**✓ SIGN OF TRUE MARICULTURE**



This *Goniopora* has a healthy growing edge, biofouling on the artificial base and cement.

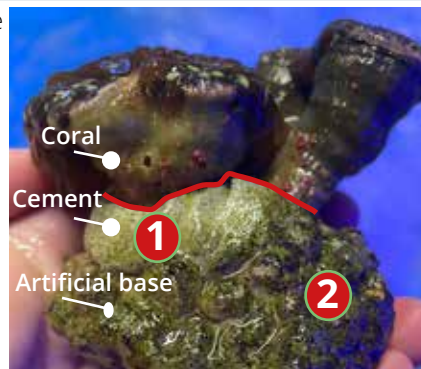
**✗ SIGN OF FALSE MARICULTURE**



Freshly cut *Goniopora* to demonstrate how false mariculture may appear. Clean, white, sharp edge visible.

**! Maricultured Euphyllia is hard to distinguish**

*Euphyllia* should have tissue growth on the external of the stem, biofouled artificial base and no new cement (often green tinge).



# Euphyllia

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## HIGH EXPORT LEVELS

**Over 500,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$3

\$400

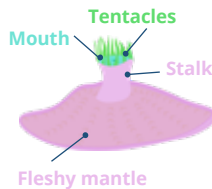
**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
**PER PIECE OR POLYP**

**OVER \$100**

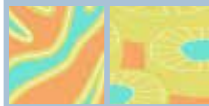
## CORALLITE FEATURES

### CORALLITE SHAPE

What is a polyp?



**FLABELLO-MEANDROID**  
**PHACELOID**



Varied across species  
(see page 22)

### TENTACLES

**VARIED**



Varied (see page 22)

### MOUTH

**OBSCURED**



Obscured mouth

## DEFINING FEATURES\*

Mouth and skeleton  
obstructed by fleshy  
polyp tentacles.

**\*Euphyllia needs to be  
identified to species  
level (see page 22)**



Tentacle shape is used to  
identify to species level for  
this genus.

## LOOK-ALIKES

Long tentacles obscuring mouth and the rest of the polyp is unique to *Euphyllia*. *Heliofungia* looks similar to *E. glabrescens*. Hammer-shaped tentacles look similar to but are longer than *Physogyra* and *Plerogyra*'s bubble vesicles.



*E. glabrescens*



*E. ancora*



*Physogyra*



*Plerogyra*



*Heliofungia*

Page 33

Page 35

Page 23

# Identifying to species

CITES requires *Euphyllia* to be identified to species level. This can be achieved for *Euphyllia* using tentacle properties and corallite shape. *Euphyllia* are heavily exported but different species have varying export levels and prices.



CHECK SPECIES



## *E. ancora*

Tentacle tips are hammer- or horse-shoe shaped.



HIGH EXPORT LEVEL  
Over 500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



## *E. paraancora*

Polyps have tentacles similar to those of *E. ancora*, with hammer-shaped or irregular triangular-shaped ends.



MEDIUM EXPORT LEVEL  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



## *E. glabrescens*

Polyps with long rod-shaped tentacles, with white knob-like tips.



HIGH EXPORT LEVEL  
Over 500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



## *E. cristata*

Polyps with short rod-shaped tentacles, similar to those of *E. glabrescens*, but shorter, ends with light tips.



MEDIUM EXPORT LEVEL  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



## *E. divisa*

Polyps have large rod-shaped tentacles, with smaller branches ending in white knob-like tips.



MEDIUM EXPORT LEVEL  
100-500,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



## *E. paradivisa*

Polyps are similar to *E. divisa* with branched tentacles, but *E. paradivisa* has more secondary branching.



LOW EXPORT LEVEL  
Under 100,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



## *E. yaeyamaensis*

Tentacles are short and fat, covered with short uniform sub-branches, each ending in knob-like tips.



LOW EXPORT LEVEL  
Under 100,000 pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



## i Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net)  
Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).



# Heliofungia

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS

**100-500,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$9

\$44

**UK IMPORT PRICE  
PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$21-99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### CORALLITE SHAPE

### TENTACLES

### MOUTH

What is a polyp?



**SINGLE**



Single corallite

**ROD-SHAPED**



Straight, knob-like tips

**OBSCURED**



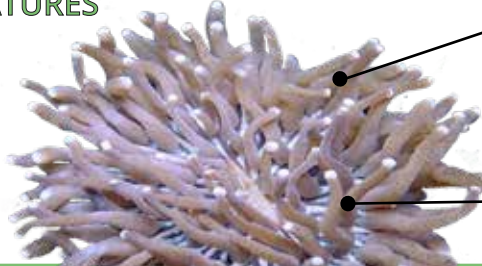
Stalk absent, obscured mouth

## DEFINING FEATURES

Tentacles may be retracted.



Narrow mouth sometimes visible.



Rod-shaped tentacles have fixed positions corresponding with the mouthward end of the ridges.

Radiating lines may be visible.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Catalaphyllia* is distinguished by its heavy, meandroid corallite, with a tapering base. Full grown *Catalaphyllia* has multiple mouths and *Heliofungia* always has a single mouth.



*Heliofungia*



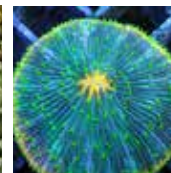
*Euphyllia*



*Catalaphyllia*



*Fungia*



*Cycloseris*

Page 21

Page 25

Page 139

Page 141



## Important distinctions

*Heliofungia actiniformis* is a solitary free-living coral on sediment substrates in the wild.

If the tentacles are retracted, the single corallite structure typical of mushroom corals (e.g. *Fungia* below) can be seen, with regular ridged septa radiating from a central single mouth.



### 1 corallite

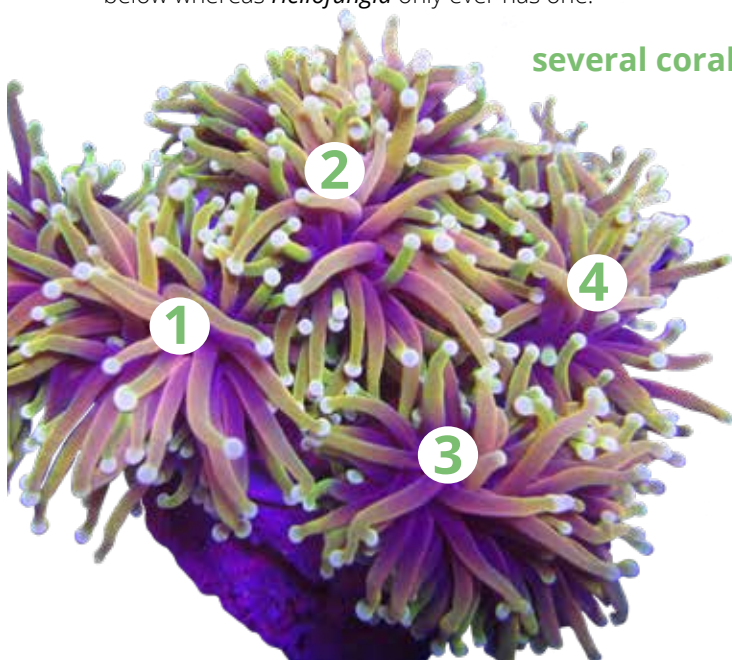


Only one species in this genus: ***Heliofungia actiniformis***

**CHECK SPECIES**

*Heliofungia* may be traded as torch *Euphyllia*, as its large fleshy tentacles are very similar. However, *Euphyllia* usually has several corallites e.g. 4 in the example below whereas *Heliofungia* only ever has one.

### several corallites



*Euphyllia* are colonial corals that attach to reef substrates in the wild.




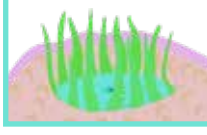
If the tentacles are retracted, the large (50–100 mm) phaceloid corallite structure typical of *E. glabrescens* can be seen, with distinct gaps between individual corallites.

**...see page 21**

# Catalaphyllia

<b>SLOW GROWTH</b>  >12 months to culture	<b>HIGH EXPORT LEVELS</b> <b>Over 500,000</b> pieces Global data 2010-2019	\$8 <b>UK IMPORT PRICE</b> <b>PER PIECE</b> <b>BETWEEN \$21-99</b>
--	---	---

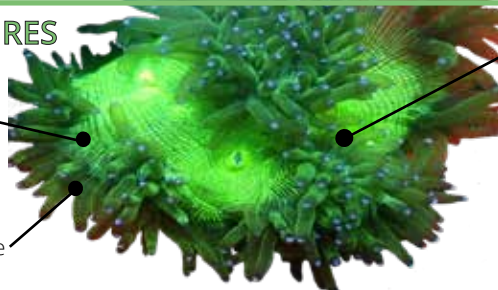
## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a polyp?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TENTACLES	MOUTH
 <p>Mouth</p> <p>Tentacles</p> <p>Fleshy mantle</p>	<b>FLABELLO-MEANDROID</b>  Valleys, separate walls	<b>POINTED</b>  Straight, rounded edged tentacles	<b>VISIBLE MOUTH</b>  Large mouths

## DEFINING FEATURES

Polyp has radiating lines from the mouth outwards.

Rod-shaped tentacles have distinctive purple tips.



Mouth fringed by 100s of purple tipped tentacles.

## LOOK-ALIKES

Mouth is clearly visible unlike *Euphyllia*. *Heliofungia* is solitary and has an elongated mouth compared to *Catalaphyllia*. *Heliofungia* has a narrow mouth that is sometimes visible.



*Catalaphyllia*



*Euphyllia*



*Heliofungia*

Page 21

Page 23





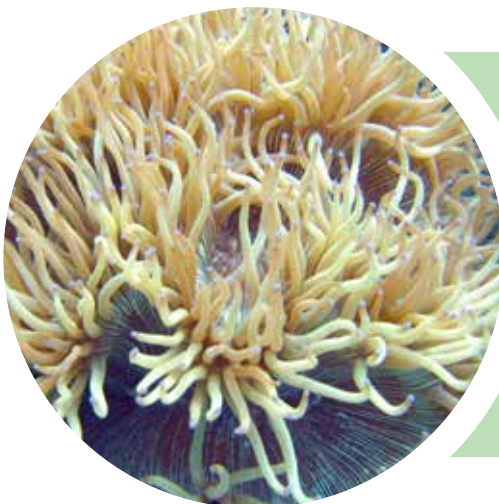
## Important distinctions

Both *Heliofungia* and *Catalaphyllia* have similar features including:

- **Radiating lines**
- **Visible mouths**
- **Rod-shaped tentacles**

*Heliofungia actiniformis* is a solitary free-living coral on sediment substrates in the wild.

*Heliofungia* corals have a flat base and the tentacles are evenly distributed over the upper surface around the mouth.



In contrast, *Catalaphyllia* tentacles fringe the upper margin of the polyp and have purple-tipped tentacles. More than one mouth may be present.

*Catalaphyllia* corals have a tapering base. They live partly buried in the sediment in the wild.



Only one species in this genus: ***Catalaphyllia jardinei***

**CHECK SPECIES**

# Dendrophyllia



## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a polyp?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### PHACELOID



### TENTACLES

#### FLOWER-LIKE



### MOUTH

#### VISIBLE MOUTH



## DEFINING FEATURES

Polyps highly elongated.

Polyps often visible and 'sea-anemone-like' but can be retracted rapidly due to touch or stress.



Smooth skeleton underneath soft tissue covered with a thin layer of yellow, orange or red living tissue.

Often called cup corals, they have a tube-like structure with mouth at the base of the 'cup'.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Dendrophyllia* has more elongated polyps than most *Tubastraea*, except *T. micranthus*. It is distinguished from *T. micranthus* and *Duncanopsammia* by the yellow, orange and/or red colouration of the tissue covering the skeleton.



*Dendrophyllia*



*Tubastraea*



*Duncanopsammia*



*Turbinaria*

Page 29

Page 31

Page 115



## *Dendrophyllia* vs *Tubastraea*

Fleshy polyps of this group often extend their tentacles during the day and look 'sea-anemone-like'. The colouration and tentacle shape of *Dendrophyllia* is very similar to *Tubastraea*, but usually have different polyp length.

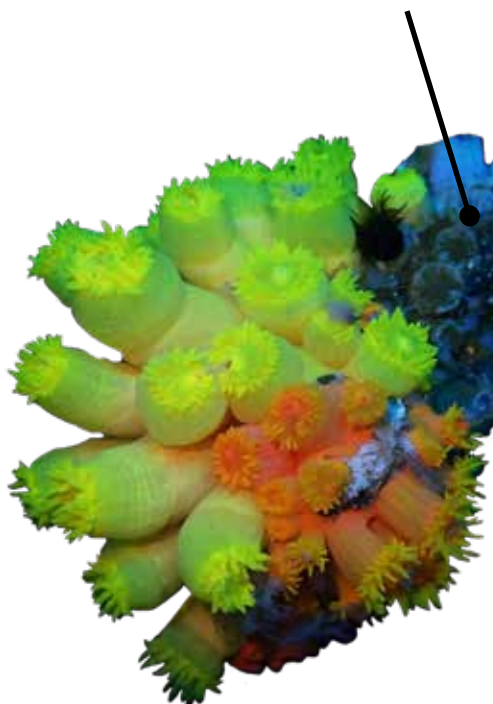
### ***Dendrophyllia***

Yellow is a popular colour in trade for the 'sun cup coral'. Compared to *Tubastraea* the polyps are longer (except *T. micranthus*).



### ***Tubastraea micranthus***

Long polyps like *Dendrophyllia* but dark green in colouration, almost appears black.



### ***Tubastraea*** ...see page 29

Shorter, more compact polyps.



### ***Eguchipsammia fistula***

Wild sourced specimens of this species have been subject to import restrictions into the EU from Indonesia. However, over 96,000 live pieces were traded globally between 2010-2019, including imports of Source Code 'F' specimens by the EU, according to CITES trade data.

# Tubastraea



## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a polyp?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### PHACELOID



Cup-like walls

### TENTACLES

#### FLOWER-LIKE



Numerous small tapering tentacles

### MOUTH

#### CENTRAL



Small mouth

## DEFINING FEATURES



Similar to other sun cup corals, tube like structure with mouth at the base of the 'cup'.

Skeleton covered by soft tissue which is orange or red. The tentacles are yellow (hence "sun coral").



Smooth skeleton.

## LOOK-ALIKES

Most *Tubastraea* species have shorter polyps than other cup corals. *T. micranthus* has long branch-like polyps, but is dark green in colour. In *Duncanopsammia*, the polyps are smaller and branching. *Turbinaria*'s corallites are smaller and dome shaped (i.e. not cup-shaped).



*Tubastraea*



*Dendrophyllia*



*Duncanopsammia*



*Turbinaria*

Page 27

Page 31

Page 115





## Colour morphs

Colour is highly variable for *Tubastraea*

### *Tubastraea micranthus*

This is a typical example of this species. The coral here has tentacles retracted.

Branching and dark green/black colouration, other *Tubastraea* species are more massive and less elongated.



Typical colouration of other *Tubastraea* are hues of yellow/orange with yellow tentacles.

*T. micranthus* at farms, Indonesia...



# Duncanopsammia



## CORAL FEATURES

### What is a polyp?



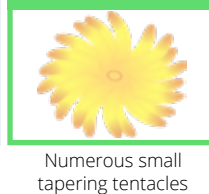
### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### PHACELOID



### TENTACLES

#### FLOWER-LIKE



### MOUTH

#### VISIBLE MOUTH



## DEFINING FEATURES

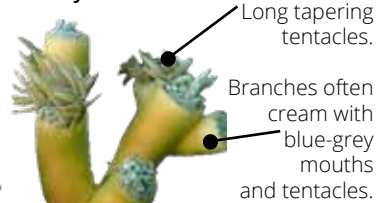
Smooth skeletal texture and tube-like corallites with mouths extending deep into skeleton.

Elongated branches have more than one mouth per branch.

In trade



### Colony on the reef



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Duncanopsammia* has elongated branches, cream skeleton and grey/blue tentacles and mouth. *Tubinaria peltata* has similar corallite colour and shape, but is encrusting, unlike branches of *Duncanopsammia*.



*Duncanopsammia*



*Dendrophyllia*



*Tubastraea*



*T. micranthus*



*Tubinaria*

Page 27

Page 29

Page 30

Page 115

## Examples in trade



Only one species in this genus: *Duncanopsammia axifuga*

CHECK SPECIES

It has been recorded in Australia, New Guinea and East Timor with a new record at Birds Head Peninsula, Indonesia reported in 2022.

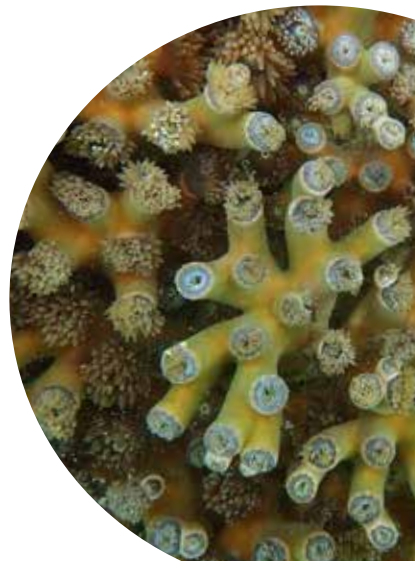
W

Because of the rarity of this taxon, trade in this species is likely to be in wild-sourced specimens, Source Code 'W'.



Between 2010 - 2019, 189,000 pieces were traded globally, primarily from Australia.

Top importers: USA, EU, UK.



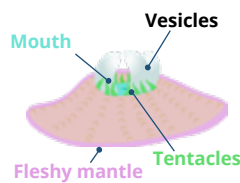


# Physogyra



## CORAL FEATURES

### What is a polyp?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### MEANDROID



Valley, shared walls

### VESICLES/TENTACLES

#### SOCK-LIKE VESICLE



Asymmetrical bubble vesicle above tentacles

### MOUTH

#### OBSCURED



Obscured by tentacles and vesicles

## DEFINING FEATURES

In day time vesicles are usually the only aspect visible; in the night, wall features and tentacles are more prominent. When vesicles are retracted, valley-shaped mouths with large crescent-shaped ridges can be seen.



Elongated asymmetrical bubble shape (sock-like).

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Physogyra* has elongated sock-like vesicles, opposed to grape-like vesicles of *Plerogyra* or hammer-shaped tentacles of some *Euphyllia* species. *Physogyra* polyps are arranged in tightly-packed narrow valleys, while *Plerogyra* valleys are larger and more spaced.



*Physogyra*



*Plerogyra*



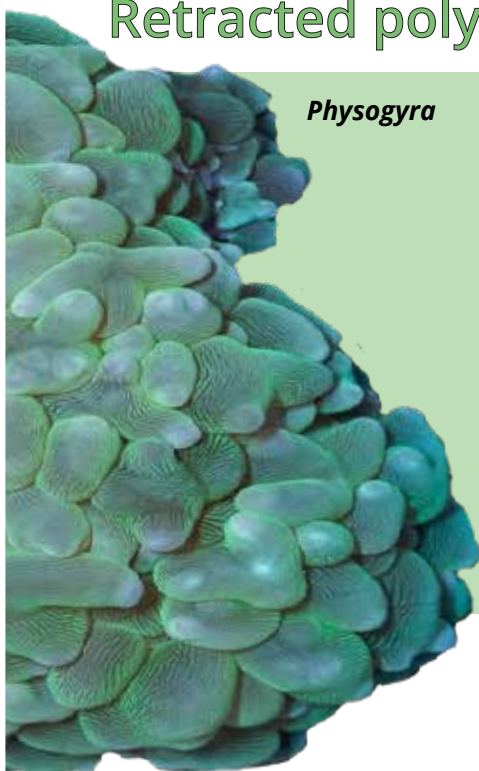
*Euphyllia*

Page 35

Page 21

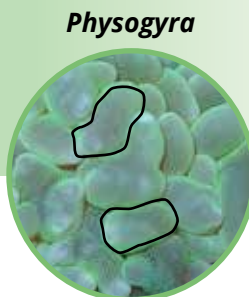


## Retracted polyps in bubble corals



***Physogyra***

*Plerogyra* and *Physogyra* can retract their tentacles in transit exposing the walls (see below). At night, feeding tentacles may be visible while bubble vesicles are retracted.



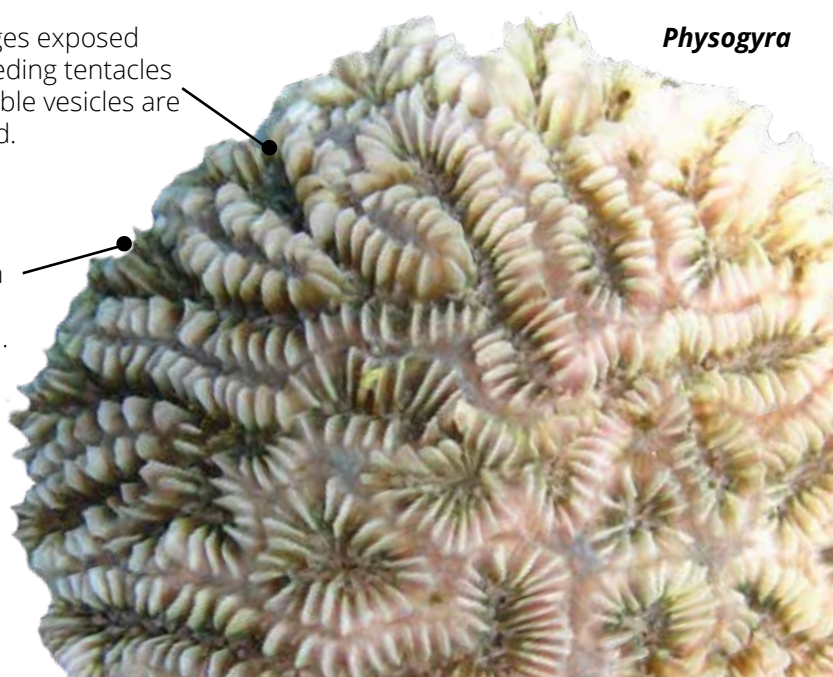
***Physogyra***



***Plerogyra***

Wall ridges exposed while feeding tentacles and bubble vesicles are retracted.

Valleys between walls exposed.



***Physogyra***

# Plerogyra



## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a polyp?	CORALLITE SHAPE	VESICLES/TENTACLES	MOUTH
<p>Mouth</p> <p>Vesicles</p> <p>Fleshy mantle</p> <p>Tentacles</p>	<p><b>PHACELOID</b></p> <p><b>FLABELO-MEANDROID</b></p> <p>Varied separate walls</p>	<p><b>GRAPE-LIKE</b></p> <p>Grape-like bubble vesicle above tentacles</p>	<p><b>OBSCURED</b></p> <p>Obscured by tentacles</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

When vesicles are retracted, valley-shaped mouths with large crescent-shaped ridges can be seen.



Bubble vesicles are usually the only feature visible.



More rounded grape-like vesicles than *Physogyra*.



## LOOK-ALIKES

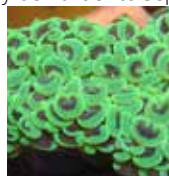
*Plerogyra* is very similar to *Physogyra* and is distinguished by the grape-like vesicles, opposed to the sock-like vesicles of *Physogyra*. Vesicles may also resemble hammer-shaped *Euphyllia* tentacles. *Plerogyra* and *Euphyllia* may be harder to separate as juveniles with a single polyp.



*Plerogyra*



*Physogyra*



*Euphyllia*

Page 33

Page 21



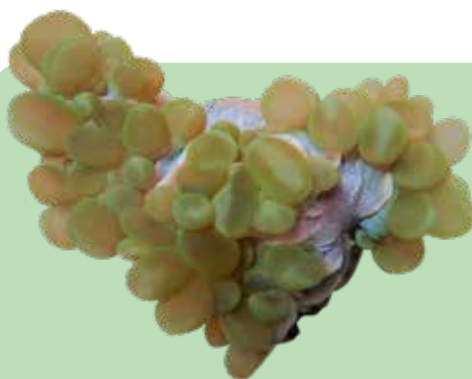
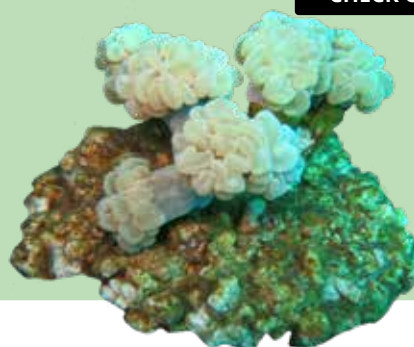
## *Plerogyra* diversity in appearance

*Plerogyra* has diverse appearance, but all species have large (5–10 mm) rounded fingernail-like ridges on the skeleton, although this detail may be obscured by bubble vesicles.



CHECK GENUS

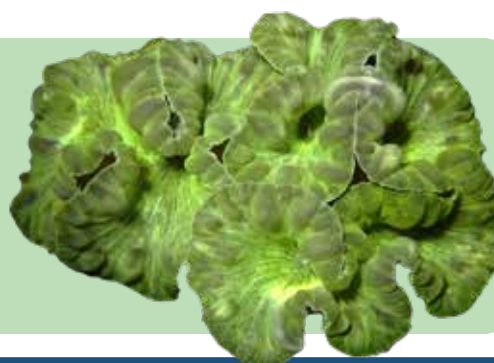
*P. simplex* has phaceloid corallites tipped with grape-like vesicles.



*P. sinuosa* has tightly packed flabello-meandroid valleys and is covered in grape-like vesicles.



*P. turbida* has a fleshy mantle with tentacles that obscure underlying skeleton, huge lily-like (flower) appearance.



### **i** Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net) Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).



# Alveopora

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## LOW EXPORT LEVELS

**Under 100,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$8

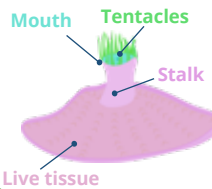
\$33

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
PER PIECE

**BETWEEN \$21-99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a polyp?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### CERIOID



Circular, shared walls

### TENTACLES

#### FLOWER-LIKE



12 short tapering tentacles

### MOUTH

#### STALK PRESENT

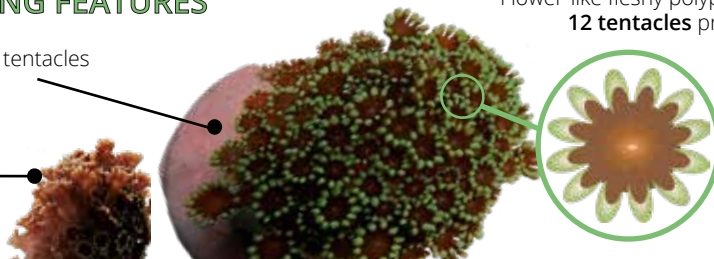


Polyps have stalks

## DEFINING FEATURES

Mouth and tentacles visible.

Polyp stalk clearly visible, and often long.



Flower-like fleshy polyps with **12 tentacles** present.

## LOOK-ALIKES

Cup corals have similar flower-like polyps but these do not have extendable stalks but are directly connected to the corallites. Stalks of *Goniopora* and *Alveopora* are soft, flexible and can easily be retracted. *Alveopora* has 12 tentacles, while *Goniopora* has 24.



*Alveopora*



*Goniopora*



*Tubastraea*



*Dendrophyllia*



*Duncanopsammia*

Page 39

Page 29

Page 27

Page 31



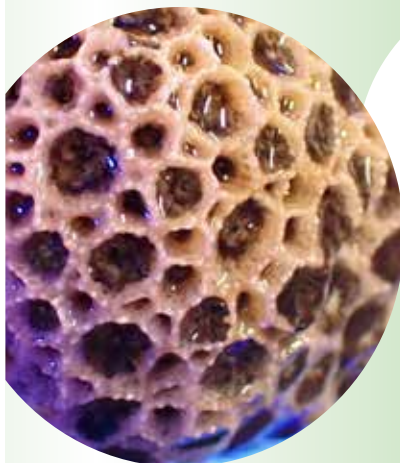
## Stalks or corallites?



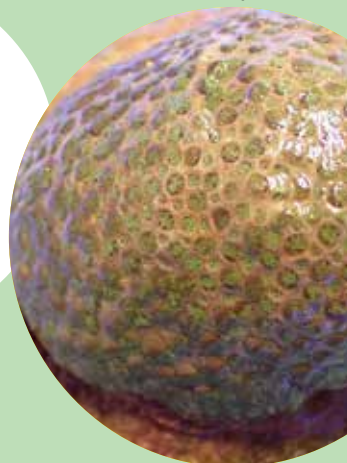
Polyp stalks of *Goniopora* and *Alveopora* are soft, flexible unlike cup corals and also have similar flower-like polyps.

## What if polyps are retracted?

*Alveopora*



*Goniopora*

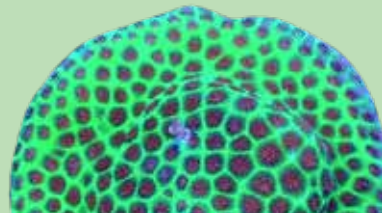


When retracted, these taxa may look like encrusting corals with smaller polyps. The interior of the corallites mostly resemble that of *Porites* or *Astreopora*.

*Astreopora*



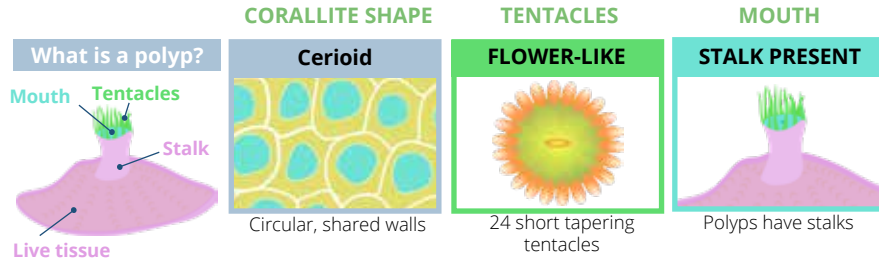
*Porites*



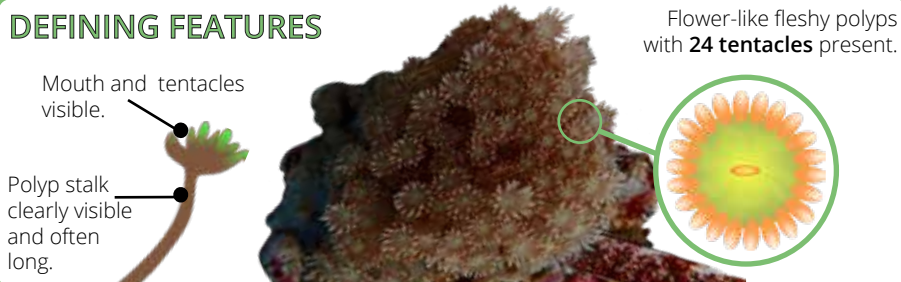
# Goniopora



## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES



## LOOK-A-LIKES

Cup corals have similar flower-like polyps but these do not have extendable stalks but are directly connected to the corallites. Stalks of *Goniopora* and *Alveopora* are soft, flexible and can easily be retracted. *Alveopora* has 12 tentacles, while *Goniopora* has 24.



*Goniopora*



*Alveopora*



*Tubastraea*



*Dendrophyllia*



*Duncanopsammia*

Page 37

Page 29

Page 27

Page 31



## Diversity in appearance of *Goniopora*



### ***Goniopora minor***

Orange in colour, short stalks.



### ***Goniopora lobata***

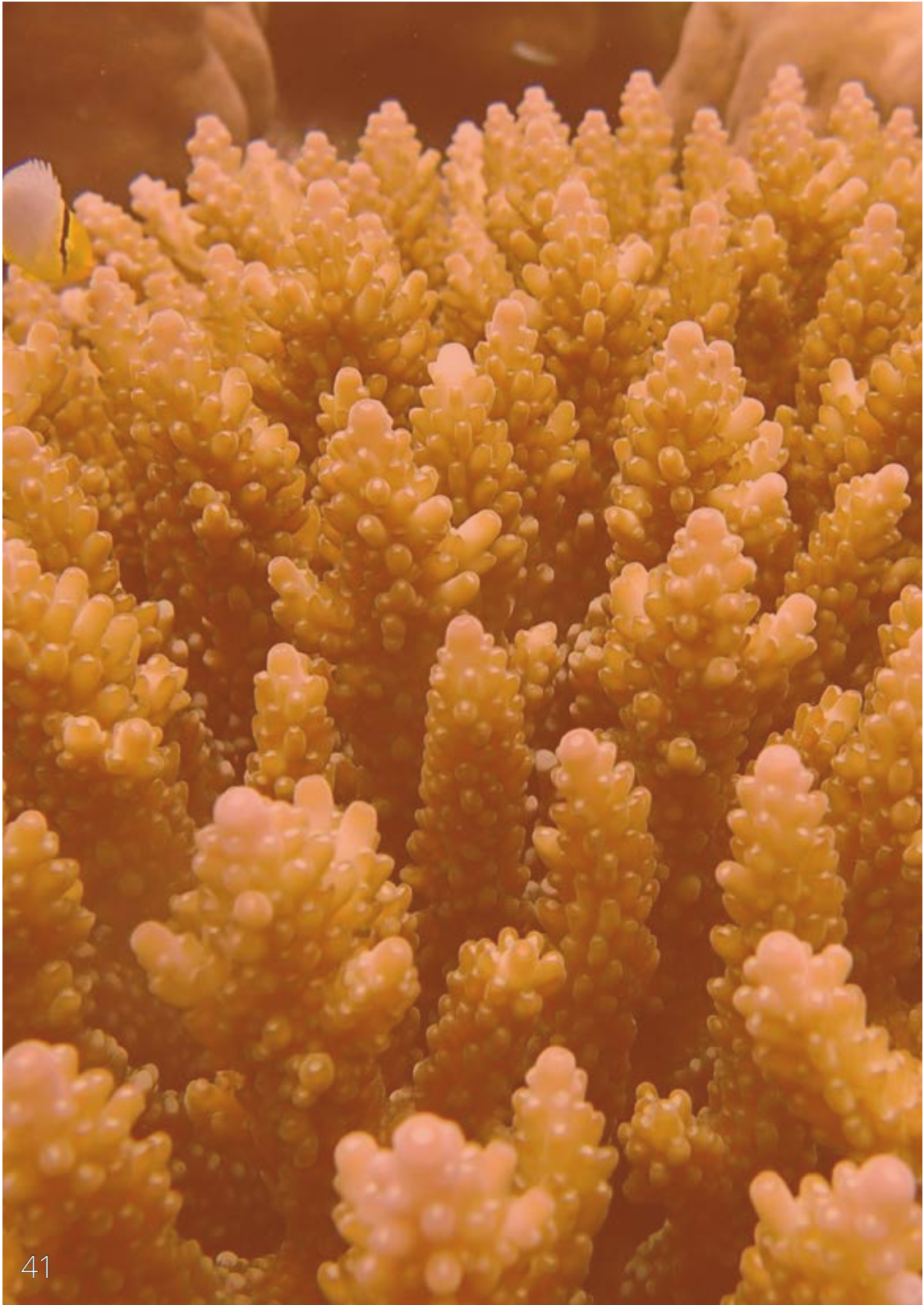
Tentacles are elongated and finger-like.



### ***Goniopora columna***

stalks may be thicker and longer.







# Branching

Branching corals have elongated protrusions of their skeletons, which range from short stubby (finger-like) branches to elongated staghorn forms and interlocking branches that form flat 'table-like' forms.

## DID YOU KNOW?

On healthy reefs, branching corals are often the most common and conspicuous coral type, but they are also the most vulnerable to the impacts of coral bleaching and increasing storminess, meaning that wild populations of branching corals are in decline in many areas.

*Acropora* are exported in high volumes and are commonly maricultured.

The delicate branches of corals in this group are vulnerable to storm damage, but they can reproduce asexually through natural fragmentation to colonise new areas.



Finger-like



Staghorn

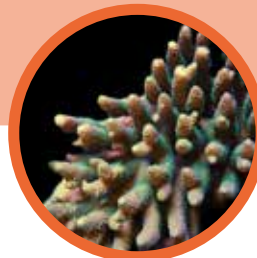


Table-like



# Overview

## Branched shaped corals in trade

Branching corals are popular in trade because of their attractive shape and fast growth rate. ***This table of contents can be used to find the correct page during your inspection, colour coded by shape chapter. Use the tabs to locate the chapter and the page number to navigate to identification pages.***



*Acropora*

Page 45-46



*Pocillopora*

Page 47-48



*Seriatopora*

Page 49-50



*Stylophora*

Page 51-52



*Duncanopsammia*

Page 31-32



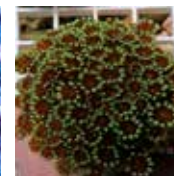
*Dendrophyllia*

Page 27-28



*Tubastraea*

Page 29-30



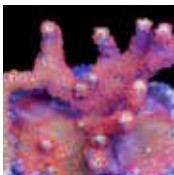
*Alveopora*

Page 37-38



*Goniopora*

Page 39-40



*Montipora*

Page 119-120



*Hydnothophora*

Page 125-126



*Pectinia*

Page 87-88

Some corals that may appear as encrusting in earlier life stages and in the trade develop branches as a secondary feature.



*Porites*

Page 117-118

Although some species of *Porites* that dominate shallow water are branching in shape (*P. cylindrica*, *P. lichen*, *P. nigrescens*, *P. rus*) many more species seen in trade are encrusting. This genus is featured in the Encrusting smaller polyp chapter.



## Detecting false mariculture

### 1 Growing edge

Healthy growing edge established on the artificial base, no fresh cuts or glue present.

### 2 Artificial base properties

Artificial base and mariculture tag has biofouling of marine life e.g., calcareous algae.

### 3 Size of colony in proportion to artificial base

A large colony should not be seen on a small base. Evidence of growth on to the artificial base should be present.



### A biofouled base is the fastest way to detect mariculture

Less time can be taken detecting false mariculture signs for low risk genera and more time spent on vulnerable taxa. **Check the growth rate, export level and price on each genus page to help guide you. For example, slow-growing, high export levels and highly priced corals should be inspected in more detail.**



#### SIGN OF TRUE MARICULTURE



Biofouling by coralline algae is common in 'mature' bases.



#### SIGN OF FALSE MARICULTURE



A new base is clean, without biofouling on the base or cement.



Due to the fast growth rate corals belonging to branching genera, many are fragmented once they arrive in the importing country. A cutting is taken from the **original import** and **grown seperately** by aquarists or retailers, reducing import levels.

However, higher-value *Acropora* will continue to be imported.

# Acropora

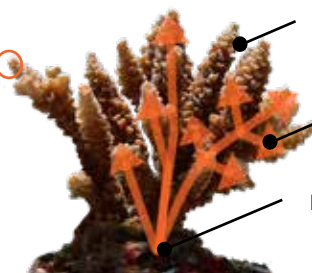
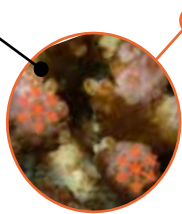


## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>PHACELOID</b> 	<b>SMOOTH SKELETON</b> 	<b>SMALL</b> 
	Tube-like structure	No skeletal bumps	1- 5 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Regular pattern forms a rosette appearance at top of branch, radiating outwards.



Corallite at branch tip is larger than surrounding corallites.

Growth from stems are normally symmetrical.

Narrow base attachment, sometimes forming a single stem.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Acropora* can be distinguished from other branching corals by its larger corallites (usually >1 mm in width) with distinct larger symmetrical corallites at each branch tip (axial corallite).



*Acropora*



*Seriatopora*



*Pocillopora*



*Stylophora*



*Porites*

Page 49

Page 47

Page 51

Page 117

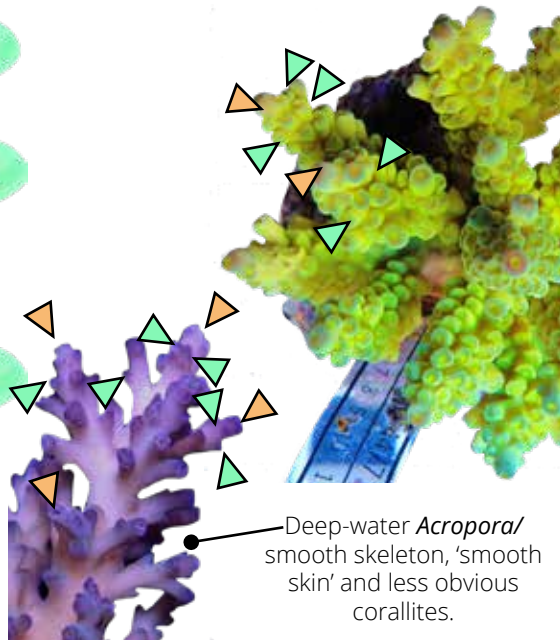
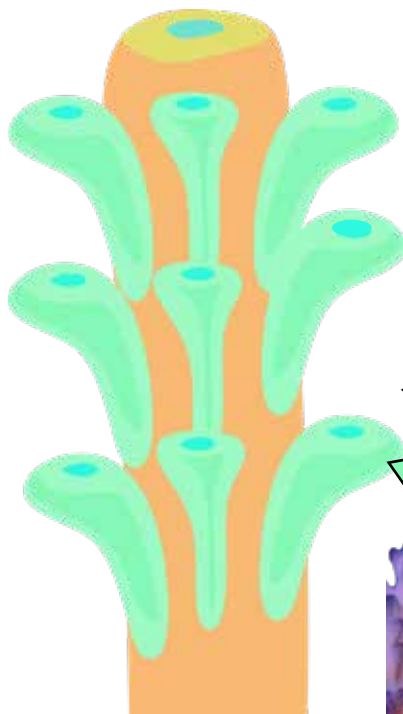
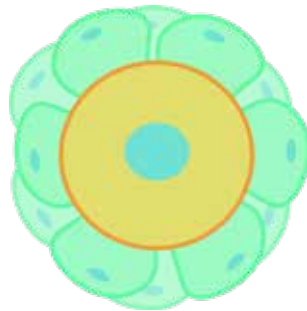




## Unique *Acropora* corallites

*Acropora* has a highly recognisable corallite structure and can grow into many forms, including finger-like, staghorn and plates. The shape of the corallites and other skeletal features can be used to identify to species level.

A rosette of **asymmetrical axial corallites** arranged in a regular pattern around the **larger, symmetrical axial corallite**.



Deep-water *Acropora*/  
smooth skeleton, 'smooth  
skin' and less obvious  
corallites.

# Pocillopora

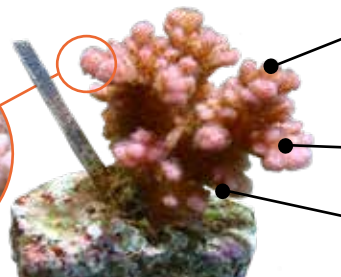


## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>PLOCOID</b> <p>Circular, separate walls</p>	<b>SKELETAL BUMPS</b> <p>Bigger than corallites</p>	<b>SMALL</b> <p>&lt;2 mm in diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Random bumps (larger than holes) arranged on the skeleton, with corallites on or in-between.



Short stubby finger-like (digitate) branches.

Tiny holes (housing the corallites) flush to the surface.

Branches resemble berries.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Pocillopora* is distinguished from *Acropora* by having smaller corallites and no 'axial' corallites on the tips of branches. Large (2–5 mm) randomly spaced bumps all over its surface giving it a berry-like appearance make it distinct from other branching corals.



*Pocillopora*



*Seriatopora*



*Acropora*



*Stylophora*



*Porites*

Page 49

Page 45

Page 51

Page 117



## Growth variation in branching corals

In tree-like branching corals, the canopy is much wider than the base, whereas in other corals (e.g. *Montipora*, *Porites*) branches grow from an encrusting base. Coral tissue encrusting the base is a signal of true mariculture in all growth forms of branching corals.

***Pocillopora***



...see page 47

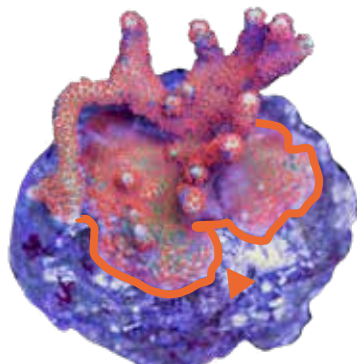
**TREE-LIKE**

***Seriatopora***



...see page 49

***Montipora***



...see page 119

***Porites***



...see page 117

## EXAMPLES OF CORALS WITH BRANCHING FORMS



***Hynophora***

Page 125



***Echinopora***

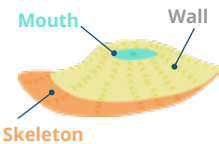
Page 91

# Seriatopora



## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?



CORALLITE SHAPE

PLOCOID



Circular, separate walls

TEXTURE

SMOOTH SKELETON



No skeletal bumps

SIZE

TINY

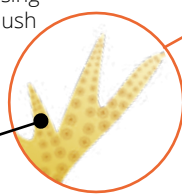


1 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Tiny holes (housing the corallites) flush to the surface.

Corallites often arranged in rows along the branches.



Smooth branches which are very delicate, tapered, thin and pointed.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Seriatopora* differs from *Acropora* by having smaller corallites and no 'axial' corallites on the tips of branches. It is distinguished from other branching corals by its delicate branches that taper to a point and its smooth skeleton. *Seriatopora* is distinguished from *Acropora*.



*Seriatopora*



*Acropora*



*Pocillopora*



*Porites*



*Stylophora*

Page 45

Page 47

Page 117

Page 51

## Branching corals in the wild



Branching corals are fast-growing, fragment easily and are often common on natural reefs, meaning they are usually considered low risk in the trade.



However, they are also the most susceptible wild corals to pressures, such as temperature-induced bleaching, storm damage and disease. This means that in some areas branching corals are greatly reduced in abundance or may be absent.



Human activities can exacerbate the threats coral reefs face and corals may become more rare. Maricultured fragments are already being used to restore coral reefs in some parts of the world. In the future, mariculture of branching corals may aid their conservation and continue to supply the trade.





# Stylophora



## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>PLOCOID</b> <p>Circular, separate walls</p>	<b>SPIKES</b> <p>Needle-like bumps</p>	<b>SMALL</b> <p>&lt;2 mm diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Stylophora* is distinguished from *Acropora* by having smaller corallites and no 'axial' corallites on the tips of branches. It is distinguished from other branching corals by small spikes covering the skeleton and robust thick branches.



*Stylophora*



*Porites*



*Pocillopora*



*Seriatopora*



*Montipora*

Page 117

Page 47

Page 49

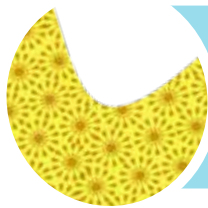
Page 119



## Branching corallite features

Several branching corals have tiny (<1 mm) circular separated corallites. They can be distinguished by skeletal features and the shape of branches. *Acropora* is not included in this page due to its distinctive axial and radial corallites (page 46).

### *Porites*



Skeleton is smooth, with very little space between holes. Variety of branch shapes from broad 'club-like' ends to finger-like ends.

...see page 117



### *Stylophora*



Small spikes on the skeleton, arranged close to the corallite 'holes' resembling hoods. Robust branches with broad 'club-like' ends.



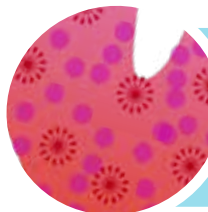
### *Pocillopora*



Bumps (larger than holes) randomly arranged on the skeleton. Robust branches with berry-like ends.



### *Montipora*



Bumps (usually same size as corallites) randomly arranged on the skeleton (sandpaper texture), bumps sometimes join to form ridge. Variety of branch structures.

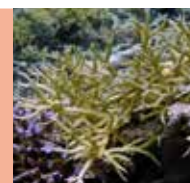
...see page 119



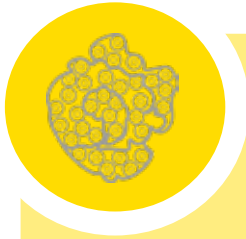
### *Seriatopora*



Tiny holes (housing the corallites) flush to the surface. Thin delicate branches with tapering pointed ends.







## Encrusting (larger polyps)

In this guide we have defined encrusting (larger polyps) as those that encrust the artificial base, sometimes forming small boulder-like mounds, and have corallites larger than >5 mm. Many of these genera are known as Large Polyp Stony 'LPS' corals by aquarists in the aquarium trade.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Many of these corals look encrusting in trade as juveniles but some can also form small boulder-like mounds on the artificial base. Many of these corals are slow-growing, increasing in size by only up to 10 mm per year in the wild. They are resilient to a range of environmental pressures, e.g. bleaching.

Some of these corals can be covered by a thick fleshy mantle which can be colourful and attractive for trade. Others have a thin layer of transparent tissue with skeleton features underneath clearly visible.

Some corals are very difficult to identify and may have changed group during taxonomic revisions in the last two decades.



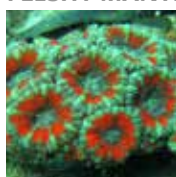


# Overview

## Encrusting (larger polyp) corals seen in trade

Encrusting (larger polyp) corals includes colonies with colourful mouths and fleshy mantles that are popular in trade. ***This table of contents can be used to find the correct page during inspection and is colour-coded by chapter. Use the tabs to locate the chapter and the page number to navigate to identification pages.***

### FLESHY MANTLE



**Acanthastrea**

Page 57-58



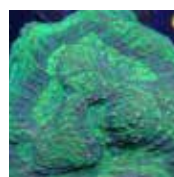
**Blastomussa**

Page 59-60



**Lobophyllia**

Page 61-62



**Australomussa**

Page 63-64



**Symphyllia**

Page 65-66

### NEAT-RIDGES

Find a neat-ridge coral key on page 74



**Diploastrea**

Page 67-68



**Moseleya**

Page 69-70



**Favia**

Page 71-72



**Favites**

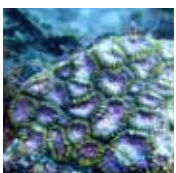
Page 73-74



**Goniastrea**

Page 75-76

### OTHER



**Montastraea**

Page 77-78



**Oulophyllia**

Page 79-80



**Platygyra**

Page 81-82



**Caulastrea**

Page 83-84



**Galaxea**

Page 85-86

### CHALICE CORALS

Find a Chalice coral key on page 96



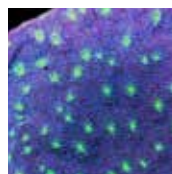
**Pectinia**

Page 87-88



**Echinophyllia**

Page 89-90



**Echinopora**

Page 91-92



**Mycedium**

Page 93-94



**Oxypora**

Page 95-96



## Detecting false mariculture

- 1 Growing edge**  
Healthy growing edge established on the artificial base, no fresh cuts or glue present.
- 2 Artificial base properties**  
Artificial base and mariculture tag has biofouling of marine life e.g., calcareous algae.
- 3 Size of colony relative to base**  
Maricultured corals in this group are usually only as big as their artificial base or smaller than it.

**! Growing edge is the most important feature to inspect**

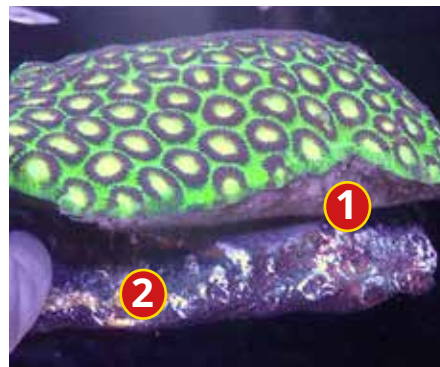
**✓ SIGN OF TRUE MARICULTURE**

**✗ SIGN OF FALSE MARICULTURE**



Healthy looking edge encrusting onto biofouled artificial base and tag.

The shape of original piece cut from the mother colony may clear, even when the colony has encrusted the entire artificial base.



Fresh cuts around the edge, showing the white skeleton not encrusted to the base and incomplete polyps.

Colony bigger than its artificial base.



# Acanthastrea



## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<p>Mouth</p> <p>Ridges</p> <p>Fleshy mantle</p>	<b>PLOCOID/CERIOID</b> <p>Circular walls shared or separate</p>	<b>FLESHY MANTLE</b> <p>Mantle over walls</p>	<b>MEDIUM/LARGE</b> <p>10-50 mm diameter</p>

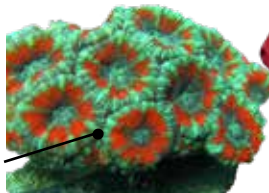
## DEFINING FEATURES

*Note: Colour is not a reliable character for identification.*

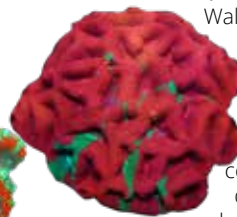
Mouth and corallites circular to lobed.

**PLOCOID**

Ridges/spikes are irregular or loosely organised into lines radiating from mouth.



**CERIOID**



Walls are thick (wall width is greater or equal to mouth diameter).

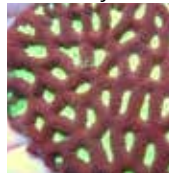
Fleshy mantle is extended over the corallite wall during the day and may be highly coloured, but no tentacles should be visible.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Favites* and *Favia* have similar corallite shape but lack a fleshy mantle. *Acanthastrea* corallites are circular and smaller than *Lobophyllia*. *Acanthastrea maxima* can be confused with *Scolymia*. However, *Scolymia* is usually solitary with only one corallite present.



*Acanthastrea*



*Favites*



*Favia*



*Lobophyllia*



*Scolymia*

Page 73

Page 71

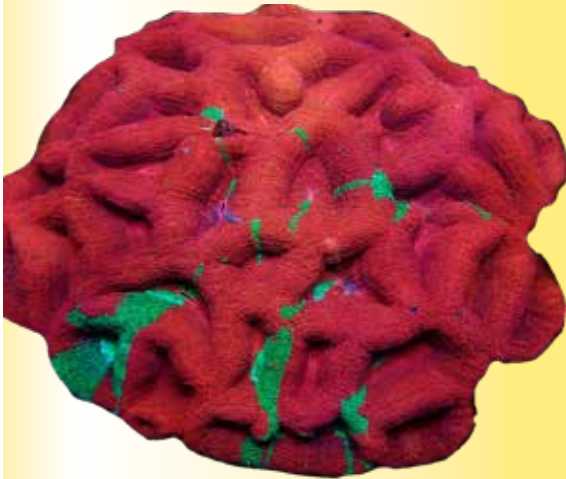
Page 61

Page 133

## Shared compared to separate walls

Ceriod *Acanthastrea* can look superficially like *Favites*, but is distinguished by its fleshy mantle and irregular ridges versus the thin tissue layer and unhidden ridges in *Favites*.

SHARED



*Acanthastrea bowerbanki*

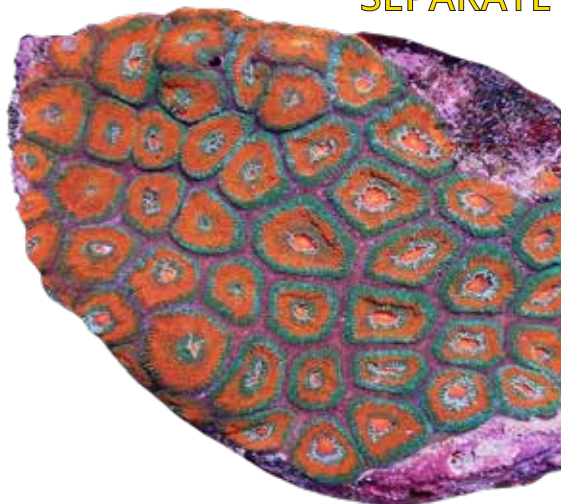


*Acanthastrea enchinata*

Plocoid *Acanthastrea* can look like *Favia*, with the same differences applying as for *Favites*. *Acanthastrea* can look similar to *Blastomussa*, but *Acanthastrea* usually has larger and more densely packed corallites.

SEPARATE

...see page 59



*Acanthastrea* sp.

### **i** Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

# Blastomussa

**MEDIUM GROWTH**



8-12 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**

**100-500,000**  
pieces

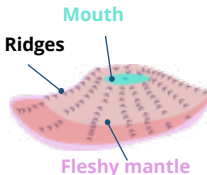



Global data 2010-2019

\$2 \$40

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
PER PIECE OR POLYP

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
 <p>Mouth</p> <p>Ridges</p> <p>Fleshy mantle</p>	<p><b>PLOCOID/PHACELOID</b></p>  <p>Circular, separate walls</p>	<p><b>FLESHY MANTLE</b></p>  <p>Mantle over walls</p>	<p><b>MEDIUM</b></p>  <p>7 - 25 mm in diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Corallite walls are always separate.

Mouth shape is circular or oval.



Walls have robust radiating ridges that are irregular in size and may be bumpy.

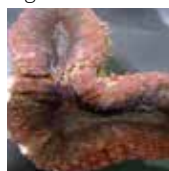
A fleshy mantle over the wall and may be highly coloured, but tentacles small and barely visible.

## LOOK-ALIKES

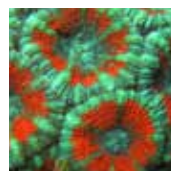
*Blastomussa* with tightly packed corallites may look like *Acanthastrea*, while *Blastomussa* with oval-shaped mouths may look like *Lobophyllia*. *Blastomussa* usually has smaller corallites than either of these genera.



*Blastomussa*



*Lobophyllia*



*Acanthastrea*

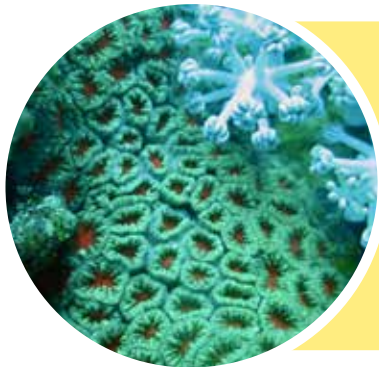
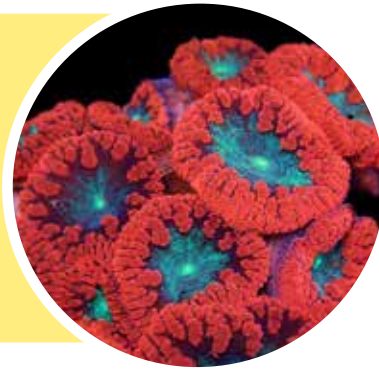
Page 61

Page 57



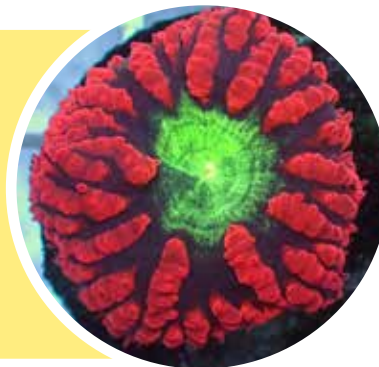
## Wild rarity and trade abundance

*Blastomussa* is traded in moderate volumes and can fetch a high price for brightly coloured colonies.



In the wild this genus is usually rare and colonies are small reaching a maximum of ~200 mm in diameter.

Only maricultured *Blastomussa* can be exported from Indonesia and there are limited number of CITES export permits available.



### *Blastomussa* spp. have import restrictions

Since 2015 the importation of Source Code 'W' (wild caught) *B. wellsi* and *B. merleti* into the European Union from Indonesia has not been permitted.



CHECK GENUS



# Lobophyllia

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## HIGH EXPORT LEVELS

**Over 500,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$6

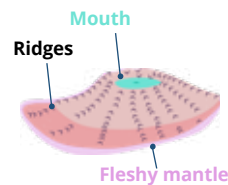
\$72

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
**PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### PHACELOID FLABELO-MEANDROID



Separate walls, valleys or oval mouths

### TEXTURE

#### FLESHY MANTLE



Mantle over walls

### SIZE

#### MEDIUM/LARGE

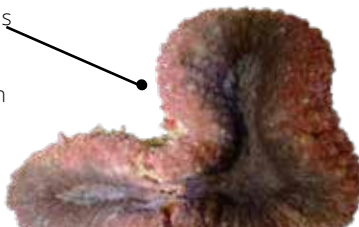


15-50 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Clearly separate walls and usually grow as elongated tubes with spaces between sometimes visible.

Corallite mouths are usually lobe to oval.



Thick walls relative to mouth (wall width is greater or equal to mouth diameter), fleshy mantle covering walls and skeleton.

Bumps present all over like *Acanthastrea*.

A single corallite may be sold, as they are easy to remove from wild colony.

## LOOK-ALIKES

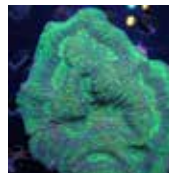
Single corallites may look like *Trachyphyllia*. It may also be confused for other corals with a fleshy mantle. *Australomussa* has shared walls, *Acanthastrea* has more circular mouths and less separation between walls and *Symphyllia* has valley-shaped mouths and shared walls.



*Lobophyllia*



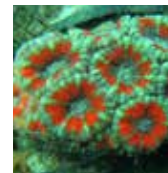
*Trachyphyllia*



*Australomussa*



*Symphyllia*



*Acanthastrea*

Page 131

Page 63

Page 65

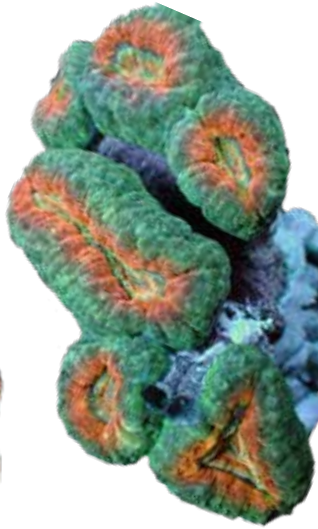
Page 57

## *Lobophyllia* and other corals

*Lobophyllia* may be harvested from the wild as an entire colony. Maricultured colonies may have very few corallites that have budded from the original corallite.



EXAMPLE ON THE REEF



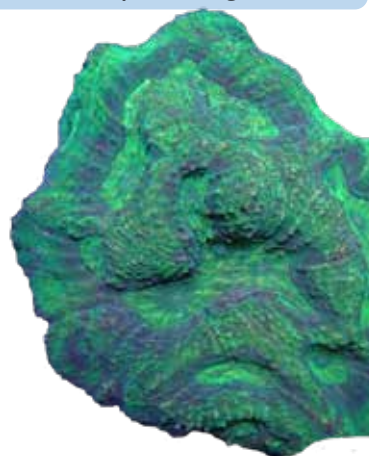
MARICULTURED

### **i** Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

*Scolymia* usually have a single, encrusting corallite and may be confused with juvenile *Lobophyllia*.

...see page 133



Unlike *Lobophyllia*, *Australomussa* has fused walls.

...see page 63

# Australomussa

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## LOW EXPORT LEVELS

**Under 100,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$12

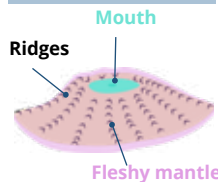
\$40

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
PER PIECE

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### MEANDROID



Valleys, shared walls

### TEXTURE

#### FLESHY MANTLE



Mantle over walls

### SIZE

#### LARGE



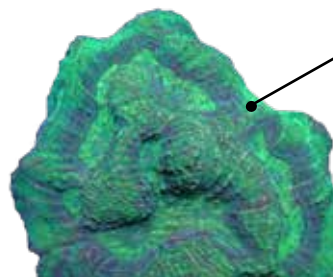
50-100 mm wide

## DEFINING FEATURES

Mouth is visible, but less wide than the walls.

Mouths are elongated into ovals and short valleys.

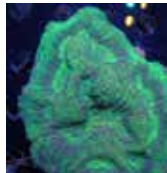
Walls are slightly raised above the mouth and are tapered.



More than one corallite may be present.

## LOOK-ALIKES

The 'flatness' of *Australomussa* is similar to its look-alikes. Valleys of *Australomussa* consist of deeper and larger-sized corallites than *Mycedium*, *Echinophyllia* and *Oxypora*. *Moseleya* has fleshy mantle, teeth fringing mouth and higher density of polyps than *Australomussa*.



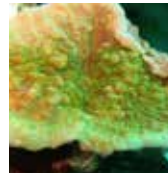
*Australomussa*



*Echinophyllia*



*Mycedium*



*Oxypora*



*Moseleya*

Page 89

Page 93

Page 95

Page 69

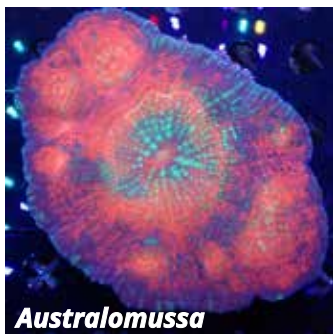
## Colourful fleshy mantles

Colourful fleshy mantles are attractive to aquarists meaning the colonies with this feature are sought after and more valuable than others in the same genus.

Colour often drives trends and corals are given distinctive names which can improve their popularity e.g. Flaming Lips Symph (*Symphyllia* sp.).



*Symphyllia*

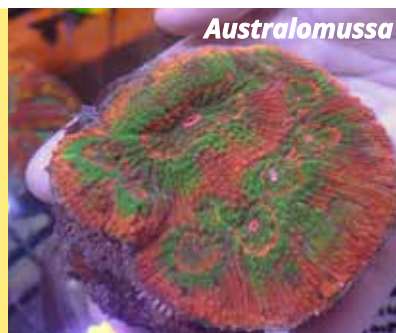


*Australomussa*

The price of the coloured colony can be 2-3 times higher than examples of more 'naturally' coloured colonies (tan or green).

Popular colours include reds and yellows.

Neat-ridged corals can have coloured mouths but lack the variety of colours and patterns seen in fleshy mantle corals. This can lead to illicit traders mislabelling fleshy mantle corals as cheaper neat-ridged corals e.g. *Austalomussa* (right) was shipped using an *Echinopora* permit.



*Australomussa*

### **i** Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net) Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).



# Symphyllia



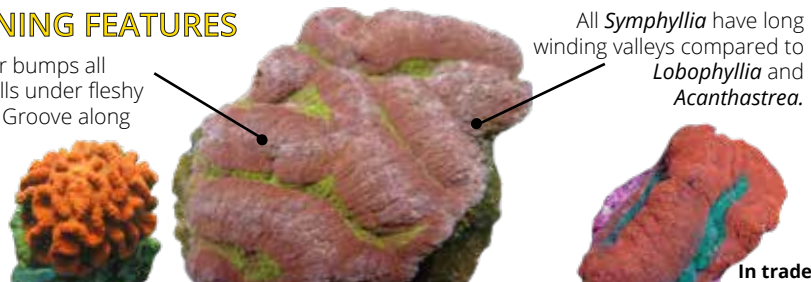
## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>MEANDROID</b>  Valleys, shared walls, groove along top of wall	<b>FLESHY MANTLE</b>  Mantle over walls	<b>MEDIUM/LARGE</b>  15-35 mm wide valleys

## DEFINING FEATURES

Irregular bumps all over walls under fleshy mantle. Groove along walls.

At sea



All *Symphyllia* have long winding valleys compared to *Lobophyllia* and *Acanthastrea*.

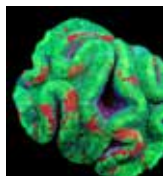
In trade

## LOOK-ALIKES

Small *Symphyllia* may look like *Trachyphyllia* or *Lobophyllia*, but normally has more valley-shaped mouths and shared walls, with groove along wall. *Symphyllia* walls are more fleshy than *Australomussa*, once settled.



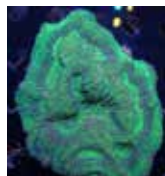
*Symphyllia*



*Trachyphyllia*



*Lobophyllia*



*Australomussa*



*Platygyra*

Page 131

Page 61

Page 63

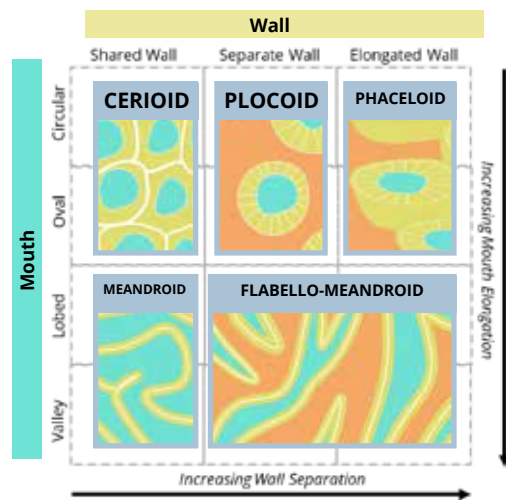
Page 81



## Corallite shape diversity

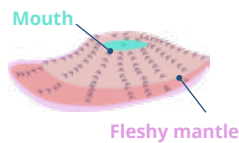
Corallite shape is based on mouth shape and wall separation. Although this feature is a continuum, this guide uses 5 corallite groups for ease of identification. If genus has more than one shape type, they are all featured on the genus pages.

Photographic examples of corals featured in this chapter (encrusting, larger polyp) under these categories are shown below.



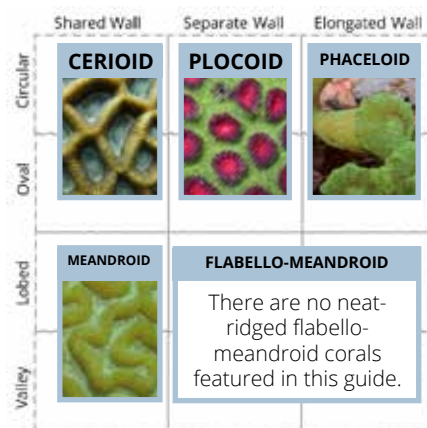
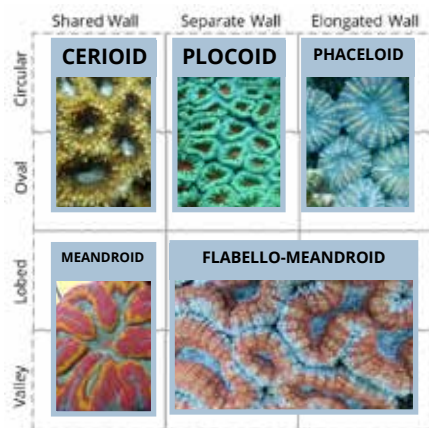
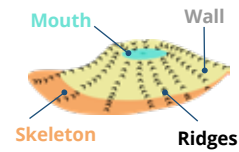
### FLESHY MANTLE

Massive corals with a fleshy mantle over the walls.



### NEAT-RIDGES

Massive corals with thin tissue layer, revealing ridges radiating from the mouth in neat arrangement.

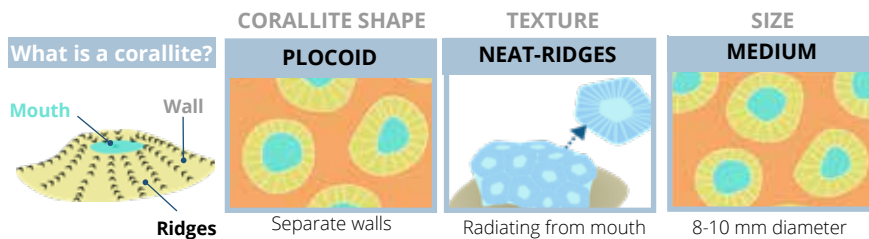


These examples show fleshy mantle and neat-ridge corals but there may be some overlap. For example, *Caulastrea* (page 83) has neat-ridges but also a fleshy tissue covering the walls.

# Diploastrea



## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES

Mouth and walls (corallites) are dome-shaped around a small circular mouth, which is <20 % the width of corallite.



Corallites are polygonal in shape and have straight walls covered in lines of regular ridges radiating from the mouth.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Favia* and *Montastrea* have similar-sized corallite with separate walls, but *Diploastrea* is distinguished by its small mouth relative to wall width and the angular edges between corallites. Volcano-shaped corallites similar to *Astreopora* but has bigger corallites.



*Diploastrea*



*Favia*



*Montastrea*



*Astreopora*

Page 71

Page 77

Page 109

## Ecology of *Diploastrea*



*Diploastrea*

15,572

Top  
importers:  
USA, UK,  
Canada, and  
the EU.

*Diploastrea* are common reef-builders found across the Indo-Pacific from East Africa to French Polynesia, over 17,000 kilometres away.

In the CITES data (2010-2019) over 15,500 pieces were exported from: Indonesia, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Australia.



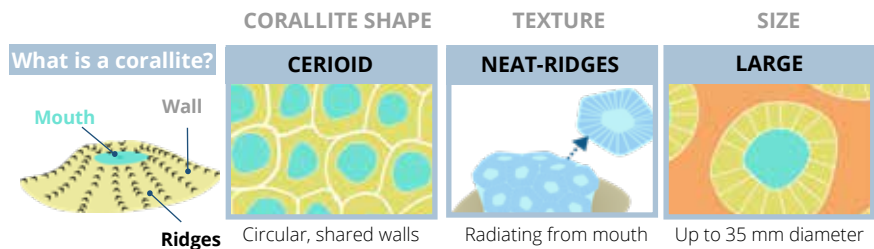
On the reef they can form large colonies several metres across, and be host to a wide range of other organisms.



# Moseleya



## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES

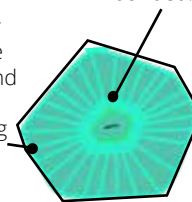
Colonies usually have a large central corallite surrounded by angular daughter corallites.

Walls are usually shared but may show small separation between.



Teeth fringing the mouth on the mouth small and rounded.

Angular corallite edge and steep tapering walls.

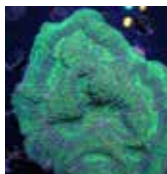


## LOOK-ALIKES

*Australomussa* and *Acanthastrea* have oval to lobed mouth with shared walls, but *Moseleya* is distinguished by angular corallite edges and steep tapering walls. It also usually has a larger central corallite.



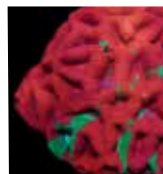
*Moseleya*



*Australomussa*



*Diploastrea*



*Acanthastrea*

Page 63

Page 67

Page 57



## Trade levels of encrusting (larger polyp) corals



HIGH EXPORT LEVELS			<p><i>Moseleya</i> is not currently cultured and is not traded in high numbers. <i>Moseleya</i> export quota may be used for fraudulent trade of more valuable boulder-like genera such as <i>Lobophyllia</i> and <i>Acanthastrea</i>.</p>		
	<i>Lobophyllia</i> 569,001	<i>Acanthastrea</i> 506,449			
MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS					
	<i>Caulastraea</i> 478,612	<i>Favites</i> 342,561	<i>Favia</i> 305,531	<i>Galaxea</i> 300,901	<i>Echinophyllia</i> 272,676
					
	<i>Blastomussa</i> 199,788	<i>Platygyra</i> 163,375	<i>Goniastrea</i> 160,964	<i>Symphyllia</i> 160,439	<i>Mycedium</i> 145,102
			LOW EXPORT LEVELS		
	<i>Echinopora</i> 121,646	<i>Pectinia</i> 100,751		<i>Montastraea</i> 69,707	<i>Oxypora</i> 45,530
					
	<i>Moseleya</i> 31,527	<i>Diploastrea</i> 15,572		<i>Oulophyllia</i> 15,150	<i>Australomussa</i> 13,266



# Favia

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS

100-500,000  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$7

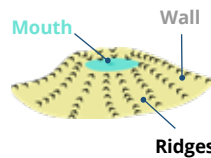
\$28

UK IMPORT PRICE  
PER PIECE

BETWEEN \$21-\$99

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### PLOCOID



Circular, separate walls

### TEXTURE

#### NEAT-RIDGES



Radiating from mouth

### SIZE

#### MEDIUM



8-20 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

**Rounded** walls with  
ridges radiating from  
the mouth.

*Favia* is very varied so  
its best to check  
look-alikes first.



Separate walls surrounding  
mouth.



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Favia* is distinguished from other circular separate walled (plocoid) boulder-like corals by not having budding of daughter corallites (page 78). *Favia* is distinguished from *Favites* by having separate walls.



*Favia*



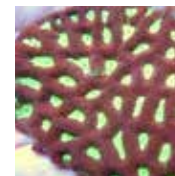
*Diploastrea*



*Montastraea*



*Cyphastrea*



*Favites*

Page 67

Page 77

Page 111

Page 73

## Teeth fringing mouths in coral

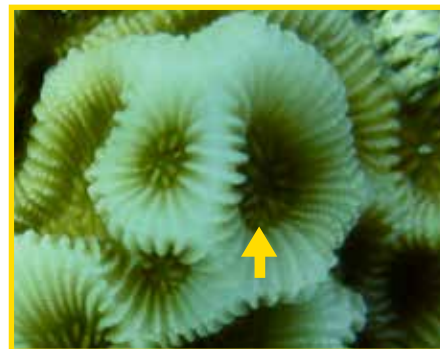
*Favites*  
TEETH ABSENT



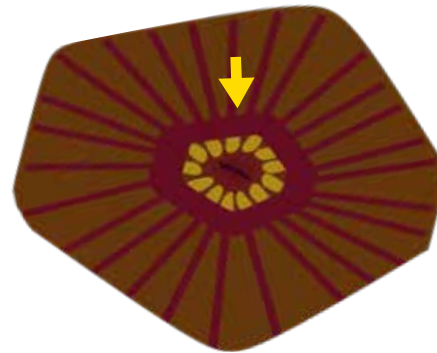
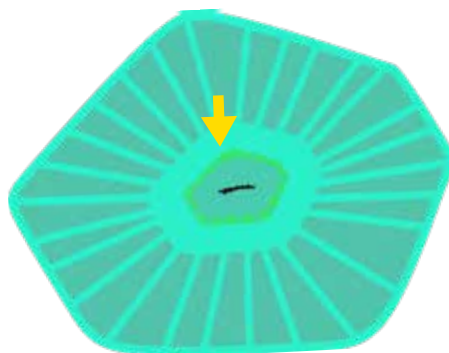
The presence of teeth fringing the mouth is a good distinction in corals across chapters. This page compares corals to help users spot this feature.



*Moseleya*  
TEETH POORLY DEVELOPED  
Teeth small and rounded.



*Goniastrea*  
TEETH WELL DEVELOPED  
Teeth long and more robust.



# Favites

**MEDIUM GROWTH**



8-12 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**

**100-500,000**  
pieces

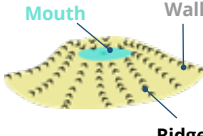



Global data 2010-2019

\$4 \$40

**UK IMPORT PRICE  
PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE <b>CERIOID</b>	TEXTURE <b>NEAT-RIDGES</b>	SIZE <b>SMALL/MEDIUM</b>
 <p>Mouth</p> <p>Wall</p> <p>Ridges</p>	 <p>Circular, shared walls</p>	 <p>Radiating from mouth</p>	 <p>3-15 mm diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

*Favites* has corallites with **shared** walls.

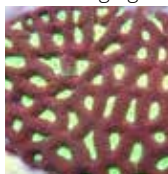
Walls are rounded and have regular ridges radiating from the mouth.



Corallite size can vary (3-15 mm).

## LOOK-ALIKES

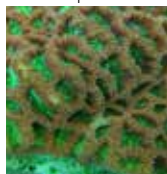
*Favites* is distinguished from most other neat-ridge corals with circular mouths by having shared walls, *Favia* has separate walls. *Goniastrea* also has shared walls, but has a crown of teeth fringing the mouth. *Acanthastrea* has spikes visible through fleshy mantle.



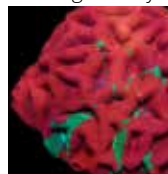
*Favites*



*Favia*



*Oulophyllia*



*Acanthastrea*



*Goniastrea*

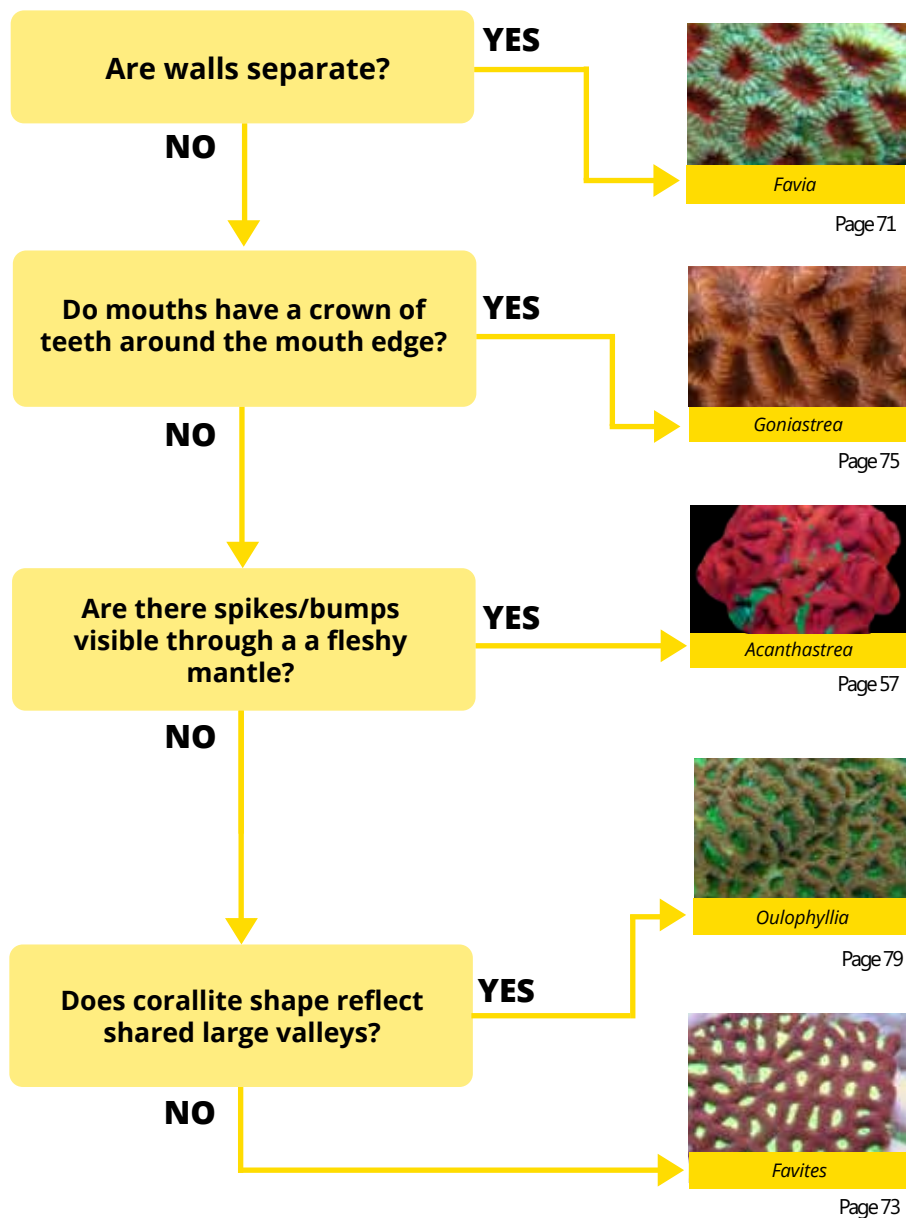
Page 71

Page 79

Page 57

Page 75

## Key to *Favites* look-alikes



### Budding or equal division?

The final question in this flowchart explains budding and equal division, you can explore this further on page 78.

# Goniastrea

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS

**100-500,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$12

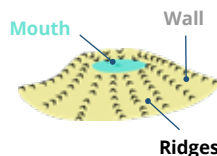
\$58

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
**PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### CERIOID/ MEANDROID



**Ridges** Circular or valley shared walls

### TEXTURE

#### NEAT-RIDGES



Radiating from mouth

### SIZE

#### MEDIUM



6-15 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Ridges on walls and small teeth fringing mouth.



## LOOK-ALIKES

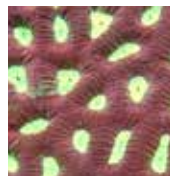
*Goniastrea* has a variable shaped mouth fringed with large teeth, absent in *Platygyra* and *Favites*, weakly developed in *Moseleya* and *Oulophyllia*. *Moseleya* has larger, more circular mouths and angular walls, *Oulophyllia* has larger corallites, more tapered walls and meandroid valleys.



*Goniastrea*



*Platygyra*



*Favites*



*Oulophyllia*



*Moseleya*

Page 81

Page 73

Page 79

Page 69

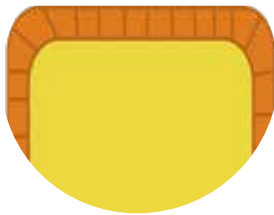


## Wall shape of neat-ridged corals



Genera in this group are hard to distinguish and wall shape can help with identification...

### *Platygyra*



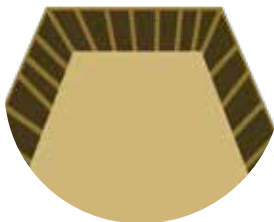
Defined valley structure with straight walls that have a **flat top**.

### *Favites*



Less defined wall top than other groups, more of a **rounded** appearance.

### *Goniastrea*



Wall grooves are **tapered and flat** i.e. do not terminate into a defined apex.

### *Oulophyllia*



Wall grooves are **tapered** to a defined apex. This genus has noticeable large corallite walls and a robust appearance.

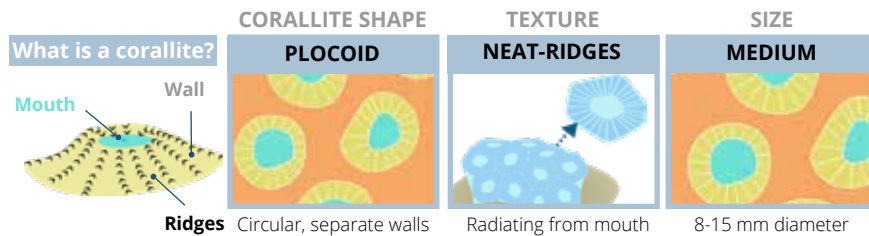
#### **i** Taxonomic changes

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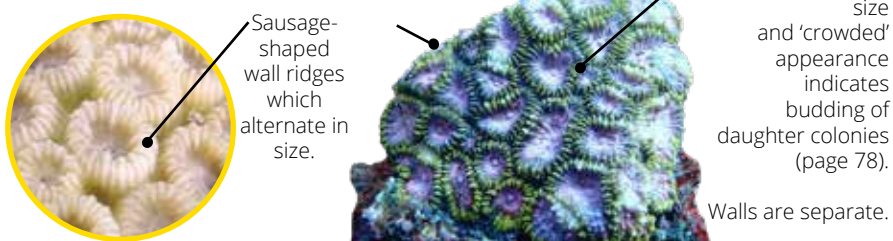
# Montastraea



## CORALLITE FEATURES

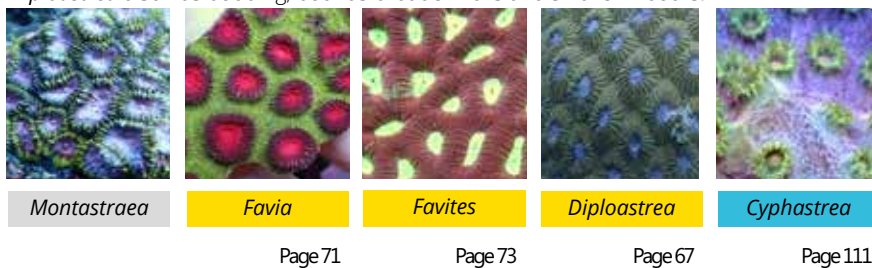


## DEFINING FEATURES



## LOOK-ALIKES

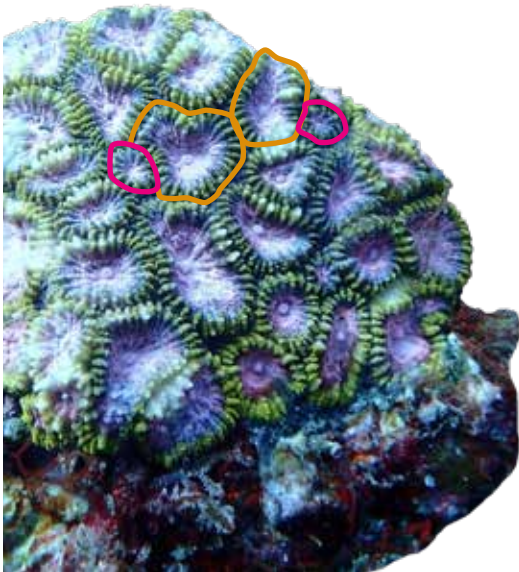
Separate walls compared to *Favites*. Budding of smaller daughter corallites compared to *Favia*. *Cyphastrea* has budding and sausage-shaped ridges, but has smaller corallites. *Diploastrea* also has budding, but has broader walls and smaller mouths.



## Distinct corallite formation

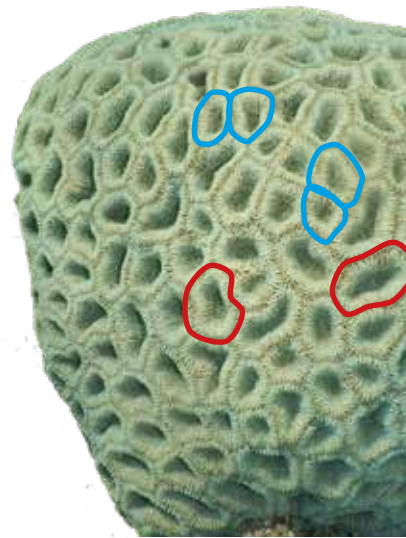
Different encrusting (larger polyp) coral genera grow new corallites in two different ways.

### BUDDING



In **budding** (e.g. *Montastraea*, *Cyphastrea* and *Diploastrea*), the new **daughter corallite** is formed from a small portion of the **parent corallite** resulting in a 'crowded' appearance. Both groups can have variable corallite size, but in **equal division** the smaller corallites appear as **equal-sized pairs**.

### EQUAL DIVISION



In **equal division** (e.g. *Favia* and *Favites*) the **parent corallite** splits into **two equal daughter corallites**.

### Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

# Oulophyllia

**NOT CULTURED**



Not currently maricultured in Indonesia

**LOW EXPORT LEVELS**

**Under 100,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$15

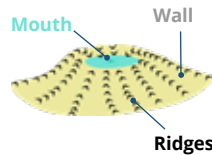
\$25

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
PER PIECE

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?



**CORALLITE SHAPE**

**MEANDROID**



Valleys, shared walls

**TEXTURE**

**NEAT-RIDGES**



Radiating from mouth

**SIZE**

**MEDIUM**



10-20 mm width

## DEFINING FEATURES

Corallite walls are sloped with lines of regular ridges radiating from mouth.

Wall shape is tapered to an apex (page 76).



Valleys may be variable in size but appear lobed in shape.

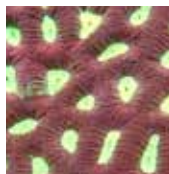
Valleys are wider than other neat-ridged corals (10-50 mm).

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Oulophyllia* has larger corallites than other neat-ridge corals, walls taper to an apex (see page 76).



*Oulophyllia*



*Favites*



*Platygyra*



*Goniastrea*

Page 73

Page 81

Page 75





## Examples of *Oulophyllia*

*Oulophyllia* has mouths that are elongated into valleys but they may be short ovals and lobes. *Oulophyllia* has larger corallites than other neat-ridge corals, walls taper to an apex.





# Platygyra

## SLOW GROWTH



>12 months to culture

## MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS

100-500,000  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$5

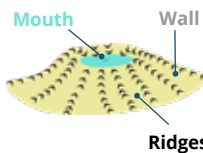
\$45

UK IMPORT PRICE  
PER PIECE

BETWEEN \$21-\$99

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### MEANDROID



Valley, shared walls

### TEXTURE

#### NEAT-RIDGES



Radiating from mouth

### SIZE

#### SMALL/MEDIUM

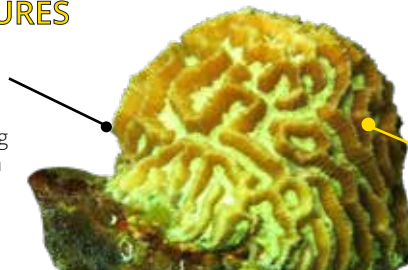


4-10 mm width

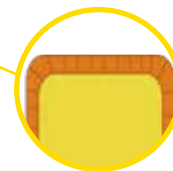
## DEFINING FEATURES

Shared walls with neat wall ridges.

*Platygyra* usually has long meandroid valleys, but in some species these may appear lobed or oval.



Walls are steep (often vertical) with a flat top or ragged top.



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Platygyra* is easily confused. It has narrower valleys than *Oulophyllia*, lacks the teeth fringing mouth of *Goniastrea*, and has usually more elongated valley-shaped mouths compared to *Favites*. *Merulina* is distinguished by the zip-like interlocking wall ridges appearance.



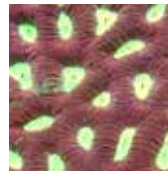
*Platygyra*



*Oulophyllia*



*Goniastrea*



*Favites*



*Merulina*

Page 79

Page 75

Page 73

Page 123

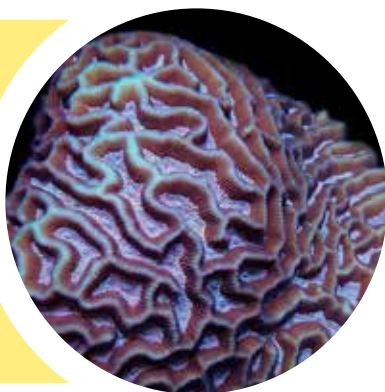
## Examples of *Platygyra* on the reef

*Platygyra* is a relatively common coral in the wild, with 11 species. It is slow-growing and is highly tolerant to environmental disturbance, often recovering well from bleaching, sedimentation and physical impacts.



The classic appearance of this genus is highly elongated valleys randomly arranged on the colony, but with highly regular valley width, giving them a brain-like surface.

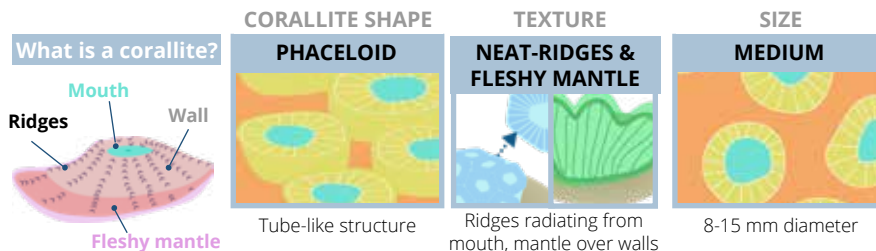
Some colonies have coloured mouths that make them attractive to the coral trade. Some also may have more oval mouth shape, which could be confused for cerioid neat-ridge corals such as *Goniastrea* and *Favites*.



# Caulastraea

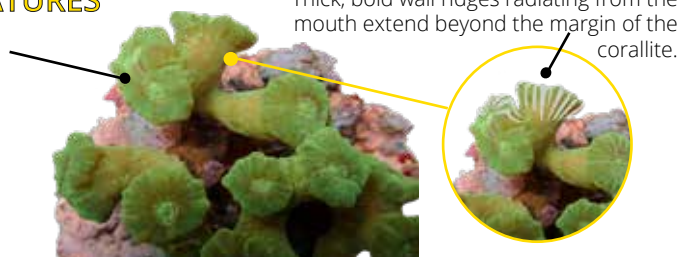


## CORALLITE FEATURES



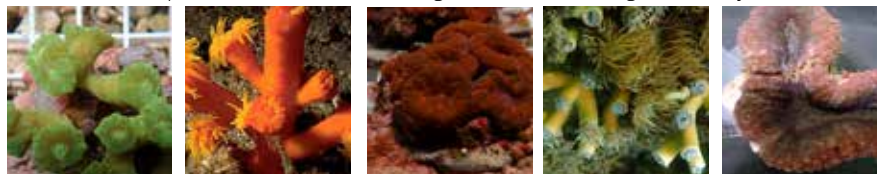
## DEFINING FEATURES

*Caulastraea* is relatively unique with very elongated (phaceloid) corallites, with circular to oval mouths.



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Caulastraea* has bold ridges visible through the live tissue, but *Duncanopsammia* and *Dendrophyllia* do not have this feature. Similar fleshy mantle appearance to *Lobophyllia* and *Blastomussa* but prominent, smooth neat-ridges are visible through the fleshy mantle.



*Caulastraea*

*Dendrophyllia*

*Blastomussa*

*Duncanopsammia*

*Lobophyllia*

Page 27

Page 59

Page 31

Page 61

## Wall detail in coral with neat-ridges

The corals that fall under the category neat-ridges are all within the family Merulinidae. Corallite shape and size can be distinct but the ridges that radiate from the mouth are regular in shape, size and spacing.

### *Favites*

Ceriod, circular,  
shared walls



### *Favia*

Plocoid, circular,  
separate walls



### *Platygyra*

Meandroid, valleys, shared walls



### *Caulastrea*

Phaceloid, circular to oval,  
separate tube-like walls

### **i** Neat-ridges provide important distinction

This feature can help to quickly distinguish between low- and high-value massive corals. This feature would be absent from more valuable fleshy mantle corals e.g. *Acanthastrea* and *Lobophyllia*.

# Galaxea

**MEDIUM GROWTH**



8-12 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**

**100-500,000**  
pieces

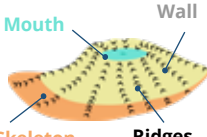



Global data 2010-2019

\$5 \$7

**UK IMPORT PRICE  
PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$2-\$20**

## CORALLITE FEATURES



What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
 <p>Mouth</p> <p>Wall</p> <p>Skeleton</p> <p>Ridges</p>	<p><b>PLOCOID/ PHACELOID</b></p>  <p>Circular, separate walls</p>	<p><b>STAR OF SPINES</b></p>  <p>Unique star shape</p>	<p><b>SMALL/MEDIUM</b></p>  <p>1- 10 mm diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Corallite edges are distinguished by long sharp spines fringing mouth pointing vertically upwards from the skeleton to form a star-like shape.

Small transparent tentacles may be visible during the day.

Mouths are circular to oval and fringed by long spines.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Galaxea* is a highly distinctive genus with the longest spines fringing mouth that are inside a ring of tentacles. No other coral genus has this feature.

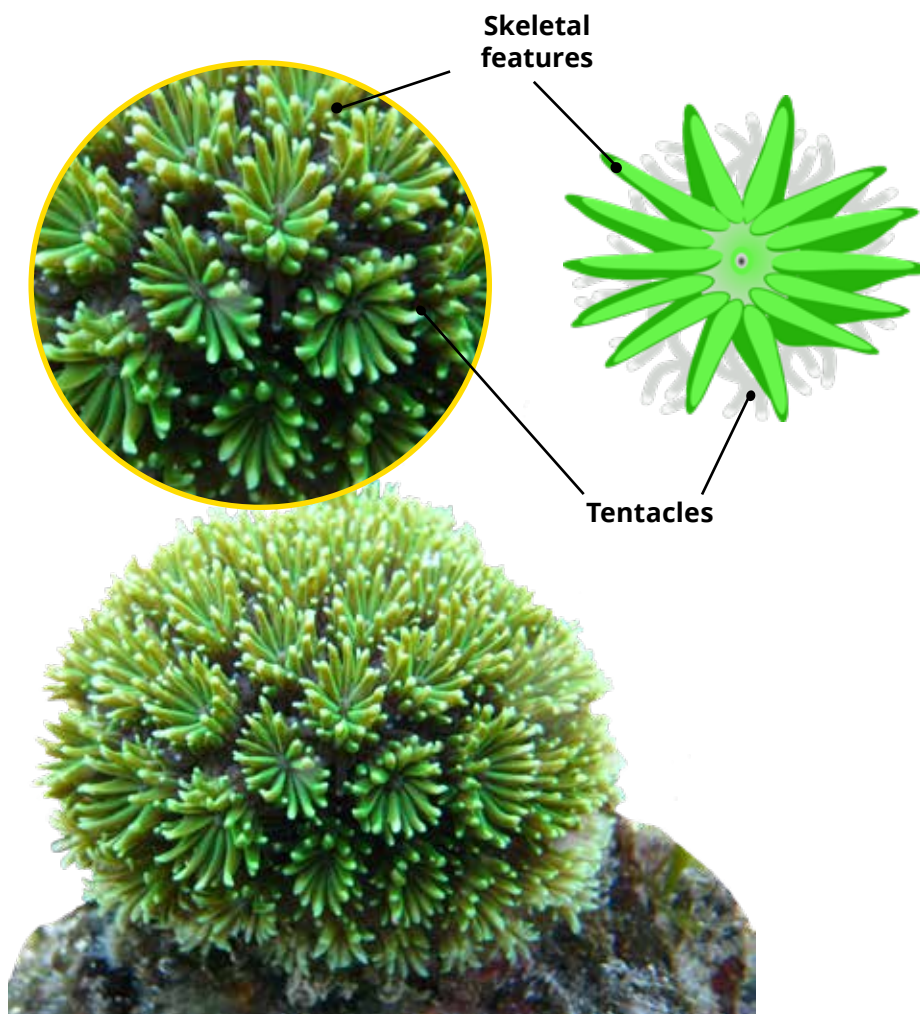


*Galaxea*

***Galaxea* is highly distinctive but can have variation in colour and shape.**



## The starry spines of *Galaxea*



*Galaxea* grown at a UK importer facility



# Pectinia

<b>MEDIUM GROWTH</b>  8-12 months to culture	<b>MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS</b> <b>100-500,000</b> pieces Global data 2010-2019	\$6 \$55 <b>UK IMPORT PRICE</b> <b>PER PIECE</b> <b>BETWEEN \$21-\$99</b>
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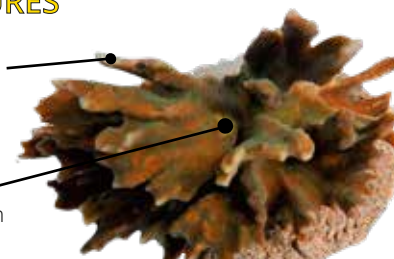
## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
 Mouth, Wall, Ridges	<b>MEANDROID</b>  Valleys, shared walls	<b>LUMPS/SPIKES</b>  Irregular wall ridges form lumps and spikes	<b>UNKNOWN SIZE</b>  Size range unknown, mouths sometimes visible

## DEFINING FEATURES

Walls form irregular, deep valleys at right angles to growing edge.

Large corallites with the irregularly shaped mouth sometimes visible between the ridges.



Distinct irregular protrusions (ridges) from the walls (which are widely spaced) can look like spikes or even branches.

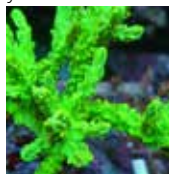


## LOOK-ALIKES

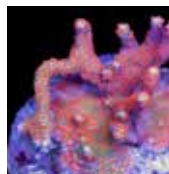
Large spikes and branches on the walls between large irregular valley-shaped mouths is unique to *Pectinia*, but may look superficially like other encrusting/foliose corals with branching and leafy adult forms.



*Pectinia*



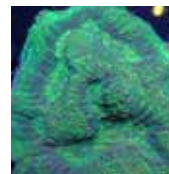
*Hydnothophora*



*Montipora*



*Trachyphyllia*



*Australomussa*

Page 125

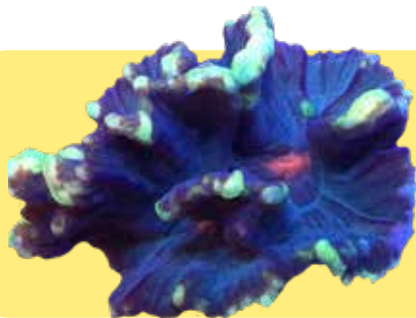
Page 119

Page 131

Page 63

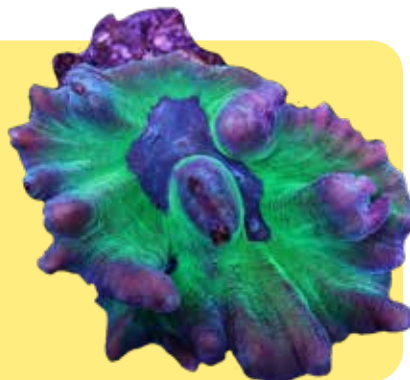
## Diverse growth morphology

Widely spaced large ridges protruding from the walls are unique to *Pectinia*, but may appear superficially like branches of *Hydnophora* or *Montipora*. In these genera, numerous circular mouths are arranged on the branches, opposed to the large irregular valley-shaped mouths often obscured between branches in *Pectinia*.



In this small piece of *Pectinia* the large mouth (red in this image) is visible between leafy protrusions.

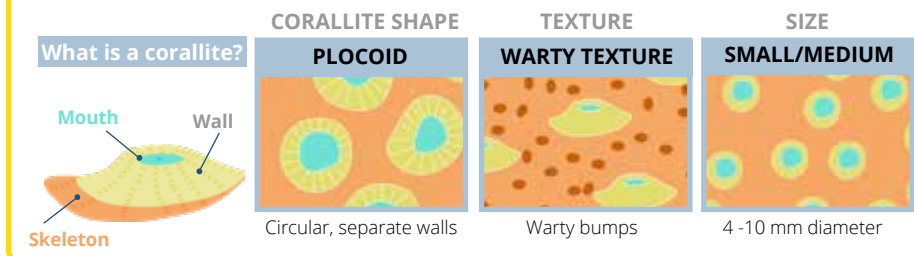
This *Pectinia* has been harvested from the wild as a juvenile, evident from the large central mouth and weakly developed ridges/wall protrusions. Corals like this may resemble some fleshy mantle solitary corals such as *Trachyphyllia* and *Australomussa*, however the features on the walls of these genera tend to be smaller.



# Echinophyllia

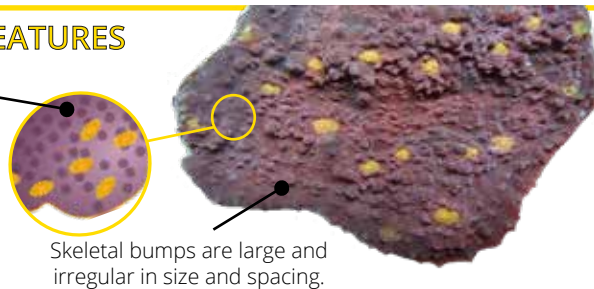


## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES

Irregularly spaced and sized corallites.

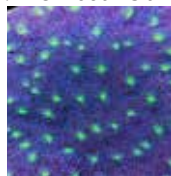


## LOOK-ALIKES

*Echinophyllia* is easily confused with other Chalice corals. It tends to have larger more irregular bumps between corallites. Corallites are also more irregularly sized and spaced than other genera. The mouth is almost always visible compared to *Oxypora*.



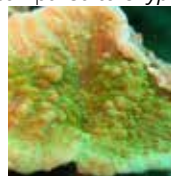
*Echinophyllia*



*Echinopora*



*Mycedium*



*Oxypora*



*Turbinaria*

Page 91

Page 93

Page 95

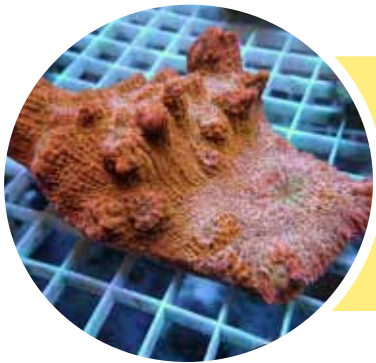
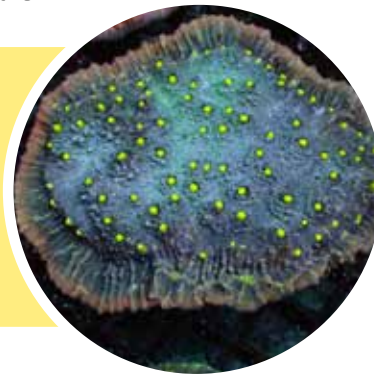
Page 115



## Variability in *Echinophyllia*

*Echinophyllia* is a highly variable genus and can look more like *Echinopora*, *Mycedium* or *Oxypora* (the Chalice corals) depending on the species and the environment the colony grew in.

This *Echinophyllia* colony resembles *Oxypora* because it has small mouths. However, *Oxypora* mouths would be more obscured.



This *Echinophyllia* colony resembles *Mycedium* because its mouths clearly face the growing edge with well developed hoods and skeletal bumps arranged perpendicular to the growing edge.

This *Echinophyllia* colony resembles *Echinopora* due to its randomly orientated and radiating lines of bumps on corallite walls but it has larger, more irregularly distributed mouths.



### Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

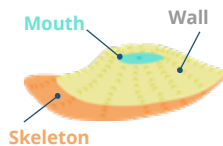


# Echinopora



## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

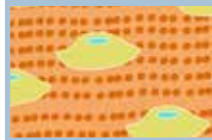
#### PLOCOID



Circular, separate walls

### TEXTURE

#### WARTY TEXTURE



Granulated texture, rows of radiating bumps

### SIZE

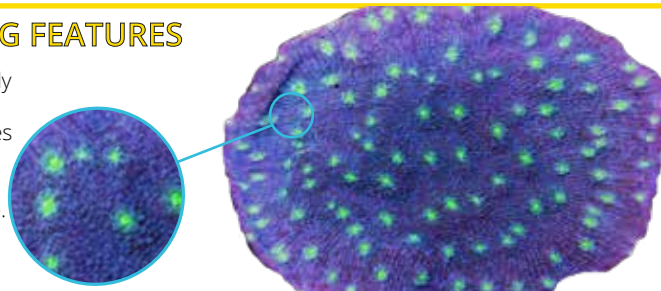
#### SMALL/MEDIUM



3-8 mm diameter

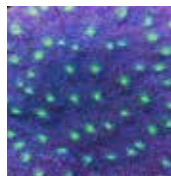
## DEFINING FEATURES

More regularly spaced and sized corallites not inclined towards the growing edge.



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Echinopora* is easily confused with other Chalice corals. It tends to have more regular spacing and size of corallites than other genera.



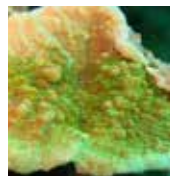
*Echinopora*



*Echinophyllia*



*Mycedium*



*Oxypora*



*Turbinaria*

Page 89

Page 93

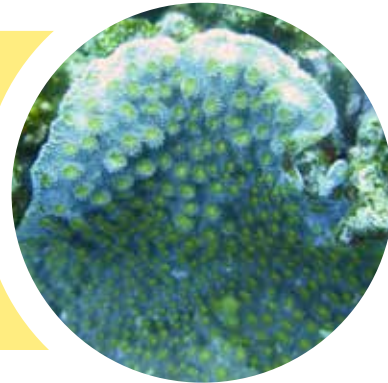
Page 95

Page 115

## *Echinopora* in the wild



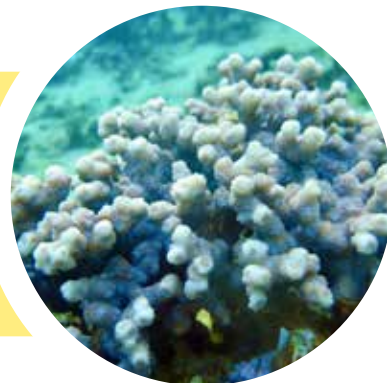
*Echinopora* is a common leafy/foliose coral found in a range of different reef environments from lagoons to reef slopes.



Large colonies in high-light environments can form dense whorls and spirals.



Other species form staghorn-like branches.



Valuable corals are traded as *Echinopora*

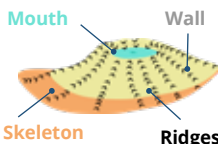
*Echinopora* is a less valuable coral that be easily mistaken for several more expensive corals including: *Echinophyllia*, *Turbinaria* and *Australomussa* which may lead to illicit labelling of these genera.

# Mycedium



## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

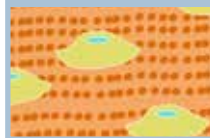
#### PLOCOID



Circular, separate walls

### TEXTURE

#### WARTY TEXTURE



Regular ridges with bumps

### SIZE

#### MEDIUM



5-15 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

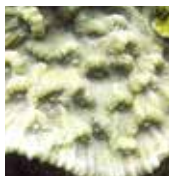
Irregularly spaced and sized corallites, with mouths facing the growing edge. A hood is often present.



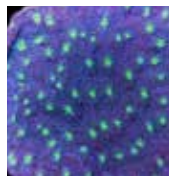
Skeletal ridges, which are often bumpy, at right angles to the growing edge present connecting mouths.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Mycedium* is easily confused with other Chalice corals. Its corallites and skeletal bumps are more strongly inclined to the growing edge than other genera.



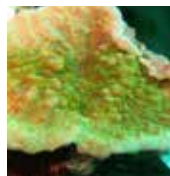
*Mycedium*



*Echinopora*



*Echinophyllia*



*Oxyphora*



*Turbinaria*

Page 91

Page 89

Page 95

Page 115

## Comparing Chalice corals

Chalice corals are a diverse group with many overlaps in characteristics between the genera. The four characteristics below can help, but be aware there are exceptions to these rules for various species or colonies that have been grown in a particular environment (e.g. the size of hood in *Echinophyllia* and *Mycedium*).

### *Echinophyllia*

**Mouth :**

**Visible** - Yes

**Inclined towards growing edge** - Yes

**Skeletal bumps:**

**Size** – Large and irregular

**Arrangement** – Random or at right angles to the growing edge



### *Mycedium*

**Mouth:**

**Visible** - Yes

**Inclined towards growing edge** - Yes, hood often present

**Skeletal bumps:**

**Size** – Small and regular

**Arrangement** – Ridges from mouths at right angles to the growing edge



### *Echinopora*

**Mouth:**

**Visible** - Yes

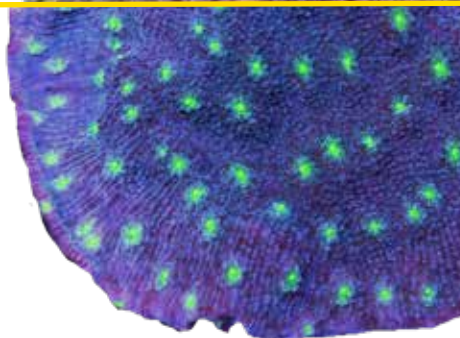
**Inclined towards growing edge** - No

**Skeletal bumps:**

**Granulated texture** (small bumps)

**Size** – Small and regular

**Arrangement** – Radiating around mouths



### *Oxypora*

**Mouth:**

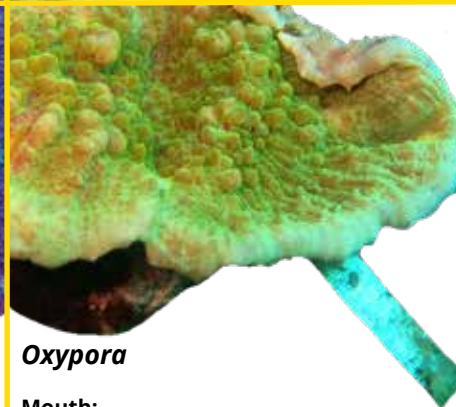
**Visible** - No

**Inclined towards growing edge** - No

**Skeletal bumps:**

**Size** – Large and irregular

**Arrangement** – Ridges from mouths at right angles to the growing edge





# Oxypora

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## LOW EXPORT LEVELS

**Under 100,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$15

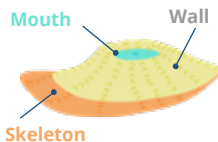
\$28

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
**PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### PLOCOID



Circular, separate walls

### TEXTURE

#### WARTY TEXTURE



Random skeletal bumps

### SIZE

#### SMALL

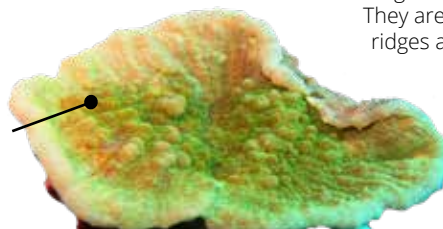


3-6 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Irregularly spaced and sized corallites.

Mouths are often very small and/or obscured by bumps on the corallite wall.



Skeletal bumps are large, irregular in size and spacing. They are usually arranged in ridges at right angles to the growing edge.

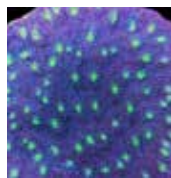


## LOOK-ALIKES

*Oxypora* is easily confused with other Chalice corals. It tends to have larger more irregular bumps than other genera and the mouths are usually obscured/not visible.



*Oxypora*



*Echinopora*



*Echinophyllia*



*Mycedium*



*Turbinaria*

Page 91

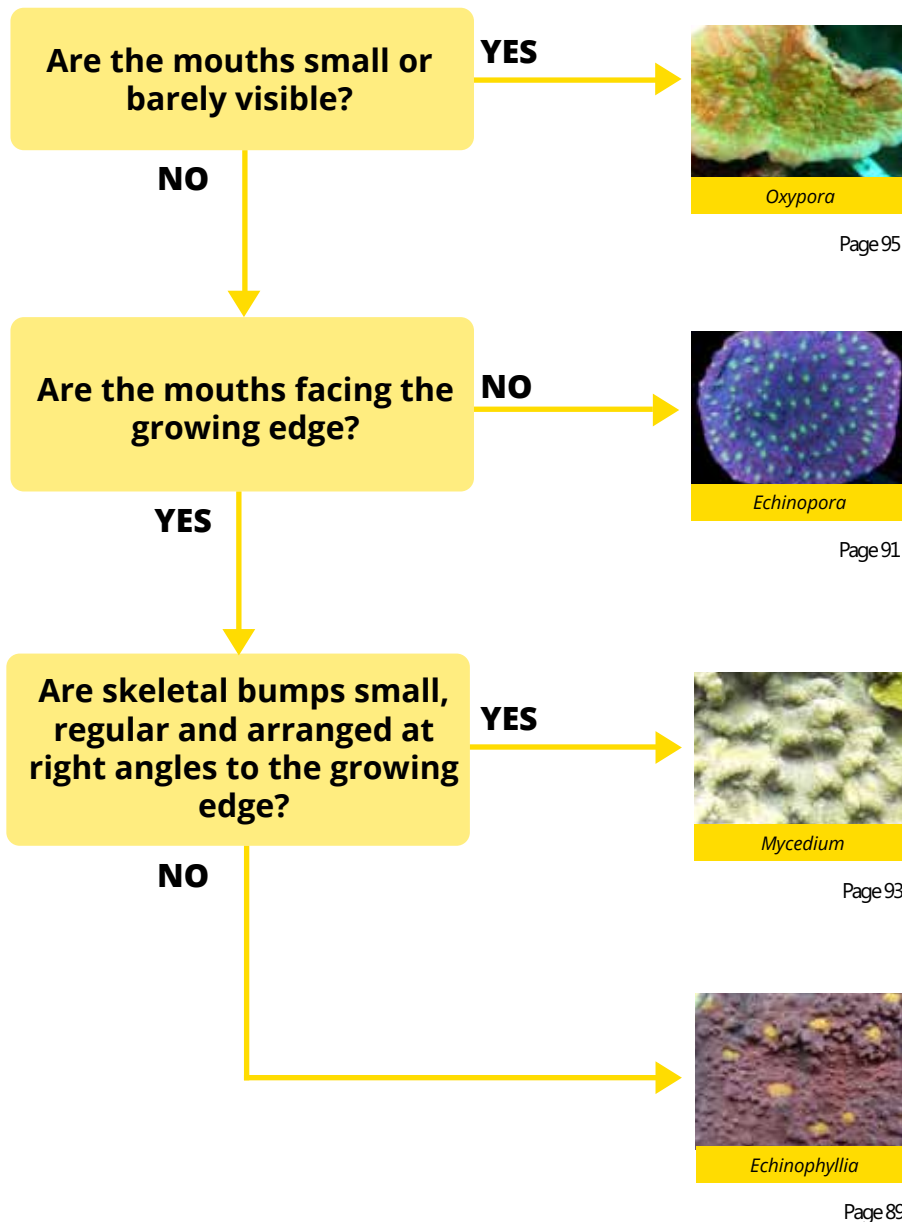
Page 89

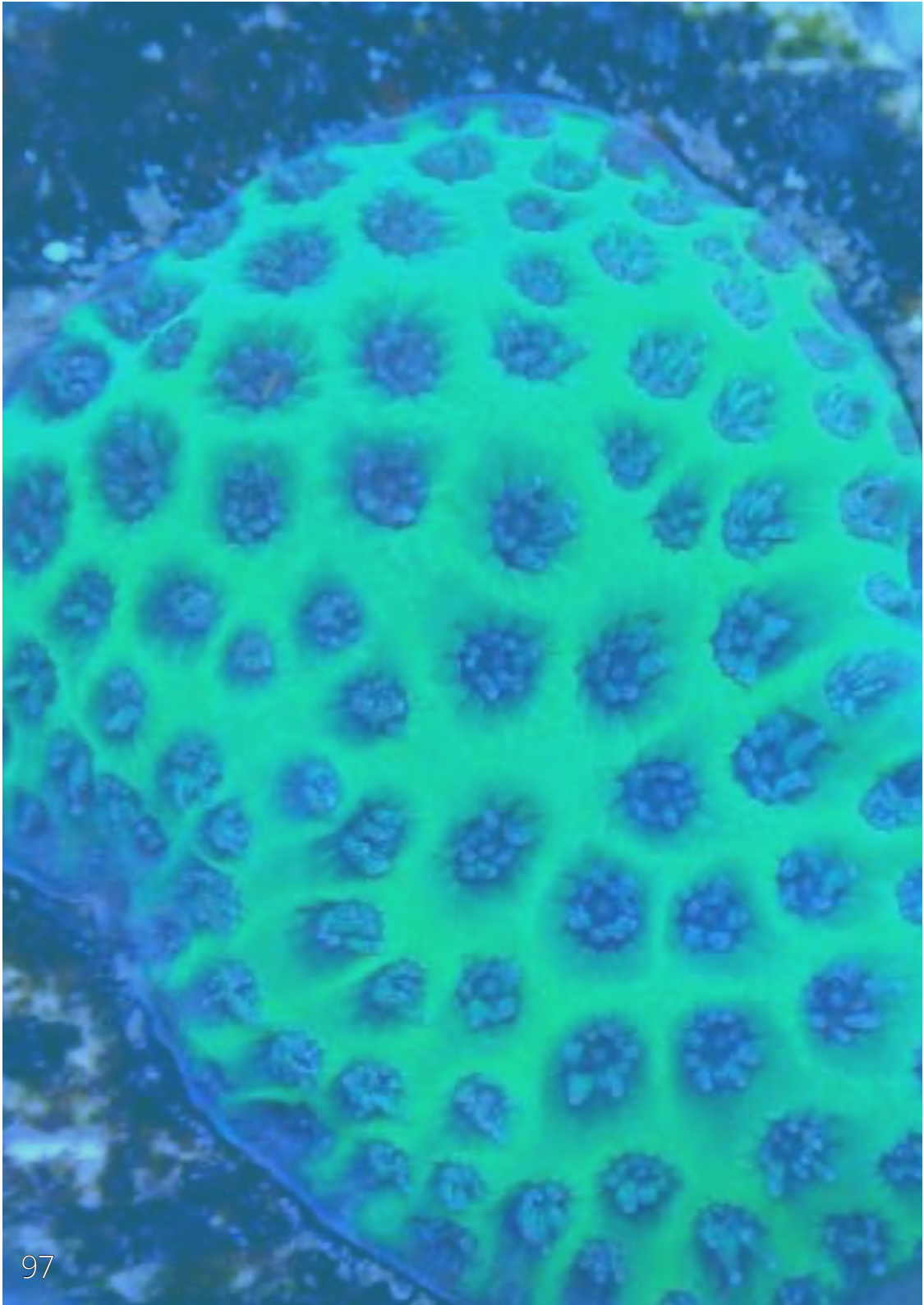
Page 93

Page 115



## Key for Chalice corals







## Encrusting (smaller polyps)

In this guide we have defined encrusting (smaller polyps) as those that encrust the artificial base, may become massive or leafy, and have corallites smaller than 5 mm. Many of these genera are known as Small Polyp Stony 'SPS' corals by hobbyists and traders.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Encrusting corals grow over the substrate making them less vulnerable to turbulent seas and storm damage.

The leafy/foliose and spiral/whorls these corals can create can be very striking but often these adults forms are absent from smaller pieces that are commonly seen in trade.

These corals may seem less flamboyant than other species but they can have brightly coloured polyp mouths that are vivid and popular in trade.



Encrusting



Leafy/  
Foliose



Spiral/  
Whorls

# Overview

## Encrusting (smaller polyp) corals in trade

Encrusting (smaller polyp) corals in trade are flat (planar), growing over the artificial base and/or forming plate-like or massive colonies. ***This table of contents can be used to find the correct page during inspection and is colour coded by chapter. Use the tabs to locate the chapter and the page number to navigate to identification pages.***

### FINGERPRINT CORALS



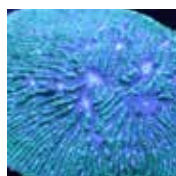
*Leptoseris*

Page 101-102



*Pachyseris*

Page 103-104



*Lithophyllon*

Page 105-106



*Pavona*

Page 107-108

Find a  
fingerprint  
coral key on  
page 106

### VOLCANO-SHAPED



*Astreopora*

Page 109-110



*Cyphastrea*

Page 111-112



*Leptastrea*

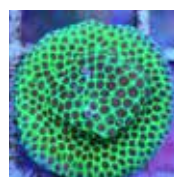
Page 113-114



*Turbinaria*

Page 115-116

### OTHER



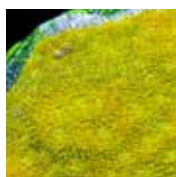
*Porites*

Page 117-118



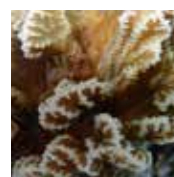
*Montipora*

Page 119-120



*Psammocora*

Page 121-122



*Merulina*

Page 123-124



*Hydnophora*

Page 125-126

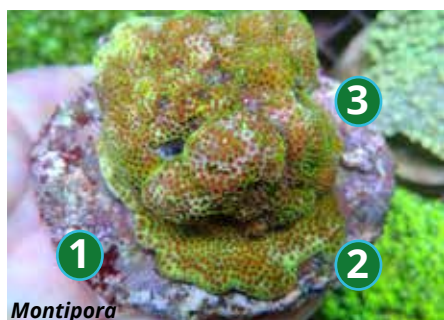


## Detecting false mariculture

- 1 Growing edge**  
Healthy growing edge established on the artificial base, no fresh cuts or glue present.
- 2 Artificial base properties**  
Artificial base and mariculture tag has biofouling of marine life e.g. calcareous algae present.
- 3 Size**  
Maricultured encrusting corals should cover most, if not all the base.

**! Healthy encrusting edge attached to artificial base**

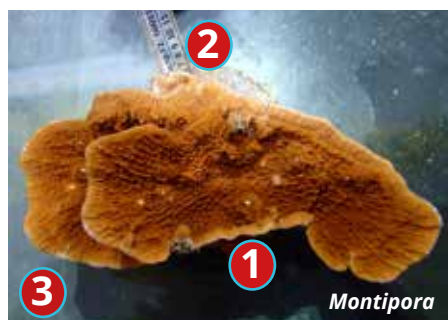
**✓ SIGN OF TRUE MARICULTURE** **✗ SIGN OF FALSE MARICULTURE**



Healthy-looking edge encrusting onto biofouled base.



This example has encrusted over half of the artificial base and shows healthy growth.



Coral has not encrusted onto the artificial base.

No biofouling on base or tag.

This example is also particularly large in comparison to the base and may be a sign it is source code 'W'.



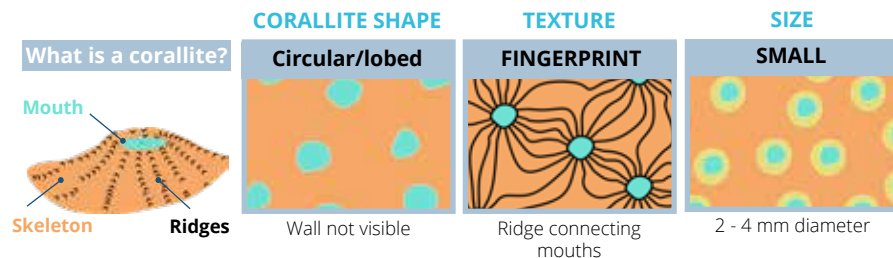
Maricultured encrusting corals will have a growing edge on the artificial base and may start growing in ways that resemble their adult forms e.g. growing beyond the artificial base. In contrast to larger-polyp encrusting taxa (see page 56).



# Leptoseris



## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES

Fingerprint texture formed by thin regularly spaced ridges that connect mouths and are arranged at right angles to the growing edge.



Mouths are oval to lobed and all corallites face the growing edge.

Ridges connecting inner (old) and outer (young) mouths taper to a point where they fuse.

## LOOK-ALIKES

Compared to other fingerprint corals, corallites in *Leptoseris* usually face the growing edge.



*Leptoseris*



*Pavona*



*Pachyseris*

Page 107

Page 103

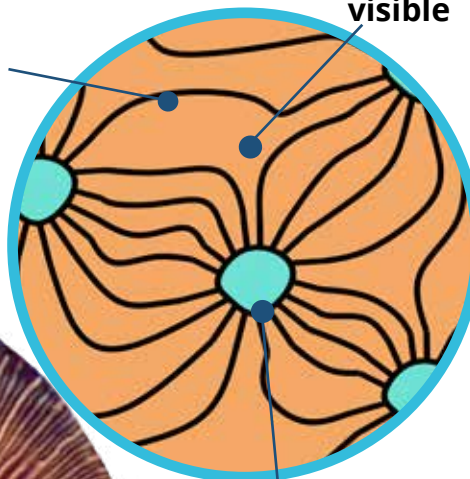


## Fingerprint appearance

### Ridges

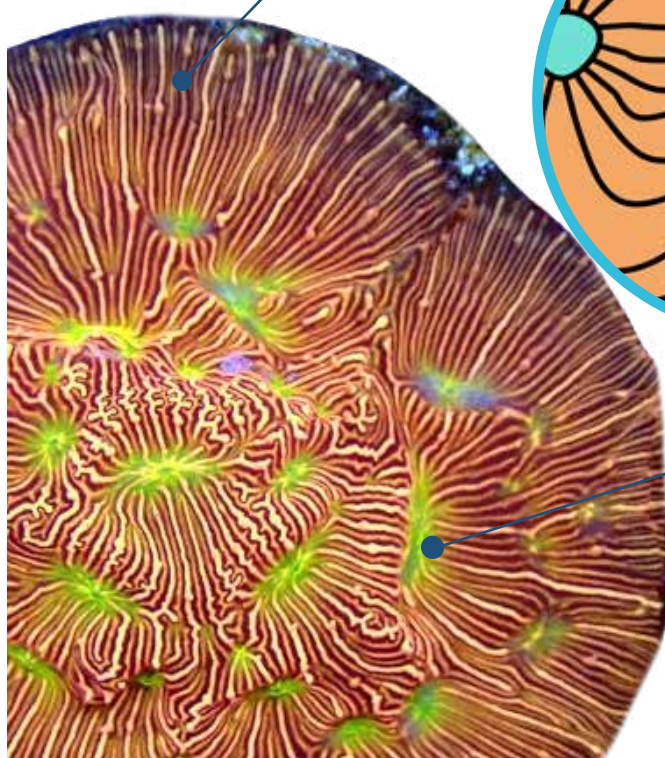
Dominant fingerprint texture from smooth ridges radiating from and connecting mouths.

### Skeleton visible



### Mouths

Mouths may be present in smooth round pockets.



*Leptoseris explanata*  
photographed on the reef.

Leafy forms of this genus will only have corallites on one side.

# Pachyseris



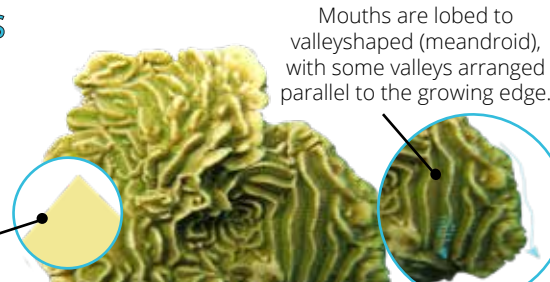
## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<p>Mouth</p> <p>Wall-like structures</p> <p>Ridges</p>	<b>MEANDROID</b>  Valleys, shared wall-like structures	<b>FINGERPRINT</b>  Ridges at right angle to valleys	<b>SMALL</b>  ~5 mm width

## DEFINING FEATURES

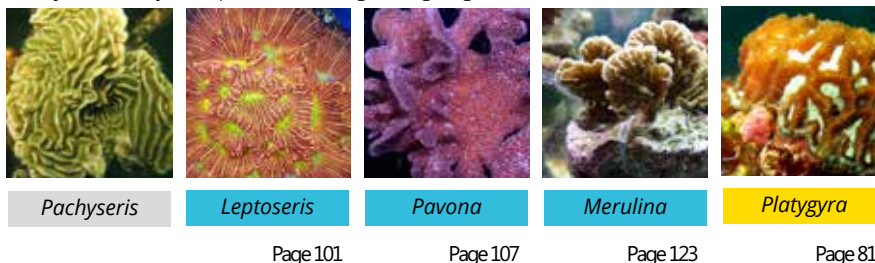
Dominant fingerprint texture formed by thin regularly spaced ridges that connect mouths and are arranged at a right angle to the growing edge and valleys.

Wall-like structures are strongly developed and taper to a point.



## LOOK-ALIKES

Compared to other fingerprint corals, corallites in *Pachyseris* are valley-shaped (meandroid) and have steep well developed wall-like structures. Unlike other meandroid corals *Pachyseris* valleys are parallel to the growing edge.

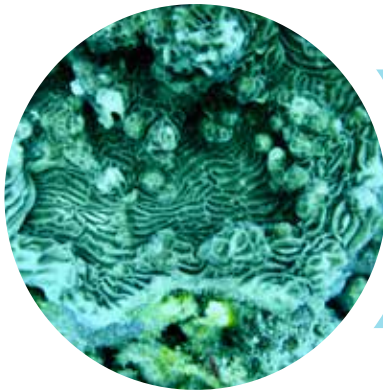




## Diverse forms of *Pachyseris*



Meandroid valleys of *Pachyseris* are usually arranged parallel to the growing edge and some species form spirals and whorls.



In some colonies the valley arrangement is more random, particularly in species that form leafy/foliose protrusions, and only have corallites on one side.



This colony has grown into an unusual cone shape, with valleys arranged regularly parallel to the growing edge.



# Lithophyllon

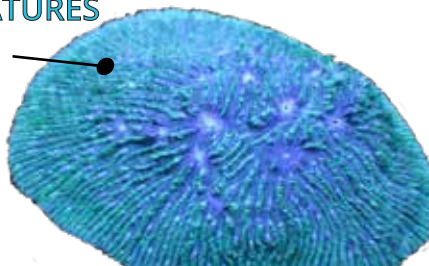


## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<p>What is a corallite?</p> <p><b>Mouth</b></p> <p><b>Skeleton</b></p> <p><b>Ridges</b></p>	<p><b>CIRCULAR/OVAL</b></p> <p>Wall not visible</p>	<p><b>FINGERPRINT</b></p> <p>Ridges at right angle to edge</p>	<p><b>SMALL</b></p> <p>3-4 mm diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Fingerprint texture formed by thin regularly spaced ridges that connect mouths and are arranged at right angles to the growing edge.

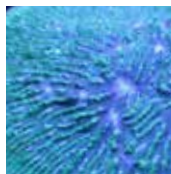


Mouths are circular to oval (lighter in colour) and most corallites face the growing edge. A large central corallite is usually present.

Ridges have a serrated texture similar to mushroom corals.

## LOOK-ALIKES

Compared to other fingerprint corals, the fingerprint ridges in *Lithophyllon* are larger and more serrated (sharp).



*Lithophyllon*



*Pachyseris*



*Leptoseris*



*Pavona*



*Fungia*

Page 103

Page 101

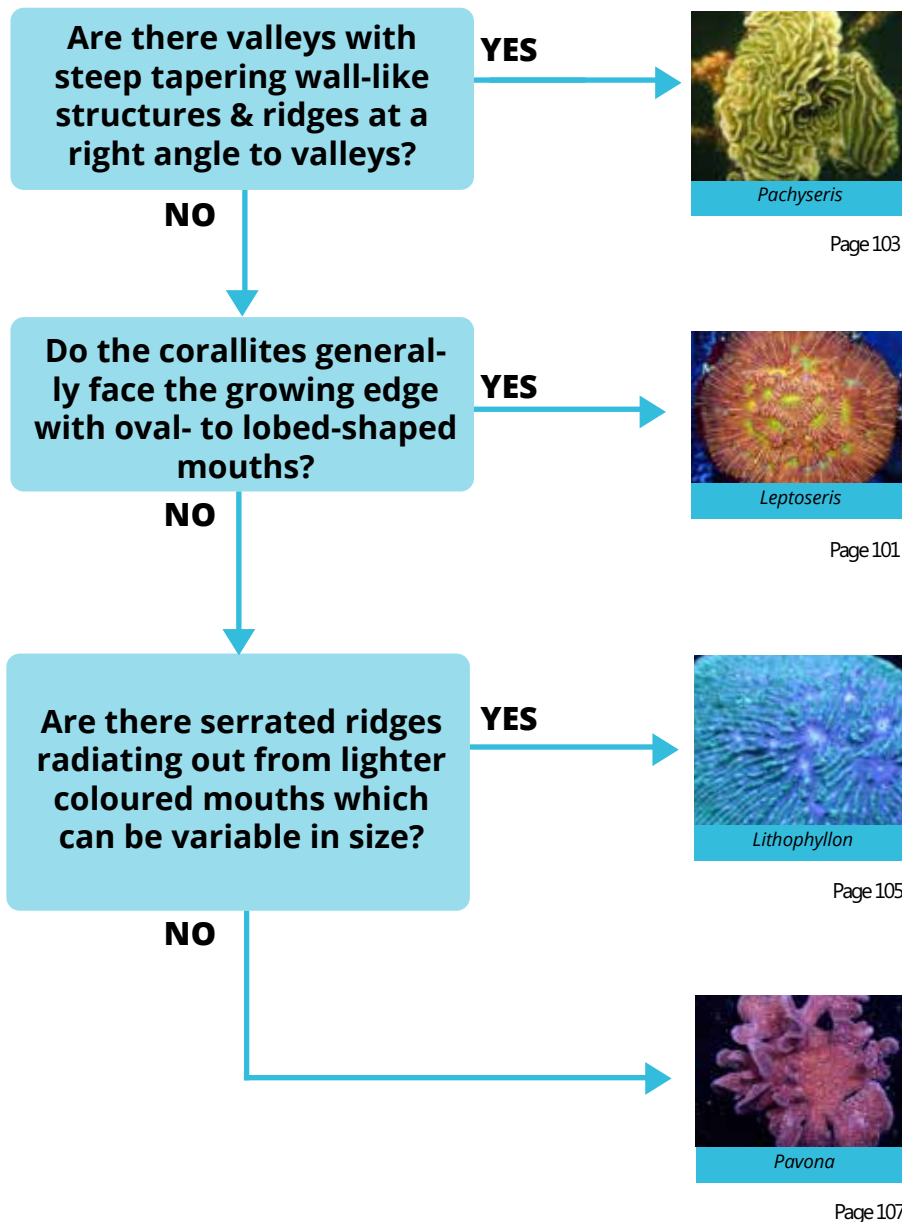
Page 107

Page 139





## Key for fingerprint corals



# Pavona



## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<p>Mouth</p> <p>Skeleton</p> <p>Ridges</p>	<p>Wall not visible</p>	<p>Mouths connected by ridges</p>	<p>2-5 mm width</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Fingerprint texture formed by thin regularly spaced ridges that connect mouths and typically at right angles to the growing edge.

Leafy forms have mouths on both sides.



Mouths are circular to oval shaped.



Walls are absent between corallite mouths.

## LOOK-ALIKES

Compared to other fingerprint corals, corallites in *Pavona* have no visible walls and do not face the growing edge. *Pavona* can resemble *Psammocora*, but *Pavona* has a fingerprint texture and larger corallites.



*Pavona*



*Leptoseris*



*Pachyseris*



*Psammocora*

Page 101

Page 103

Page 121



## Comparing fingerprint corals

### *Leptoseris*

**Corallite shape** - Circular/oval found on only one side of leafy forms

**Walls** - Not visible

**Ridges** - Smooth

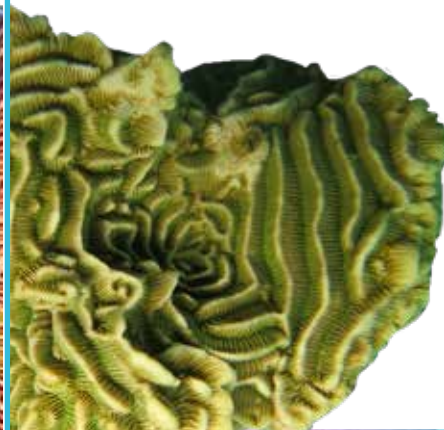


### *Pachyseris*

**Corallite shape** - Valleys shared wall-like structures (meandroid) found on only one side of leafy forms

**Walls** - Strongly developed/tapered wall-like structures

**Ridges** - Smooth

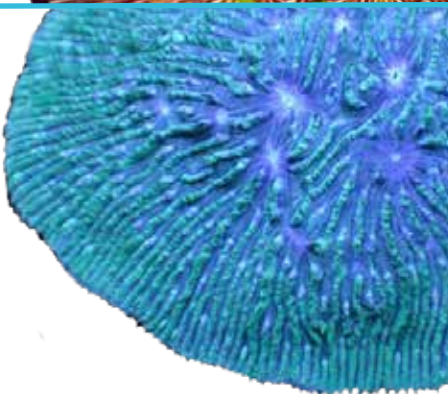


### *Lithophyllon*

**Corallite shape** - Circular/oval

**Walls** - Not visible

**Ridges** - Serrated (sharp)

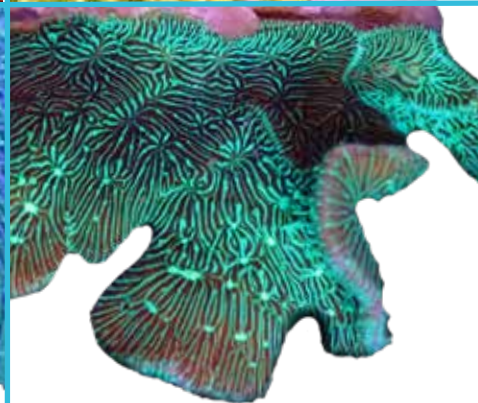


### *Pavona*

**Corallite shape** - Circular/oval found on both side of leafy forms

**Walls** - Not visible

**Ridges** - Smooth

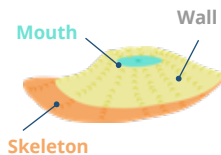


# Astreopora



## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

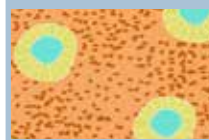
#### PLOCOID/PHACELOID



Circular, separate walls

### TEXTURE

#### SANDPAPER



Slightly, volcano-like

### SIZE

#### SMALL



2-4 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Corallites are raised cones and resemble volcanoes which can vary in height.

May appear more encrusting in trade.



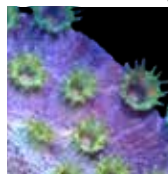
The walls and skeleton between the mouths is bumpy, giving a sandpaper-like texture, like *Montipora*.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Astreopora* have uneven volcano-shaped corallites. Unlike *Astreopora*, *Turbinaria* has no clear skeletal features and is completely smooth between corallites, *Cyphastrea* has neat-ridges and *Diploastrea* has neat-ridges and larger corallites than *Astreopora*.



*Astreopora*



*Cyphastrea*



*Diploastrea*



*Turbinaria*

Page 111

Page 67

Page 115



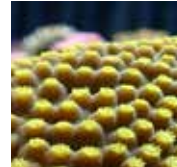
## Trade of encrusting (smaller polyp) corals



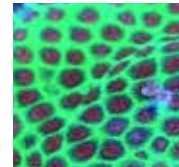
**HIGH EXPORT LEVELS**  
**Over 500,000**  
pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



*Montipora*  
876,821



*Turbinaria*  
672,071



*Porites*  
590,702

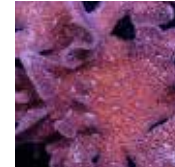
**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**  
**100-500,000**  
pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



*Hydnothophora*  
356,835

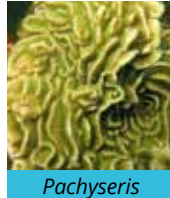


*Merulina*  
210,394



*Pavona*  
146,263

**LOW EXPORT LEVELS**  
**Under 100,000**  
pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



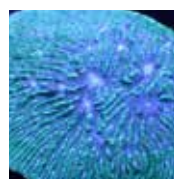
*Pachyseris*  
46,075



*Cyphastrea*  
32,619



*Leptastrea*  
30,211



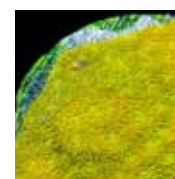
*Lithophyllon*  
24,655



*Leptoseris*  
16,998



*Astreopora*  
9,819



*Psammocora*  
9,488

# Cyphastrea

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## LOW EXPORT LEVELS

**Under 100,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$4

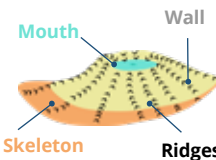
\$45

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
**PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

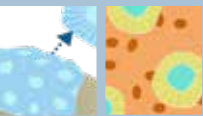
#### PLOCOID/ PHACELOID



Circular, separate,  
volcano like

### TEXTURE

#### NEAT- RIDGES



Wall ridges radiating from  
mouth and skeletal bumps

#### BUMPS



### SIZE

#### SMALL



2-3 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Regularly spaced  
circular corallites  
that are often slightly  
elongated.

Some skeletal bumps may be present  
but only between corallite walls.



The walls are  
rounded  
with broad  
sausage-  
shaped ridges  
that are  
regular  
in size and  
shape.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Cyphastrea* has small volcano-shaped corallites but these are smaller, finer and less ragged than *Astreopora*. *Astreopora* bumps are present on corallite walls but skeletal bumps are only present inbetween corallite walls on *Cyphastrea*.



*Cyphastrea*



*Diploastrea*



*Leptastrea*



*Astreopora*



*Turbinaria*

Page 67

Page 113

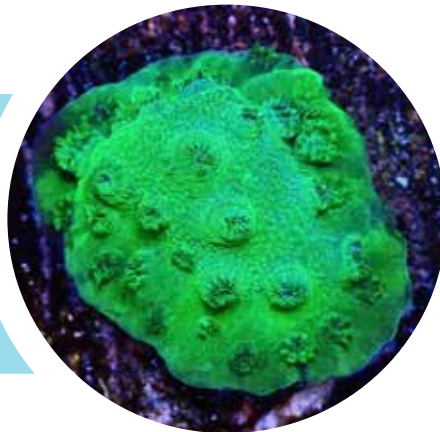
Page 109

Page 115

## Look-alikes, a closer look...



*Cyphastrea* has small volcano-shaped corallites, with regular sausage-shaped ridges with bumps on the skeleton only.



*Astreopora* has very similar shaped corallites, but the walls and skeleton are covered in bumps giving a sandpaper-like texture and lacks the neat skeletal ridges of *Cyphastrea*.



Volcano-shaped corallites are present in *Turbinaria*. *Turbinaria* has a smooth skeleton between mouths.



# Leptastrea



## CORALLITE FEATURES

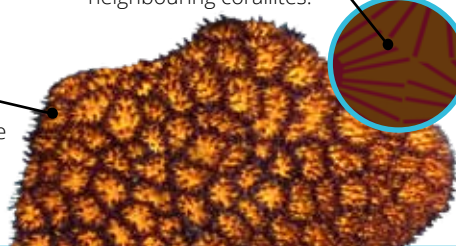
	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>CERIOID</b> <p>Circular, shared walls</p>	<b>NEAT-RIDGES</b> <p>Wall ridges radiating from mouth</p>	<b>SMALL</b> <p>3-5 mm diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Irregularly sized and spaced corallites, walls usually shared.

Smooth featureless space where the walls join, not seen in all colonies, but obvious when present.

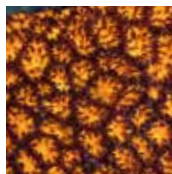
Ridges radiating from mouth do not align with neighbouring corallites.



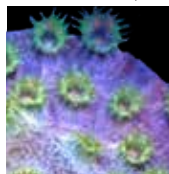
Neat-ridges radiate out from the mouth, but may be covered by small tentacles that can be extended during the day.

## LOOK-ALIKES

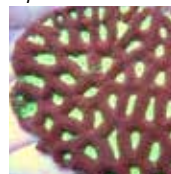
*Cyphastrea* has volcano-shaped corallites. *Leptastrea* and *Favites* have shared walls but in *Leptastrea* corallites are smaller and ridges do not align with neighbouring corallites. Furry texture resembles *Psammocora*, but *Leptastrea* have more obvious mouths.



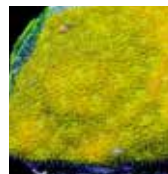
*Leptastrea*



*Cyphastrea*



*Favites*



*Psammocora*

Page 111

Page 73

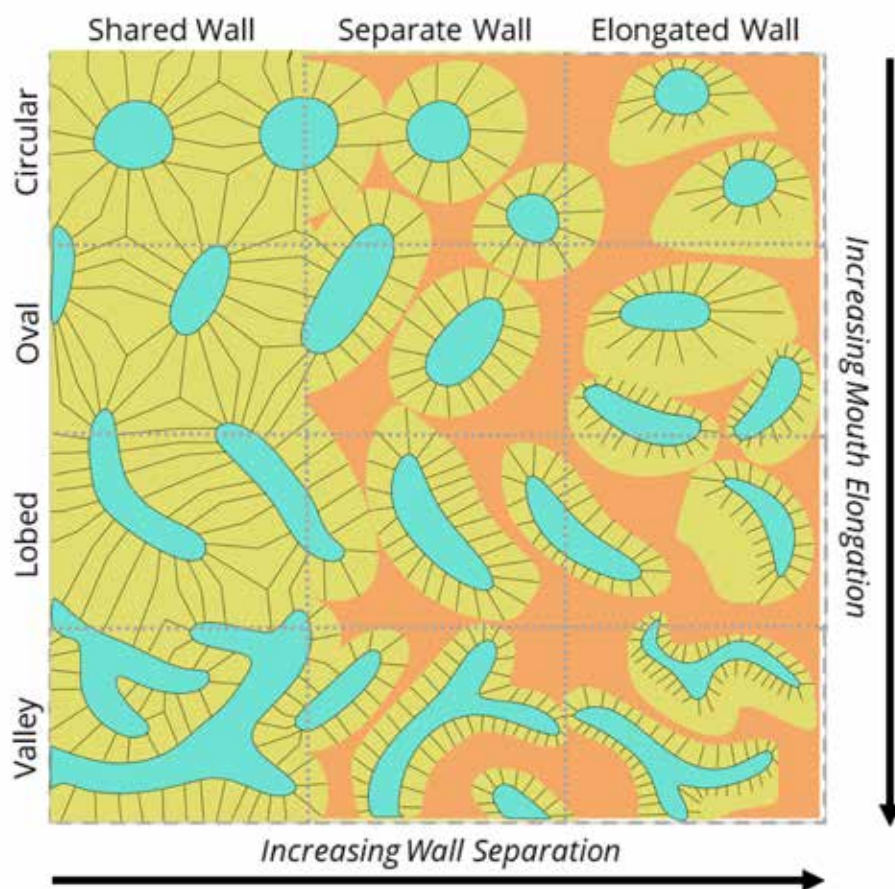
Page 121





## Diverse growth morphology

As mentioned in the visual glossary (page 13-14). Corallites with circular mouths are known as cerioid, plocoid and phaceloid in formal coral taxonomy, while valley-shaped mouths are Meandroid or Flabello-meandroid. However, many corals have lobed and oval mouths falling between these two categories.



Wall elongation is a continuum from shared walls where the edges of corallites are indistinct and ridges join up, to densely packed corallites where the clearly defined walls touch, but ridges do not join up. There are varying levels of corallite elongation, where the wall extends outwards from the skeleton.

# Turbinaria

## MEDIUM GROWTH



## HIGH EXPORT LEVELS

**Over 500,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$4

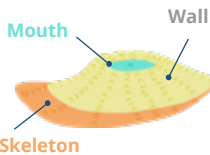
\$15

**UK IMPORT PRICE  
PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$2-\$20**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

### What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### PLOCOID/ PHACELOID



Circular separate walls,  
slight elongation

### TEXTURE

#### SMOOTH TEXTURE



Smooth skeletal texture

### SIZE

#### SMALL

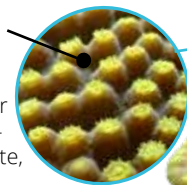


2-6 mm diameter

## DEFINING FEATURES

Smooth, no  
skeletal  
bumps.

Round, regular  
often volcano-  
shaped corallite,  
irregularly  
arranged.



Variety of colours  
but yellow  
common from  
Indonesia.

Tentacles may be  
extended during  
the day.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Turbinaria* has smooth skeleton and flower-like tentacles similar to *Dendrophyllia* and *Tubastraea*, but its corallites are smaller and the tentacles less striking and often retracted. Similar volcano-shaped and sized corallites as *Astreopora* and *Cyphastrea*, but lacks clearly visible skeletal texture.



*Turbinaria*



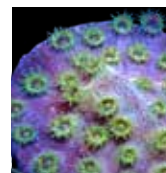
*Dendrophyllia*



*Tubastraea*



*Astreopora*



*Cyphastrea*

Page 27

Page 29

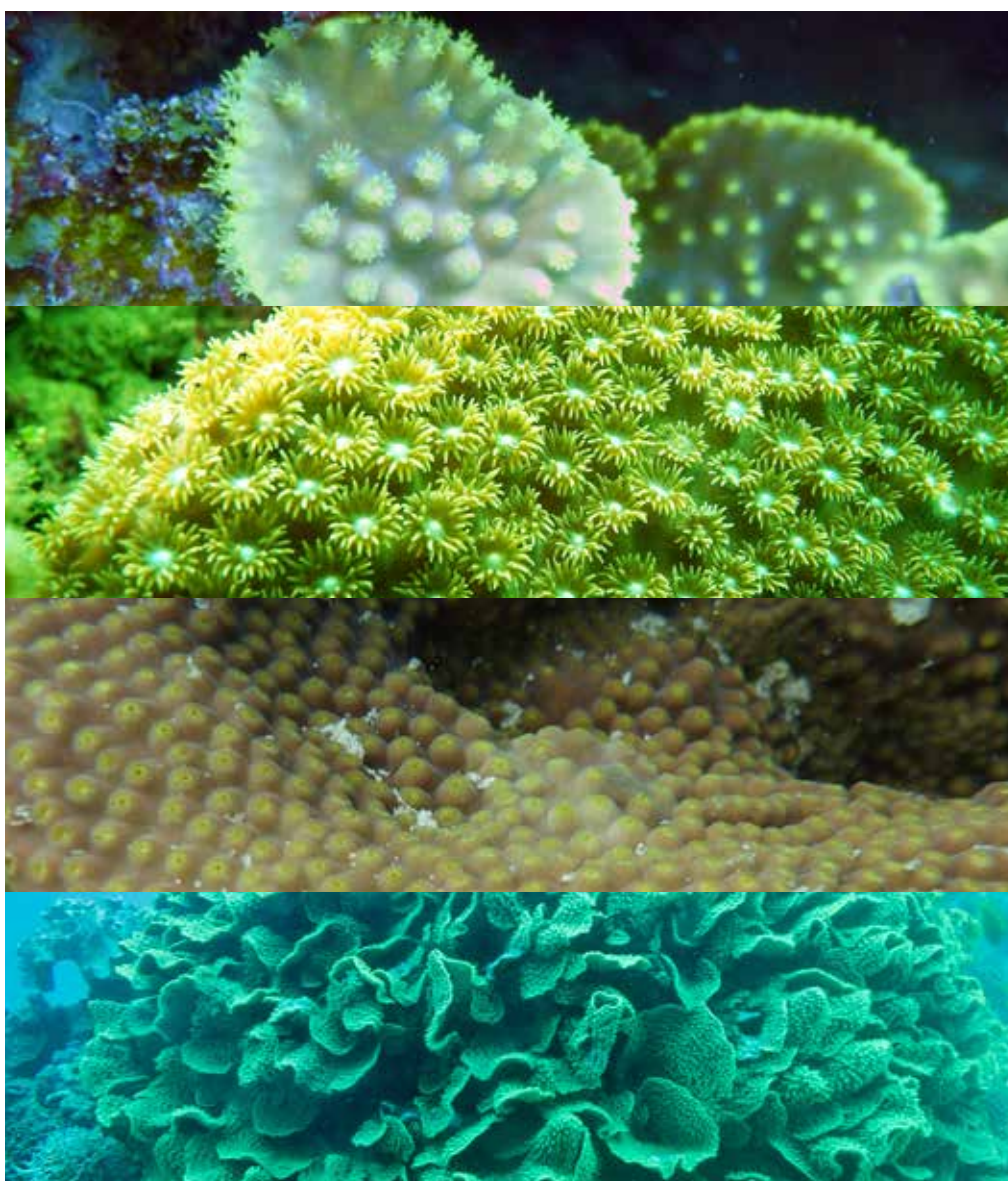
Page 109

Page 111



## Attractive colours and tentacles

*Turbinaria* is one of the most highly traded foliose corals, perhaps because of the attractive violet and yellow colouration and flower-like polyps that are often extended during the day. This genus is in the Dendrophyllidae family and so is more closely related to *Tubastraea* and *Dendrophyllia* (in the fleshy polyp chapter). This genus can form large whorls and spirals as adults.



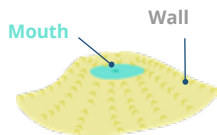


# Porites



## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

CERIOID



Circular, shared walls

### TEXTURE

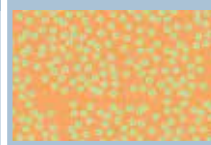
SMOOTH WALLS



No bumps on walls

### SIZE

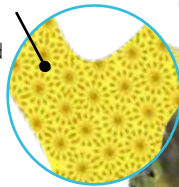
TINY



0.5-1.5 mm diameter

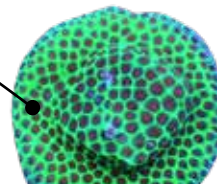
## DEFINING FEATURES

Corallites flush to the surface with well defined walls and smooth texture where the walls join.



Surface not uniform or flat, but has 'mounds' or undulating surface.

Others have short stubby finger-like branches, while some are encrusting.



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Porites* has shared walls and tiny corallites with a smooth surface, making it distinct from other branching corals (see also page 52). Encrusting *Porites* can form 'mounds' or have an undulating surface.



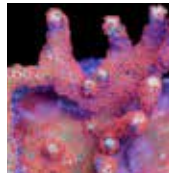
*Porites*



*Stylophora*



*Pocillopora*



*Montipora*



*Seriatopora*

Page 51

Page 47

Page 119

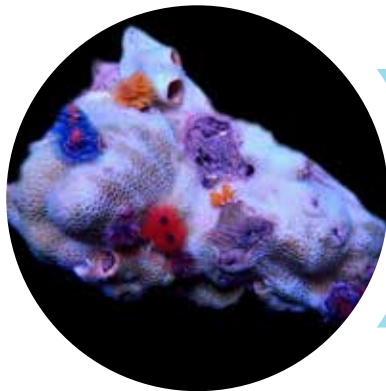
Page 49



## Morphological diversity of *Porites*

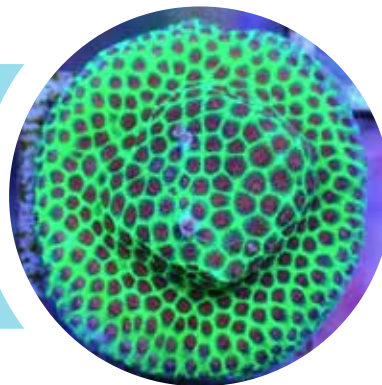
*Porites* has diverse growth forms from massive boulder forms to finger-like branching structures.

Corallites in all species are tiny, circular and tightly packed with shared walls. The surface of the walls is smooth lacking bumps or ridges.



Boulder-shaped *Porites* are most common in the wild and can form huge colonies several metres wide that are inhabited by a range of other organisms, including Christmas tree worms which can increase the price in trade.

Small colonies of both massive and branching *Porites* may appear encrusting in trade as the fragment of tissue grows across the artificial base, before developing branches or massive form later in life.



### *Porites* or *Montipora*

*Porites* may be mislabelled as *Montipora* as both have small corallites and are encrusting, which makes them hard to distinguish for traders.

# Montipora

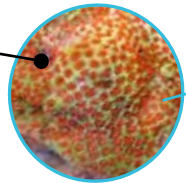


## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	SURFACE TEXTURE	SIZE
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>PLOCOID</b> <p>Circular, separate walls</p>	<b>ROUGH TEXTURE</b> <p>Sandpaper bumps</p>	<b>TINY</b> <p>0.5-1 mm diameter</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Very small corallites (<1 mm) in diameter.



Variable growth forms (page 120) making *Montipora* hard to define.



Surface texture resembles sandpaper.

Surface can have 'mounds' or undulating surface or can grow into branches.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Montipora* has sandpaper surface texture (comparison found on page 52). Like *Porites*, surface can have 'mounds' or undulating surface or can grow into branches. Smaller corallites with less defined corallite walls compared to *Porites*.



*Montipora*



*Porites*



*Stylophora*



*Pocillopora*



*Seriatopora*

Page 117

Page 51

Page 47

Page 49

## Diverse growth forms in *Montipora*



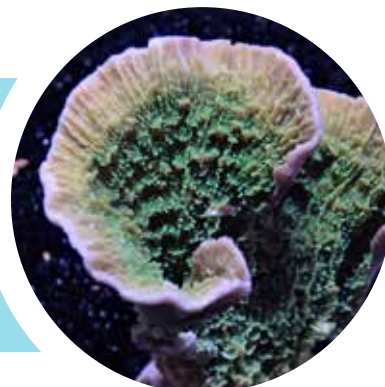
### Encrusting

All *Montipora* begin life as a small encrusting patch and some species remain encrusting throughout their lives.



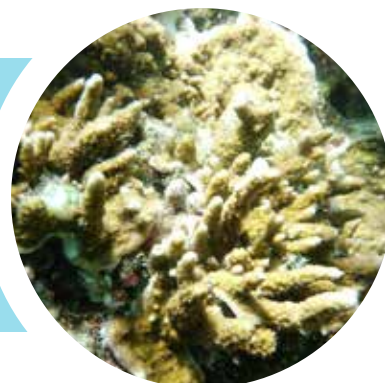
### Whorls/Spirals

Other *Montipora* species form vase-shaped whorls, or layered plates.



### Branching

Some *Montipora* develop finger-like or staghorn-like branches, however, this is a secondary feature arising from the encrusting base, unlike the stem in tree-like branching corals such as *Stylophora* (page 48).



# Psammocora

## MEDIUM GROWTH



8-12 months to culture

## LOW EXPORT LEVELS

**Under 100,000**  
pieces

Global data 2010-2019

\$15

\$25

**UK IMPORT PRICE**  
**PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$21-\$99**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

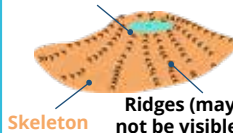
### CORALLITE SHAPE

### TEXTURE

### SIZE

What is a corallite?

Mouth



Skeleton

Ridges (may  
not be visible)

**Circular**



Circular, no visible walls

**FURRY TEXTURE**



Small polyps look furry

**TINY**

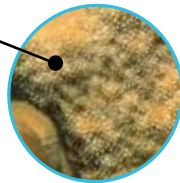


>1 mm diameter\*

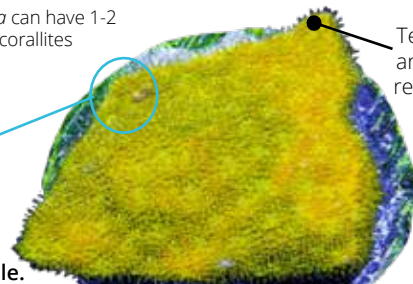
## DEFINING FEATURES

\**P. digitata* can have 1-2  
mm corallites

No obvious  
wall, groove or  
mouth features  
by a furry tex-  
ture which are  
minute tentacles  
present on the  
surface.



Wall ridges appear granular **if visible.**



Tentacles  
are rarely  
retracted.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Psammocora*, *Montipora* and *Porites* have a relatively smooth surface and barely visible corallites. The furry texture made up by polyp tentacles is usually clear on close inspection compared to smooth surface in *Porites* and sandpaper texture in *Montipora*.



*Psammocora*



*Montipora*



*Porites*

Page 119

Page 117





## Trade of encrusting (smaller polyp) corals

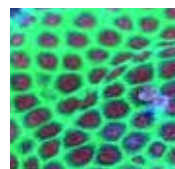
**HIGH EXPORT LEVELS**  
**Over 500,000**  
pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



*Montipora*  
876,821



*Turbinaria*  
672,071



*Porites*  
590,702

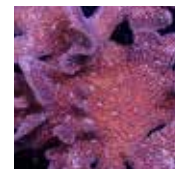
**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**  
**100-500,000**  
pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



*Hydnophora*  
356,835



*Merulina*  
210,394



*Pavona*  
146,263

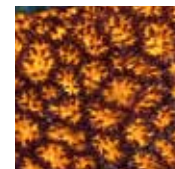
**LOW EXPORT LEVELS**  
**Under 100,000**  
pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



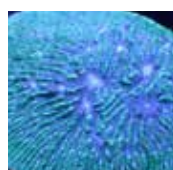
*Pachyseris*  
46,075



*Cyphastrea*  
32,619



*Leptastrea*  
30,211



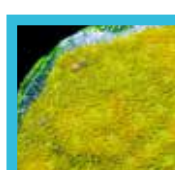
*Lithophyllon*  
24,655



*Leptoseris*  
16,998



*Astreopora*  
9,819



*Psammocora*  
9,488

# Merulina

**FAST GROWTH**



3-6 months to culture

**MEDIUM EXPORT LEVELS**

**100-500,000**  
pieces

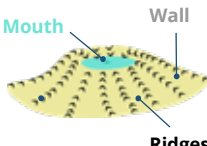

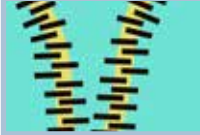

Global data 2010-2019

\$6 \$15

**UK IMPORT PRICE  
PER PIECE**

**BETWEEN \$2-\$20**

## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<b>What is a corallite?</b>  <p>Mouth</p> <p>Wall</p> <p>Ridges</p>	<b>MEANDROID</b>  <p>Valleys, shared walls</p>	<b>ZIPPER</b>  <p>Irregular ridges and spikes</p>	<b>SMALL</b>  <p>1-10 mm width</p>

## DEFINING FEATURES

Zipper-like appearance arranged neatly.





Leafy protrusions may be present.



Walls form narrow valleys at a right angles to the growing edge.

## LOOK-ALIKES

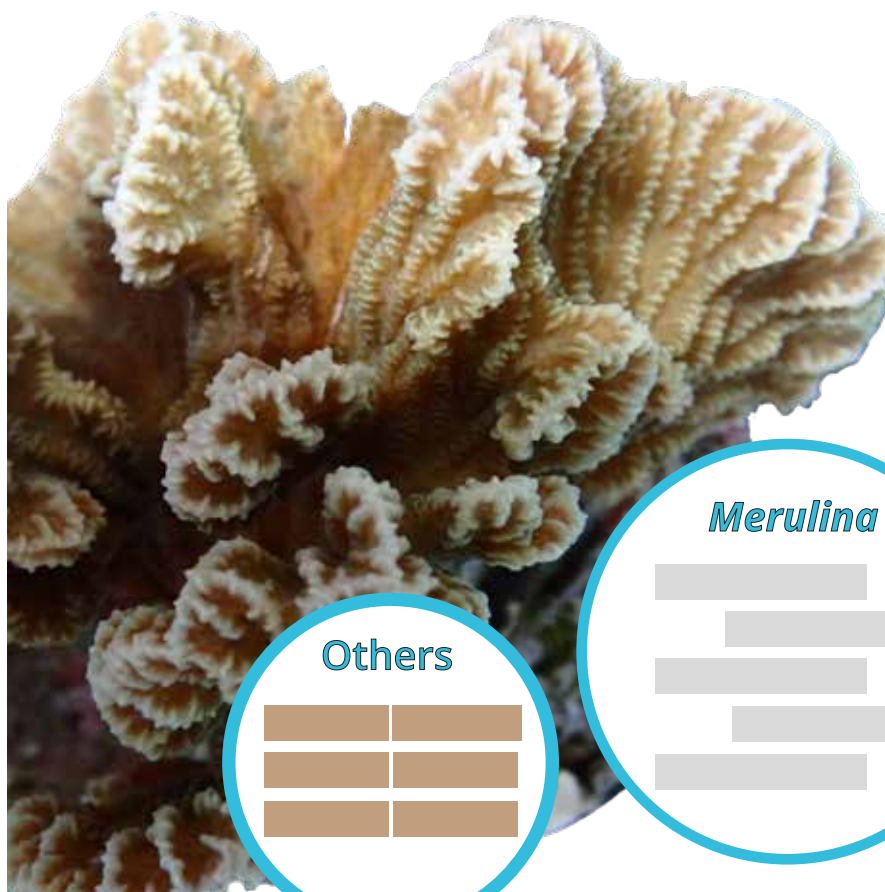
Long meandroid valleys with neat-ridges are shared with several genera. The zipper-like texture of ridges and arrangement of mouths at right angles is unique to *Merulina*.

			
<i>Merulina</i>	<i>Platygyra</i>	<i>Pachyseris</i>	<i>Goniastrea</i>
Page 81	Page 103	Page 75	



## Unique 'zipper' structure

*Merulina* has the most overlapping wall grooves which have a zipper appearance.



Others



*Merulina*



Arrangement of valleys for *Merulina* and look-alikes

Right angles:  
*Pachyseris*

Random:  
*Platygyra*,  
*Goniastrea*



Radiating:  
*Merulina*

# Hydnophora



## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	SIZE
<p>What is a corallite?</p>	<p><b>CERIOID</b></p> <p>Valleys, shared walls</p>	<p><b>SHARP BUMPS</b></p> <p>Sharp bumps grow with mouths nested below</p>	<p><b>SMALL</b></p> <p>2-3 mm in diameter</p>

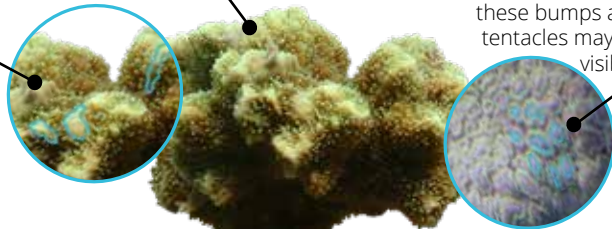
## DEFINING FEATURES

Sharp tooth-like bumps present where mouth would be in other corals.

Small tentacles may be visible during the day giving them a furry appearance.

These bumps can fuse into elongated protruding wedges.

Mouths are nested under or among these bumps and tentacles may be visible.

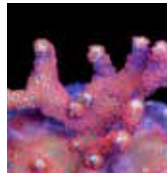


## LOOK-ALIKES

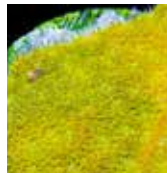
Branch shapes of *Hydnophora* may look like other encrusting or branching corals, but have unique sharp tooth-like bumps, which may obscure their mouths. The uneven surface of *Montipora* may resemble *Hydnophora* bumps but are smaller and less pronounced.



*Hydnophora*



*Montipora*



*Psammocora*



*Pectinia*

Page 119

Page 121

Page 87





## Diverse growth morphology



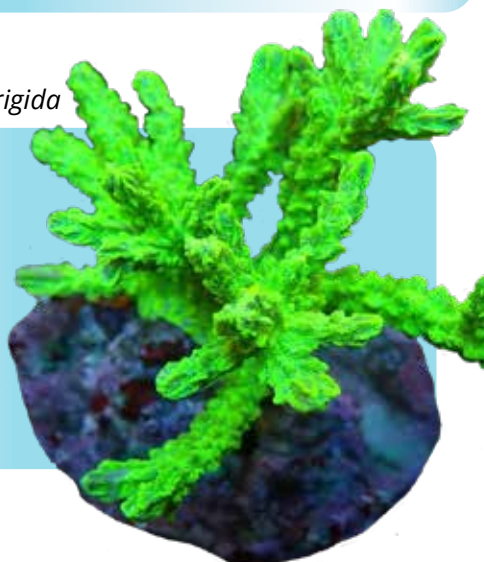
*Hydnophora exesa*

*H. exesa* is a good example with sharp bumps which are visually fused into elongated 'protruding wedges' which obscure their mouths.

Known as 'horn coral' *Hydnophora rigida*

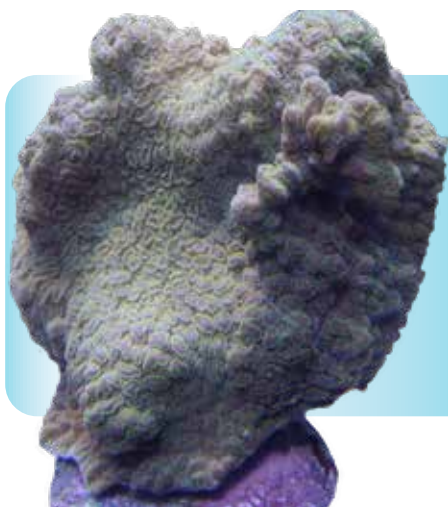
*H. rigida* 'protruding wedges' are parallel to branching structure.

Growth forms can be branch-like or more boulder-like.

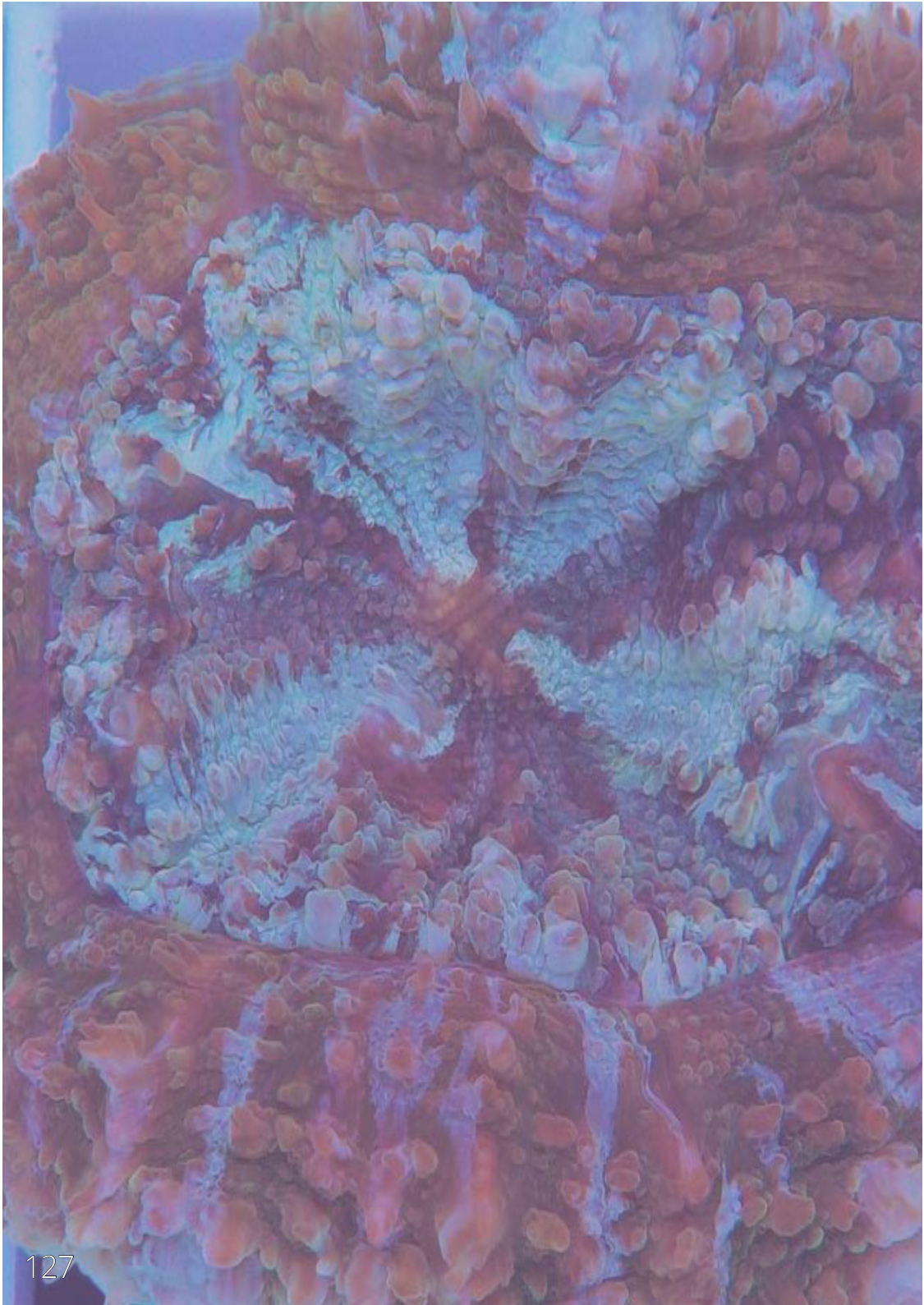


*Hydnophora microconos*

Colonies of *H. microconos* are boulder-like with small uniform bumps 2-3 mm diameter.



CHECK GENUS





# Solitary and Free-living

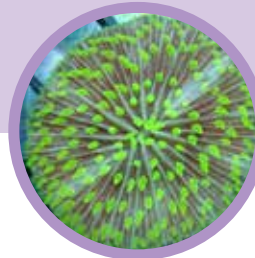
Solitary corals exist as a single corallite, i.e. do not form colonies. Free-living corals are not attached to any substrate.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Some solitary corals are free-living in the natural environment and are not attached to solid reef substrates/rocky reef substrates, e.g. *Fungia*, *Cycloseris*, *Trachyphyllia*. However, they will be attached to an artificial base for trade.

Some solitary corals are found attached e.g. *Scolymia*, *Cynarina* and *Acanthophyllia*.

Solitary and free-living corals are naturally quite rare and occupy unusual habitats for coral, for example, sandy or muddy substrates and underhangs of reefs, shaded areas or small spaces.





# Overview

## Solitary and Free-living shaped corals in trade

Solitary corals are not part of a colony and only have one polyp present. ***This table of contents can be used to find the correct page during inspection, colour coded by chapter. Use the tabs to locate the chapter and the page number to navigate to identification pages.***

### FLESHY MANTLE SOLITARY CORALS



*Trachyphyllia*

Page 131-132



*Scolymia*

Page 133-134



*Cynarina*

Page 135-136



*Acanthophyllia*

Page 137-138

Find a fleshy mantle coral key on page 138

### FREE-LIVING SINGLE MOUTH



*Fungia*

Page 139-140



*Cycloseris*

Page 141-142



*Heliofungia*

Page 23-24

### FREE-LIVING MULTIPLE MOUTHS



*Herpolitha*

Page 143-144



*Polyphyllia*

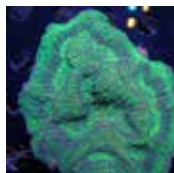
Page 145-146

### SIMILAR-LOOKING CORALS FROM OTHER CHAPTERS



*Lobophyllia*

Page 61-62



*Australomussa*

Page 63-64



*Euphyllia*

Page 21-22





## Detecting false mariculture

- 1 Fragmentation**  
Solitary corals that have been fragmented from 'mother stock' will always have a healed cut.
- 2 Budding**  
Budding of solitary corals e.g. Fungiidae following collection stress. Budded corals are traded as Source Code 'W' but are smaller in size.
- 3 Artificial base**  
Some maricultured solitary corals are attached to an artificial base. Only free-living corals do not require an artificial base.

**! Healed cut should be present, not a whole individual.**

**✓ SIGN OF TRUE MARICULTURE**

**✗ SIGN OF FALSE MARICULTURE**

Fragmentation cut can be seen showing active growth (healed cut).



Budding can be triggered following collection. 'Buds' are separated and grown on for export.



This is a Source Code 'W' *Trachyphyllia*. Note the complete shape without cuts and the natural folds.



*Acanthastrea*



*Scolymia*

# Trachyphyllia



## CORALLITE FEATURES

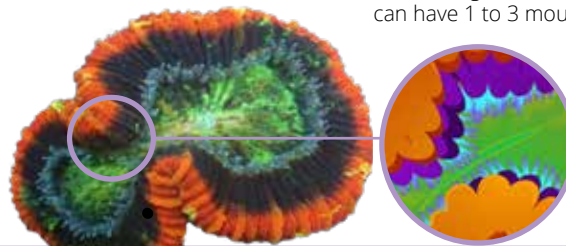
	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>LOBED/VALLEY</b>  Lobed corallite, up to three mouths	<b>FLESHY MANTLE</b>  Mantle over walls and skeleton	<b>NEAT-RIDGES</b>  Radiating from mouth

## DEFINING FEATURES

Mouth is visible and is usually as wide as or wider than the walls.

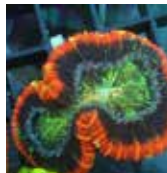
Key-hole shaped, walls are rounded and raised above the mouth, covered in neat-ridges radiating from the mouth.

Tentacles fringe the mouth, can have 1 to 3 mouths.

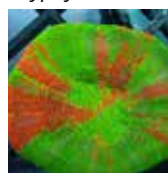


## LOOK-ALIKES

*Trachyphyllia*'s mouth is more elongated than the more circular mouths of *Scolymia*, *Acanthophyllia* and *Lobophyllia*. Its walls are more rounded than the tapering walls of *Australomussa*. *Trachyphyllia* has more prominent ridges than *Lobophyllia*.



*Trachyphyllia*



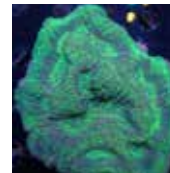
*Scolymia*



*Acanthophyllia*



*Lobophyllia*



*Australomussa*

Page 133

Page 137

Page 61

Page 63



## Colourful and popular

*Trachyphyllia* is one of the most popular coral taxa in trade. One reason is the range of colours it can show on its mouth and fleshy mantle. Its natural rarity, slow growth and high demand mean that illicit traders may attempt to label this coral as something less valuable (e.g. *Lobophyllia*).

### i Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

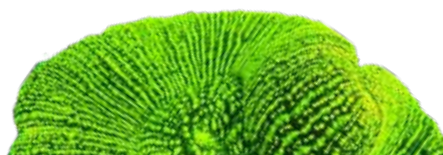


**HIGH EXPORT LEVELS**  
**Over 500,000**  
pieces  
Global data 2010-2019



**CHECK GENUS**

*Trachyphyllia* has high export levels and is very popular in trade due to its bright colouration.



### i Mariculture

**SLOW GROWTH**



>12 months to culture

*Trachyphyllia* is slow-growing and maricultured examples are not common in trade (2022).

In Indonesia, *Trachyphyllia* is being studied to enhance mariculture methods for trade. At present, they are produced in low numbers for international trade.

*Trachyphyllia* are cultured by fragmenting each coral into two equal fragments longitudinally.



# Scolymia



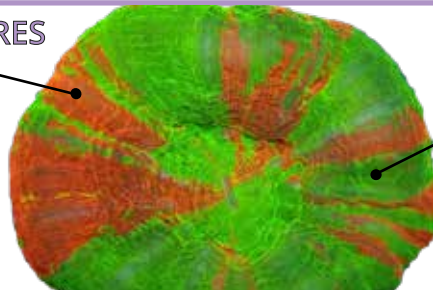
## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	
<p>Mouth</p> <p>Ridges</p> <p>Fleshy mantle</p>	<b>CIRCULAR</b>  Circular, single corallite	<b>FLESHY MANTLE</b>  Mantle over wall	<b>WARTY TEXTURE</b>  Warty bumps present on wall

## DEFINING FEATURES

Mouth is visible and is usually as wide as or wider than the wall.

Wall covered in irregularly sized bumps that may be randomly spaced or loosely arranged in radiating lines from the mouth.



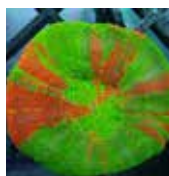
Wall is only slightly raised above the level of the mouth.

Folds absent.

'Saucer' shaped compared to 'key-hole' shape of *Trachyphyllia*.

## LOOK-ALIKES

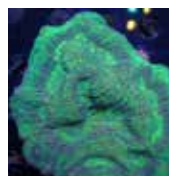
*Scolymia*'s wall is flatter (less raised) than *Trachyphyllia*, *Australomussa* and *Lobophyllia*. The wall edge and bumps on the walls are more regular compared to *Acanthophyllia*.



*Scolymia*



*Trachyphyllia*



*Australomussa*



*Lobophyllia*



*Acanthophyllia*

Page 131

Page 63

Page 61

Page 137



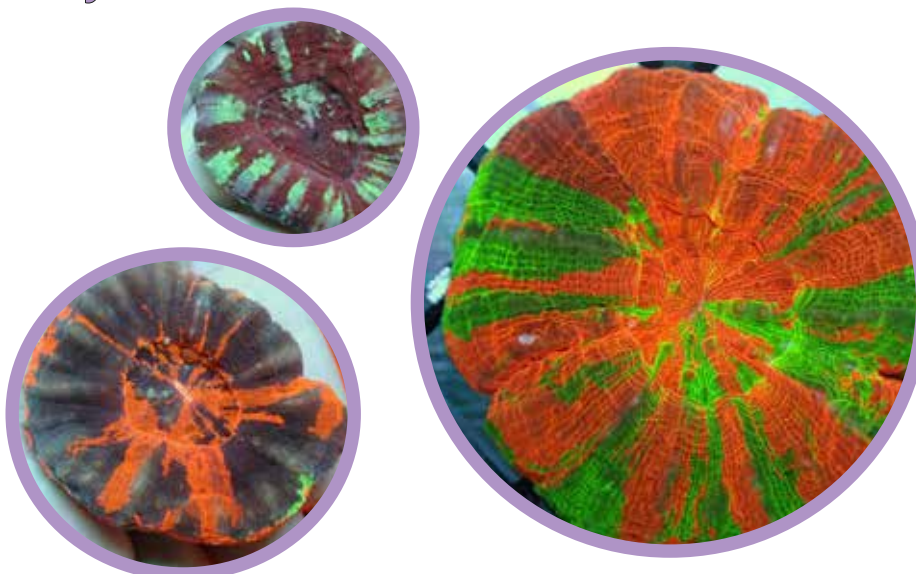
## Colourful and popular

Most *Scolymia* in trade are 'wild-sourced' from Australia.

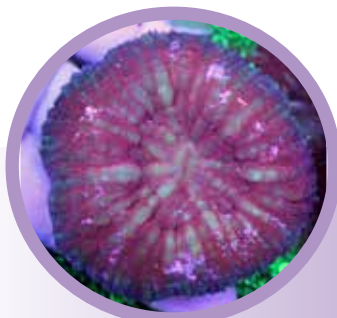
### Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

### *Scolymia australis*



CHECK GENUS



### *Scolymia vitiensis*

In Indonesia, methods to mariculture *Scolymia vitiensis* are still being developed for commercial trade. At present, this taxon is only produced in low numbers.

# Cynarina

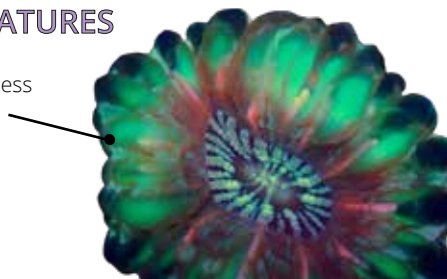


## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>OVAL</b>  Oval single corallite	<b>FLESHY MANTLE</b>  Mantle over wall	<b>NEAT-RIDGES</b>  Radiating from mouth

## DEFINING FEATURES

Mouth is visible, but less wide than the wall.



Wall has large radiating ridges that protrude slightly as rounded fingernail shapes, transparent fleshy mantle forms sausage-shaped bubbles between ridges.

## LOOK-ALIKES

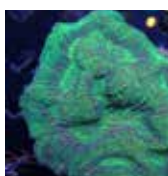
Unlike other fleshy mantle solitary corals, *Cynarina* has large ridges that radiate out from the mouth which is fringed with teeth.



*Cynarina*



*Trachyphyllia*



*Australomussa*



*Scolymia*



*Acanthophyllia*

Page 131

Page 63

Page 133

Page 137

## Distinguishing features of *Cynarina*

*Cynarina* is distinguished by:

1. Fleshy mantle is transparent
2. Large lobed ridges visible through the fleshy mantle
3. Visible mouth is less wide than wall

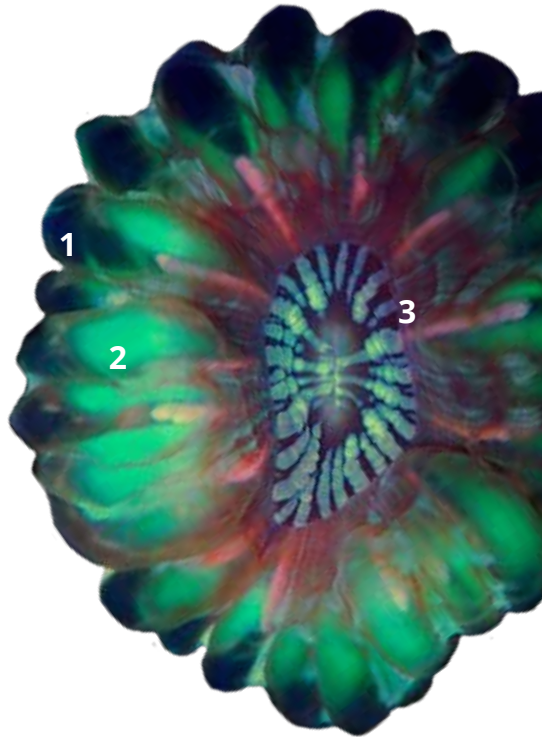


### Mariculture

In Indonesia, mariculture of *Cynarina* is still being developed for commercial trade.



CHECK GENUS

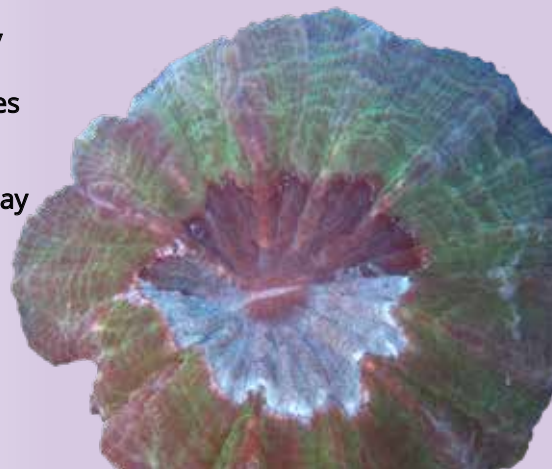


*Acanthaphyllia* is distinguished by:

1. Mouth is wider than the wall
2. Wall is covered in irregularly sized and irregularly arranged bumps compared to large lobes of *Cynarina*
3. Wall edge is irregular and may look ragged whereas *Cynarina* has smooth edges



CHECK GENUS



# Acanthophyllia



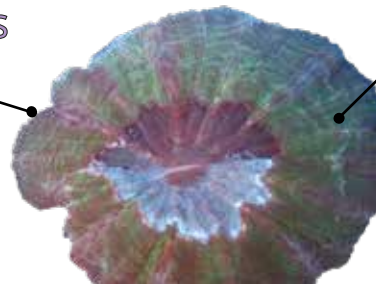
## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES

Mouth is visible, but less wide than the wall.

Wall is covered in irregularly sized and irregularly arranged bumps.



Wall is only slightly raised above the level of the mouth.

Wall edge is irregular and may look ragged.

## LOOK-ALIKES

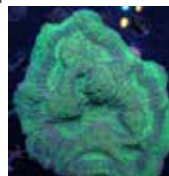
*Acanthophyllia's* walls are flatter (less raised) than *Trachyphyllia*, *Australomussa* and *Lobophyllia*. Unlike key-hole shape of *Trachyphyllia* corallite is circular/oval similar to *Scolymia* but the wall edge and bumps on the wall are more irregular in shape.



*Acanthophyllia*



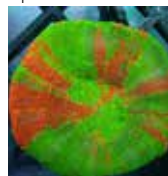
*Trachyphyllia*



*Australomussa*



*Lobophyllia*



*Scolymia*

Page 131

Page 63

Page 61

Page 133



# Key for fleshy mantle solitary corals

Are there obvious folds in the wall structure?

NO YES

Are there ridges radiating from the mouth with raised fingernail shapes visible through the mantle?

NO

YES

Are the edge of the wall and bumps on the wall irregular?

NO YES



*Acanthophyllia*

Page 137

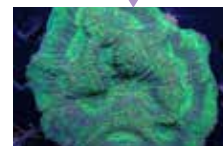
Is the corallite single and shaped like a key-hole?

YES NO



*Trachyphyllia*

Page 131



*Australomussa*

Page 63

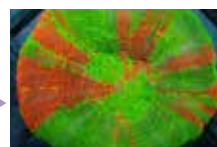


*Cynarina*

Page 135



CHECK ALL GENERA IN THIS KEY



*Scolymia*

Page 133



## Mariculture

In Indonesia, mariculture of *Acanthophyllia* is still being developed for commercial trade.

# Fungia



## CORALLITE FEATURES

	CORALLITE SHAPE	TEXTURE	
<b>What is a corallite?</b> 	<b>OVAL</b>  Oval single corallite	<b>MUSHROOM</b>  Wall ridges resemble Fungiidae corals.	<b>SERRATED RIDGES</b>  Ridges have sharp hooks

## DEFINING FEATURES

Narrow ridges, with serrations on them, radiating from a central mouth.



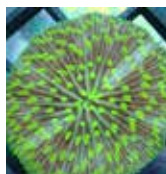
Overall shape can be circular/oval or elongated compared to *Cycloseris* which is only round or oval.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Fungia* is most similar to *Cycloseris*, but has serrated/hooked ridges and can be circular/oval/elongated. *Herpolitha* has similar 'hooked' ridges, but has a very elongated corallite with blunt ends. *Heliofungia*'s skeleton is extremely similar to *Fungia*, but is obscured by tentacles.



*Fungia*



*Cycloseris*



*Herpolitha*



*Heliofungia*

Page 141

Page 143

Page 23



## Mushroom corals

Mushroom corals in the Fungiidae family are usually solitary and free-living, found on reefs or on sandy or muddy substrates nearby. *Lithophyllon* (see encrusting (small polyp) chapter) and some other genera (not featured) may have multiple mouths and encrust onto reefs. Small transparent tentacles are often present during the day in this family which may be brightly coloured under black light. In *Heliofungia* these tentacles are striking and rod-shaped (see fleshy polyp chapter). A common feature for all members of this family are narrow linear ridges radiating from the centre of the colony.

### **i** Mariculture



In Indonesia, mariculture of *Fungia* is still being developed for commercial trade.

In the image is a newly fragmented *Fungia* in a closed environment. The mother coral has been taken from the wild.

Many Fungiidae grow on a stalk as juveniles and drop off later in life. This means that *Fungia* can have a detachment scar on the underside.



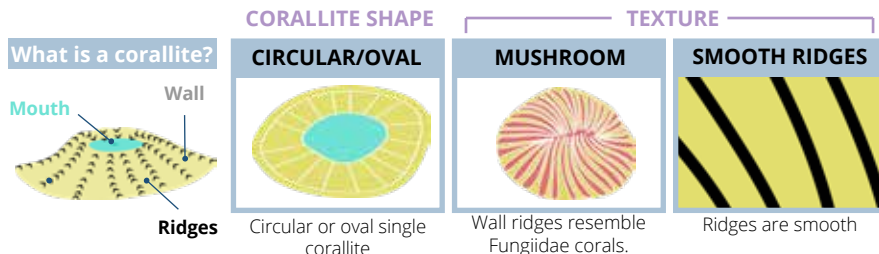
### **i** Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

# Cycloseris



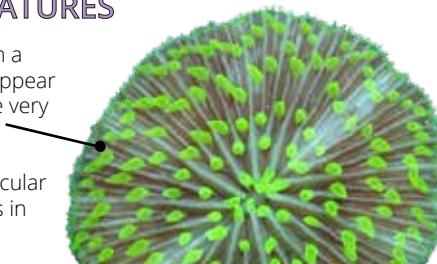
## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES

Ridges radiating from a central mouth may appear smooth but can have very fine hooks.

Corallite is oval or circular and not elongated as in some *Fungia*.

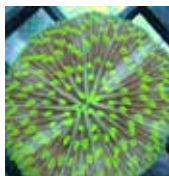


Mouth can be smaller or short, but can also be elongated.



## LOOK-ALIKES

*Cycloseris* is most similar to *Fungia*, but has smooth ridges and is circular or slightly oval (not elongated). *Herpolitha* is much more elongated than *Cycloseris*.



*Cycloseris*



*Fungia*



*Herpolitha*

Page 139

Page 143





## Ridge structure in Fungiidae

Ridges in *Cycloseris* are usually smooth, while *Fungia* and *Herpolitha* have serrated ridges.

### Mariculture

In Indonesia, mariculture of *Cycloseris* is still being developed for commercial trade.



### *Cycloseris*



### *Fungia*



### *Herpolitha*



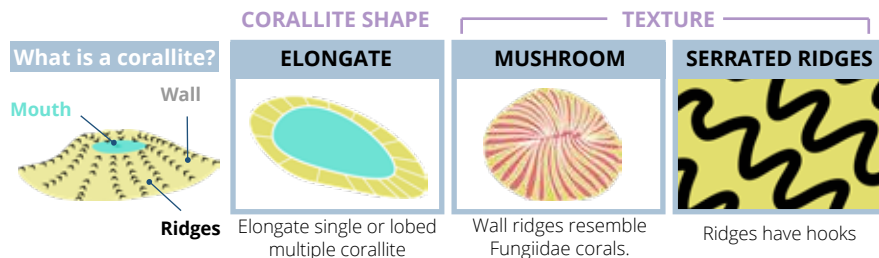
### Taxonomic changes

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# Herpolitha



## CORALLITE FEATURES



## DEFINING FEATURES

Radiating wall ridges from an elongated mouth.

Even within single corallite, there is a primary mouth (found in the centre) and smaller secondary mouths over the colony surface, which may be less visible.



Can be very elongated in shape which can fork into extra lobes.

## LOOK-ALIKES

*Herpolitha* has similar hooked serrations to *Fungia*, but *Herpolitha* is much more elongated than other Fungiidae and can form a colony (page 144). *Polyphyllia* looks similar but has less aligned mouths and thicker, more spaced serrated ridges compared to *Herpolitha*.



*Herpolitha*



*Fungia*



*Polyphyllia*

Page 139

Page 145



## Extra information on *Herpolitha*

There is only one species in the *Herpolitha* genus *H. limax*. Like *Fungia* there are serrations/hooks on the wall ridges but compared to other Fungiidae (mushroom corals) *Herpolitha* is very elongate (often named slipper coral in trade).

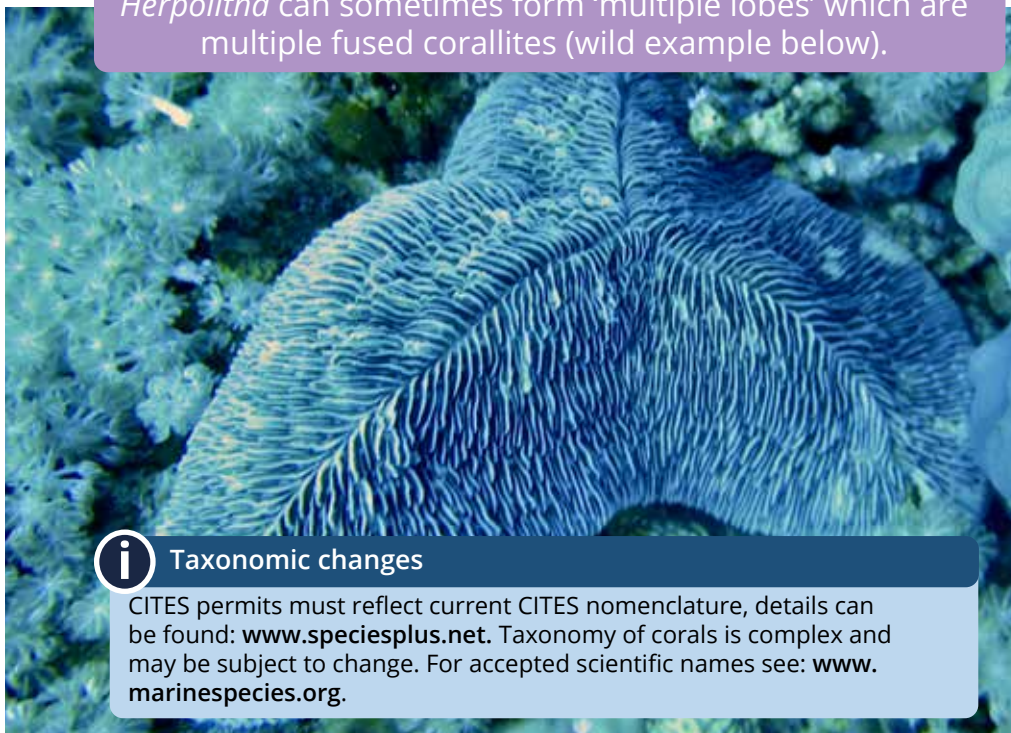


### Mariculture

In Indonesia, mariculture of *Herpolitha* is still being developed for commercial trade.



*Herpolitha* can sometimes form 'multiple lobes' which are multiple fused corallites (wild example below).



### Taxonomic changes

CITES permits must reflect current CITES nomenclature, details can be found: [www.speciesplus.net](http://www.speciesplus.net). Taxonomy of corals is complex and may be subject to change. For accepted scientific names see: [www.marinespecies.org](http://www.marinespecies.org).

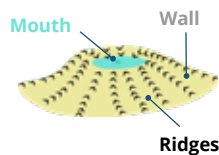


# Polyphyllia



## CORALLITE FEATURES

What is a corallite?



### CORALLITE SHAPE

#### ELONGATE



Scattered mouths, less aligned

### TEXTURE

#### MUSHROOM



Wall ridges resemble Fungiidae corals.

#### SERRATED RIDGES



Thick and bigger serrations on ridges

## DEFINING FEATURES

Regular serrated ridges but ridges are short

Ridges serrations are thicker, bigger and more prominent than *Herpolitha*



## LOOK-ALIKES

Both *Herpolitha* and *Polyphyllia* have an elongate central mouth, but *Polyphyllia* has less aligned mouths and coarser serrated ridges compared to *Herpolitha*.



*Polyphyllia*



*Herpolitha*





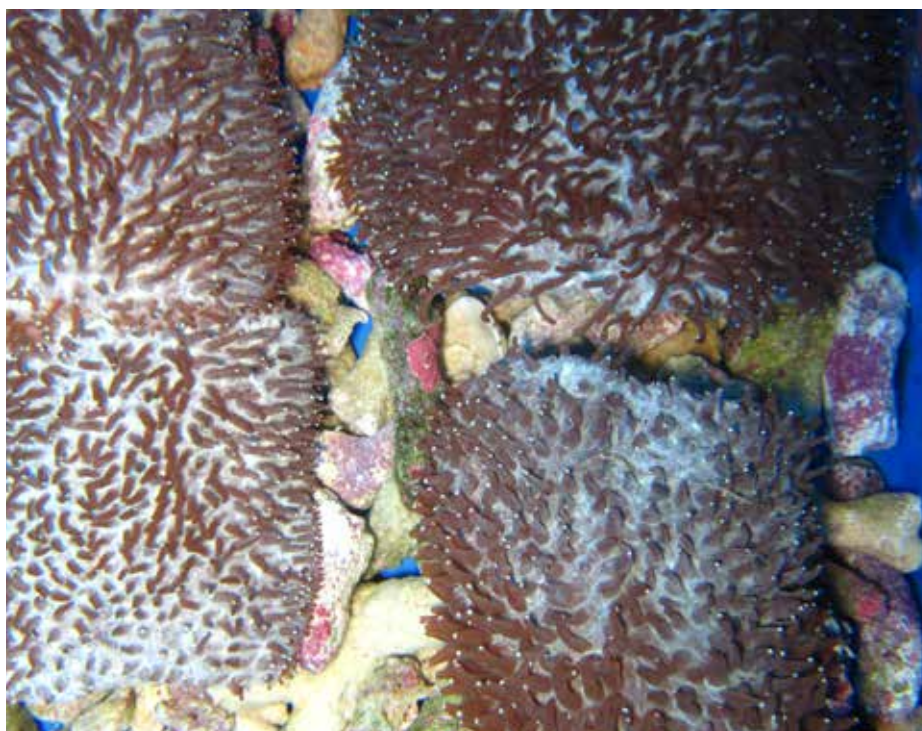
## Extra information on *Polyphyllia*

Like *Herpolitha*, *Polyphyllia* can sometimes form 'multiple lobes' which are multiple fused corallites.



### **i** Mariculture

In Indonesia, mariculture of *Polyphyllia* is still being developed for commercial trade.



## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This 'Identification of CITES-listed live stony corals in the aquarium trade' guide was based on an original concept discussed between Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and the Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association (OATA) regarding the need for a visual resource to differentiate stony corals originating from a wild-collected or mariculture source. Development of the guide was made possible with funding by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and delivered through a collaborative project comprised of team members from Cefas, The Indonesian Coral Reef Foundation (TERANGI) and The Indonesian Nature Foundation (Yayasan Alam Indonesia Lestari - LINI).

The guide provides an identification resource for commonly seen growth forms of live stony corals in the aquatic trade. Taxa were selected based on their global export levels (>10,000) for a ten-year period between 2010 and 2019 according to the CITES database, coral growth rates, and market values, which can affect the likelihood of mislabelling maricultured coral. This guide is therefore designed to support customs inspectors of live coral in the aquarium trade and should not be used as a definitive source of taxonomic reference for stony corals.

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