

N	K	E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	I	U	P
O	F	S	T	V	C	F	N	P	B	E	Z	P	S
I	N	X	S	Z	X	B	P	B	M	K	O	N	A
G	U	V	R	H	I	Z	O	M	E	B	O	E	P
H	B	C	R	E	E	F	L	X	V	T	X	U	I
S	R	P	W	K	B	Z	Y	U	I	A	A	M	L
R	E	T	P	C	G	T	P	H	N	V	N	A	I
H	X	A	R	E	R	B	V	A	U	C	T	T	Y
Y	K	A	G	P	T	H	H	B	R	U	H	O	I
M	A	N	G	R	O	V	E	I	S	G	E	P	N
W	H	W	G	B	A	K	U	T	E	I	L	H	T
P	F	T	J	A	Q	S	B	A	R	W	L	O	V
E	K	B	G	V	G	X	S	T	Y	D	A	R	B
T	C	O	R	A	L	Q	O	A	P	O	E	E	L

CORAL  
ECOSYSTEM

NURSERY  
PNEUMATOPHORE

SEAGRASS  
ZOOXANTHELLAE

HABITAT  
MANGROVE

POLYP

REEF  
RHIZOME

**REEF RELIEF**

Reef Relief is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to improving and protecting our coral reef ecosystem. Tax deductible membership begins at \$30/year.

Visit our website at  
[www.roofrelief.org](http://www.roofrelief.org)

Phone: (305) 294-3100

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ANSWERS



**REEF RELIEF**

# FLORIDA KEYS ECOSYSTEMS Kids Guide



ALL OF US CAN WORK TOGETHER TO SAVE THE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE FLORIDA KEYS, INCLUDING KIDS! WE CAN LEARN ABOUT HOW TO TAKE CARE OF OUR OCEANS, AND TEACH OUR PARENTS AND FRIENDS. IF WE WANT A CLEAN AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR OURSELVES AND THE CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE. THE TIME TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE OUR PLANET IS NOW!

# ECOSYSTEMS ARE...

EVERYTHING THAT INTERACTS, LIVING AND NONLIVING,  
IN ONE GEOGRAPHIC AREA!

LIVING = BIOTIC



NONLIVING = ABIOTIC



## COOL CORAL



POLYPS ARE CONNECTED  
TOGETHER TO MAKE CORAL  
COLONIES, WHICH MAKE REEFS!

DID YOU KNOW CORAL IS AN  
ANIMAL? IT'S RELATED TO  
JELLYFISH AND SEA  
ANEMONES - THEY ARE  
CNIDARIANS.



EACH CORAL POLYP IS A  
TINY ANIMAL SMALLER  
THAN YOUR FINGERNAIL!

POLYPS HAVE TENTACLES  
WITH SPECIAL STINGING  
CELLS CALLED  
NEMATOCYSTS.



# CORAL REEFS ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY ARE A HABITAT AND NURSERY

CORAL REEFS ARE HOME  
TO ANIMALS IN SHALLOW  
TROPICAL WATERS.



CORAL REEFS ARE MADE OF MANY  
DIFFERENT SPECIES OF CORAL COLONIES



CORAL REEFS ARE HOME  
TO 25% OF MARINE LIFE  
BUT ONLY COVER  
1% OF SEA  
FLOOR!

CORAL REEFS HELP  
ANIMALS HIDE  
FROM PREDATORS.



# SUPER SEAGRASS

**SEAGRASS IS NOT SEAWEED**

Seagrass is a true plant - they have underground roots



THEY NEED SUNLIGHT

SEAWEED IS AN ALGAE, NOT A TRUE PLANT



**Turtle Grass**  
IS FLAT LIKE A RIBBON

GREEN SEA TURTLES EAT SO MUCH TURTLE GRASS THAT THEIR FAT AND CARTILAGE TURNS GREEN!



**Manatee Grass**  
IS ROUND LIKE SPAGHETTI

MANATEE GRASS IS A FAVORITE SNACK OF THE FLORIDA MANATEE. THEY EAT MOSTLY SEAGRASS!



## SEAGRASS VS SEAWEED TIC TAC TOE

DRAW A BLOB FOR SEAWEED



OR SPIKES FOR SEAGRASS




SEAGRASS IS A NURSERY - THAT MEANS THAT BABY ANIMALS LIVE THERE FOR PROTECTION.

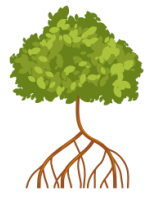
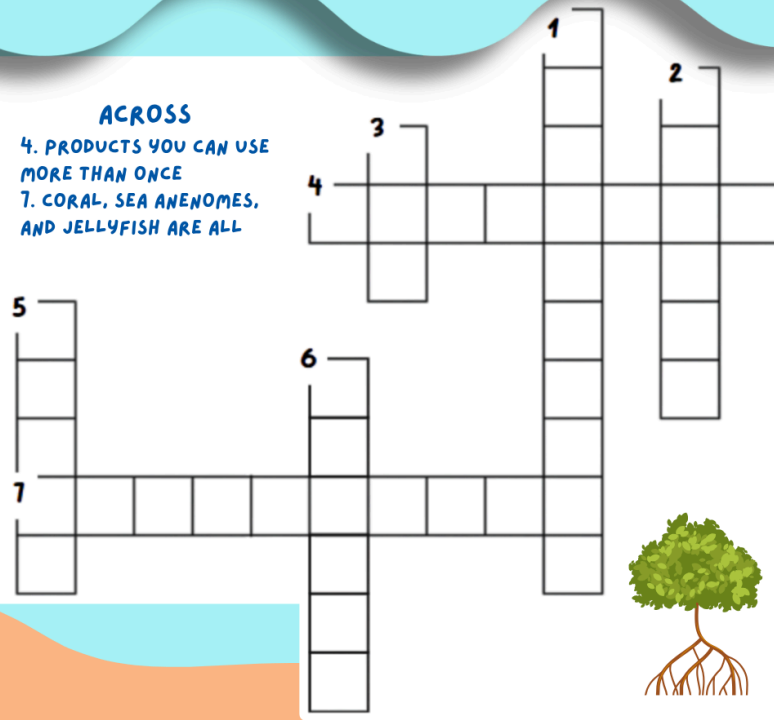


# MAGICAL MANGROVES

ARE TREES THAT CAN LIVE IN SALT WATER! THEY GROW ALONG THE COAST ALL OVER THE WORLD.

- DOWN**
1. STINGING CELL
  2. MANY POLYPS CONNECTED TOGETHER
  3. MANGROVES WITH PROP ROOTS
  5. MANGROVES WITH SNORKEL ROOTS
  6. THIN AND FLAT SEAGRASS

- ACROSS**
4. PRODUCTS YOU CAN USE MORE THAN ONCE
  7. CORAL, SEA ANEMONES, AND JELLYFISH ARE ALL



## Red



RED MANGROVES HAVE SPECIAL "PROP" ROOTS THAT LIFT THEM OUT OF THE WATER.

BLACK MANGROVES HAVE "SNORKEL ROOTS", WHICH COME UP OUT OF THE WATER SO THAT THE TREE CAN GET AIR.



## Black

## White



WHITE MANGROVES LIVE FURTHEST FROM THE WATER.

THEY FILTER SALT OUT OF THE BACKS OF THEIR LEAVES, SO THEY TASTE SALTY!

PNEUMATOPHORES

MANGROVES ARE IMPORTANT HABITAT AND NURSERIES FOR ANIMALS IN THE WATER...



RED MANGROVE ROOTS ARE A GOOD PLACE FOR ANIMALS TO HIDE.

... AND ABOVE!

MANY ANIMALS LIVE AMONG THE MANGROVE TREES!



CAN YOU FIND?:

- 1. MANATEE
- 2. HERMIT CRAB
- 3. PARROTFISH

- 4. ALLIGATOR
- 5. CORMORANT
- 6. SNAPPER
- 7. LEMON SHARK

- 8. KEY DEER
- 9. MANGROVE SNAIL
- 10. PELICAN

# WHAT ARE ECOSYSTEM SERVICES?

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES ARE SOMETHING AN ECOSYSTEM DOES THAT BENEFITS HUMANS!

THEY DO A LOT FOR US!

MANGROVES BUILD ISLANDS AND PREVENT EROSION.



WE SHOULD DO THE SAME FOR THEM.

SEAGRASS AND MANGROVES FILTER WATER.



ALL OF OUR ECOSYSTEMS ARE HOME TO MANY ANIMALS, SO THEY ARE IMPORTANT FOOD SOURCES.



## PROTECT OUR ECOSYSTEMS

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP!

- USE LESS PLASTIC - USE REUSABLE PRODUCTS, LIKE A METAL WATER BOTTLE.
- DON'T TOUCH, AND BE A SAFE BOATER. RESPECT OUR PLANTS AND ANIMALS!
- DON'T LITTER - THROW AWAY ALL YOUR TRASH, AND ANY TRASH YOU SEE.

CORAL REEFS AND MANGROVE FORESTS PROTECT US FROM STORMS AND WAVES. WITHOUT THEM, WE COULDN'T LIVE ON THE COAST!



MATCH THE TRASH AND THE RECYCLING TO THE CORRECT BINS

HINT: NO FOOD OR GREASE CAN GO IN THE RECYCLING



# REEF RELIEF

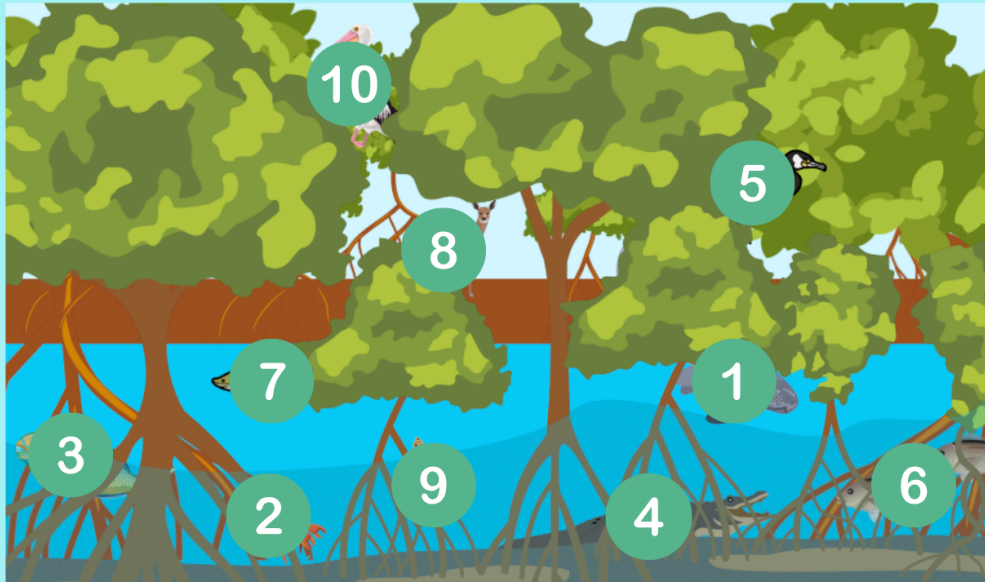
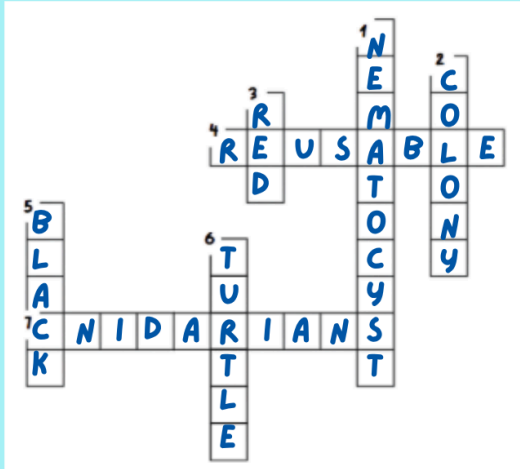
## FLORIDA KEYS ECOSYSTEMS

### Kids Guide Answers



ACROSS  
4. REUSABLE  
7. CNIDARIANS

DOWN  
1. NEMATOCYST  
2. COLONY  
3. RED  
5. BLACK  
6. TURTLE



# REEF RELIEF

## FLORIDA KEYS ECOSYSTEMS

### Kids Guide Answers

N	K	E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	I	U	P
O	F	S	T	V	C	F	N	P	B	E	Z	P	S
I	N	X	S	Z	X	B	P	B	M	K	O	N	A
G	U	V	R	H	I	Z	O	M	E	B	O	E	P
H	B	C	R	E	E	F	L	X	V	T	X	U	I
S	R	P	W	K	B	Z	Y	U	I	A	A	M	L
R	E	T	P	C	G	T	P	H	N	V	N	A	I
H	X	A	R	E	R	B	V	A	U	C	T	T	Y
Y	K	A	G	P	T	H	H	B	R	U	H	O	I
M	A	N	G	R	O	V	E	I	S	G	E	P	N
W	H	W	G	B	A	K	U	T	E	I	L	H	T
P	F	T	J	A	Q	S	B	A	R	W	L	O	V
E	K	B	G	V	G	X	S	T	Y	D	A	R	B
T	C	O	R	A	L	Q	O	A	P	O	E	E	L

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