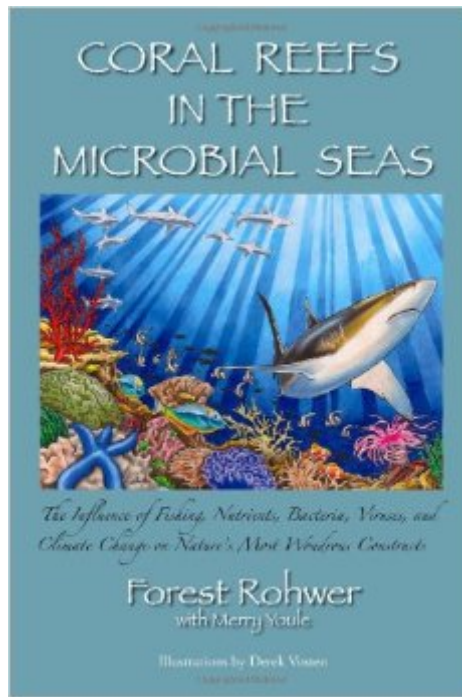


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# Coral Reefs In The Microbial Seas



## Synopsis

For millennia, coral reefs have flourished as one of the planet's most magnificent natural wonders. As Earth's most biodiverse ecosystem-surpassing even the rainforests-they are home to a cooperative network ranging from immense fish to sunlight-capturing algae to invisible microbes. Just how critical the microbes in particular are for coral reef health is finally understood thanks to recent discoveries. *Coral Reefs in the Microbial Seas* is the first book to unveil the complete story of how these relationships uphold coral reef health and what impact human activity has on this delicate balance.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The book is a gem. Aside from appreciating the importance and , especially at this moment in time, the relevancy of it's content, I would like to thank the authors for structuring the chapters in such a way that even a non-scientist like me finds it fascinating to read. The pictures painted in the narrative , the second part of each chapter, provide the perfect gateway to the more scientific body of the chapter. I recommend this book to all who ,like me, live through their eyes.  
Brigitte Sekirka  
Cooper

No sharks no coral reefs! This is a one-liner that will live for a long time. The arguments presented in this book allow you to see the big picture. Based on solid biology, that is, including both microbes and larger animals and plants, you are presented with a well documented and logical chain of

mechanisms explaining the deteriorating conditions for coral reefs. In addition you are presented with a vivid account of science in real life. This is good fun and serves to build trust vis-à-vis the authors genuine experience. A strong sense of responsibility towards our common ocean and its future shines through the presentation, yet scientific reasoning is the sole guiding principle for the arguments. In view of the global destruction of the fish community it could, for example, be tempting make a comparison between coral reefs and the destruction of the rainforest. Forest Rower and Merry Youle however manage to capture the larger context and importance of the ecosystem structure by being able to make connections through the entire food-web of the coral reef and not by inference to a different system.

For the amateur SCUBA enthusiast the material presented in the narrative is probably a real eye-opener. From low level microbes all the way up the food chain (web) to the sharks, the complex life formations required to keep the coral reef alive are mind boggling. The book is part college text containing significant amounts of research and part recreational reading sure to keep even a lay diver interested in seeking more information as the story unfolds. A nice job all around. A background in reefs is probably presupposed as the authors jump right into research needs and findings without providing requisite underpinnings. But, then again, it's not going to be bought by a casual reader seeking colorful pictures. There is sufficient information to interest the lay reader as well as technical data to please SCUBA divers seeking to learn more about what they see in coral reef formations. In summary, the book is a good read and deserves a place on bookshelves for current and reference information.

Much has been written on coral reef biology, conservation and the biodiversity. The strength of this book lies in its breadth in using a systems approach to studying coral reef health from actual field expeditions. From the number of sharks to the types of bacteria and dissolved organic carbon in the oceans all lead to a symbiotic relationship with coral reefs. The stories that precede each chapter provide a glimpse into the fun, excitement, tedium and hardships of scientific field work. The chapters are divided into first describing what makes up coral reefs and then describing associated diseases and stressors of corals and ending finally with conservation practices that may save coral reefs for future generations. The authors use a number of field expeditions to places such as the Line Islands to illustrate the challenges in pinpointing causes to the decline of coral reefs. Taking a close look at bacteriophages and the microbial health of corals is an often overlooked when examining corals. This view also impacts what can be done for the overall conservation of coral

reefs and their associated fisheries. The chemistry and metabolism that produce an interplay of feedback mechanisms is greatly appreciated in this small and enjoyable book.

This book is fantastic and necessary for anybody who is interested in either microbial ecology or coral reefs. It has an attractive approach using anecdotes that allow readers to relate to the sophisticated scientific concepts. Moreover, the chapters are organized to cover the subject from different angles so one enjoys reading the book, in the meantime grasp a good understanding of the relation between microbes and coral reefs. I recommend this book to marine biologists, microbiologists and everybody who is interested in understanding the problems that face the beautiful coral reefs all over the world.

This book blends rigorous academic ideas into a beautiful and witty story. It is an excellent introduction to coral ecology and the problems facing it (but goes far beyond "the reefs are dying, the reefs are dying" and dives right into the causes, the causes of the causes, and what the solutions are). All told through the pen of a wonderful writer. This is a rare book that could be used as supplementary material for a high school biology course, all the way to grad school. I would also expect my non-scientist parents to both enjoy reading and learn something from it. Everybody will be able to get different things out of it. I highly recommend it.

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A Field Guide to Coral Reefs: Caribbean and Florida (Peterson Field Guides)  
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Coral Reefs: Secret Cities of the Sea  
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A Guide to the Coral Reefs of the Caribbean  
Coral Reefs of the Southern Gulf of Mexico (Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies)

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