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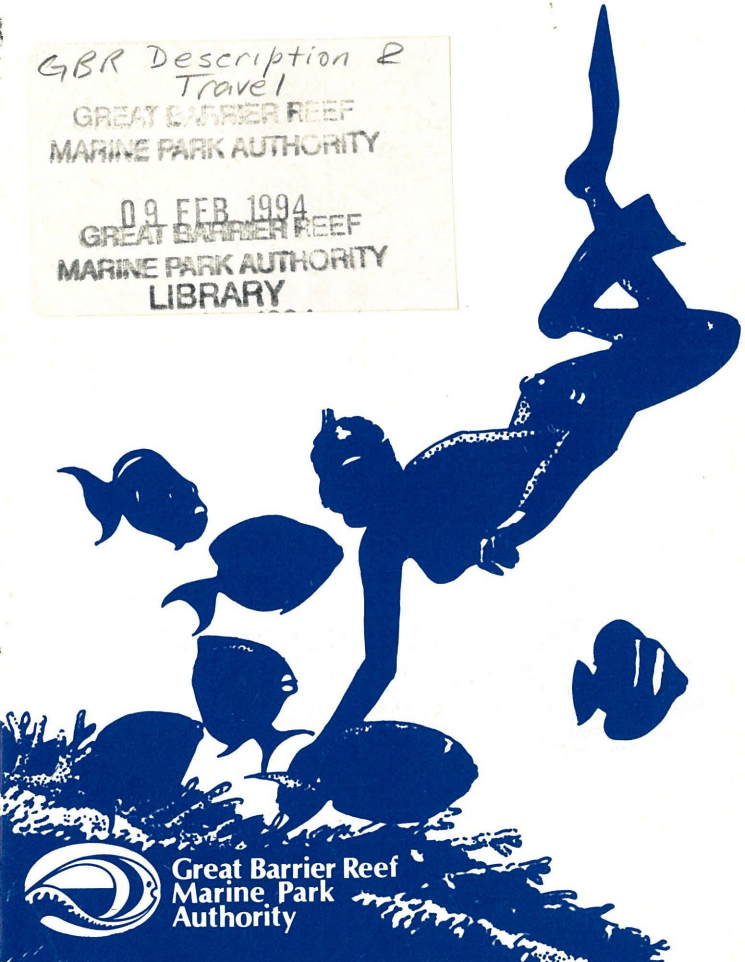
The Great Barrier Reef:

fiction for children

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GREAT BARRIER REEF
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**Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park
Authority**

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to assist teachers, librarians and parents to find works of fiction that children will enjoy and that will help to introduce them to the Great Barrier Reef. The books are arranged in order of age group suitability starting with those for younger children. The suitability is, of course, only indicative and there will be much individual variation.

This list makes no pretence to completeness. In particular the older, standard adventure stories have been excluded. There is a surprising lack of fiction about the Great Barrier Reef and the editor would be interested to hear of items that can be recommended for inclusion.

POLYP

- Geraldine Carlin. Townsville, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, 1986.
- 20p; coloured illustrations.
- 4-10 years

This is the fictionalised, but accurate, life cycle of a coral polyp tracing polyp's adventures from when he first drifts away from his parent as a floating planula through his life in the plankton to settling down and producing a coral colony. The book is enhanced by the excellent illustrations produced by Western Australian school children.

THE MAGIC SHELLS: a tale of the Great Barrier Reef

- Ben Marcus. Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1984.
- ISBN 0-207-14297-4. 76p.; coloured and black and white illustrations.
- 5-8 years

This is a classical fairy tale complete with magic spells, a wicked witch, a good and beautiful princess, a treasure chest and a happy ending. The words and pictures are enhanced by the underwater setting which lends itself to both eerie gloom and magical beauty.

TEZZA, THE CORAL TROUT

- Brenda D. Shields. Winston-Salem, John F. Blair, 1962.
- 36p; coloured and monochrome illustrations.
- 6-8 years

Tezza is a young coral trout and we learn with him about the creatures he meets and go with him and Thea the turtle on an expedition to an island for Thea to lay her eggs.

DIGIT DICK ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

- Leslie Rees. Sydney, Landsdowne Press, 1969.
- ISBN 0-7018-1630-9. 26p.; coloured illustrations.
- 7-9 years

This is one of the popular series of books whose hero is "only as big as his mother's big toe". In this book Digit Dick visits a Barrier Reef Island and has a number of unlikely adventures including attending a birthday party for Mr Crab, being swallowed by a shark and finally rescued from shipwreck by an osprey.

THE SIXPENNY ISLAND

- Ruth Park. London, Macmillan, 1968.
- 126p.
- 10-13 years

An English family, newly arrived in Australia, win a Barrier Reef island in a lottery. On moving there they find they have to cope with the dangers and difficulties of tropical life. They succeed in doing this and, incidentally, learn a good deal about their new natural environment.

THE NAUTILUS AND THE GANG OF THREE

- Jacques K. Lee, New York, Vantage Press, 1983.
- ISBN 533-05516-4. 37p.; black and white illustrations.
- 10-14 years

One of the heroes of this story is an Australian giant clam who sets out to attend an underwater summit conference to decide who is to be ruler of all molluscs. Many biological facts about molluscs are introduced along with less probable phenomena such as a feminist violet spider conch with a French accent, a sacred chank from the Bay of Bengal who considers himself the new marine Messiah and a hermit crab, master of disguise and trouble maker. The denouement is effected by a peace loving bystander.

DOLPHIN ISLAND

- Arthur C. Clarke, London, Victor Gollancz, 1966.
- 186p.
- 10-14 years

This science fiction story is set in a Barrier Reef research institute working on dolphins. The hero having been rescued by dolphins from a shipwreck becomes involved in uncovering an underwater conspiracy. All the standard adventure story components are here, cyclone, chase, sharks and rescue, handled by an author expert in both science fiction and underwater science.

MYSTERY ON MINNAMURRA

- Gordon Benjamin. London, Longmans Young Books, 1968.
- 142p.
- 10-14 years

This is a classical adventure story involving two boys on holiday on an island. There is a kindly uncle, a ghostly legend and a treasure hunt. The boys explore an underwater cave and are almost given up as lost but they — and the treasure — are found before the last chapter.

THE SWIFTLET ISLES

- James Porter. Sydney, Hodder and Stoughton, 1977.
- ISBN 0-340-21918-1. 122p; chapter head illustrations in black and white.
- 12-15 years

The young hero of this book escapes from the unpleasant reality of his family life by sailing his catamaran to the Swiftlet Isles. Here he becomes totally immersed in the natural world and his self reliance. By the time his family, and a cyclone, finally catch up with him, he has acquired considerable maturity and is able to return with new confidence to mainland life.

BOY LOST ON TROPIC COAST: Adventure with DEXTER HARDY

- Leslie Rees. Sydney, Ure Smith, 1986.
- about 200p.
- 11-15 years

Dexter Hardy is a bush pilot. He is called in by a North Queensland headmaster to help locate a pupil who has disappeared, apparently along with some of the school funds. The search is not a straightforward one and the author uses good characterisation and a nice touch with the setting to sustain interest.

ISLE OF THE SEA HORSE

- H.F. Brinsmead. London, Oxford University Press, 1969.
- 191p.; black and white illustrations.
- 11-15 years

In this award winning novel four teenagers and an older woman are marooned on an uncharted Barrier reef island. The natural environment of the island, and the survival strategies of the group are used as a background to the personal stories of the five people and the development of the relationships between them.



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