

Student

Fact Files



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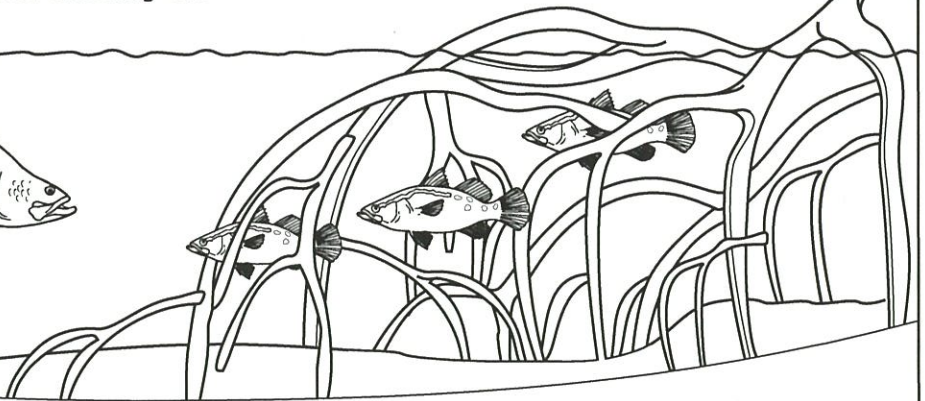
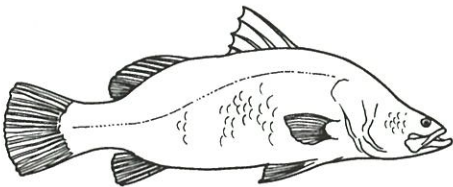
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

#26

May 2005

Mangroves

- There are at least 37 species of mangroves in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. This is more than half of all the species of mangroves in the world.
- Mangrove forests occupy approximately 2070 square kilometres along the length of the coast next to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.
- Mangrove and seagrass ecosystems affect the health of nearby coral reefs. Mangroves filter out nutrients from land-based sources and help to keep the water entering the Reef healthy.
- Many reef creatures live, breed and feed in mangrove environments.
- Mangroves provide protection and shelter for some marine animals.
- Mangrove forests are often cleared to develop land along the coast.



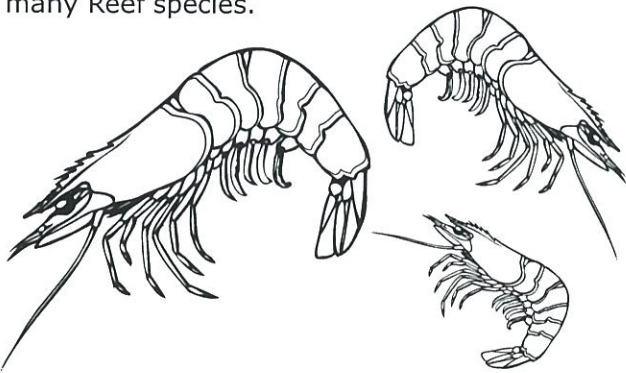
our great barrier reef
let's keep it great





Mangroves are found in intertidal areas on sheltered shorelines and in rivers along the length of the Great Barrier Reef. Mangroves within and bordering the Reef are some of the most diverse mangrove forests in the world. There are many types and varieties of mangroves in Queensland. All mangroves within and next to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park form a critical part of the entire Reef ecosystem.

Many species of animals, particularly some fish and crustaceans (such as shrimps, crabs, crayfish and barnacles), spend part of their lifecycle living within mangrove ecosystems and the remainder living in other parts of the marine environment, such as on coral reefs. Mangroves are an extremely important spawning ground and nursery area for many Reef species.



Mangroves are protected in Queensland, however they are often harmed by a number of pressures from human activities. Mangrove forests are often cleared so the land can be used for development along the coast to build structures such as breakwaters, boat ramps, houses and other buildings. Buildings close to mangroves may change the water flow, and increase water and air pollution in the area. This can cause mangroves to stress. Pollution events such as an oil spill may also damage mangroves.

