

## Coral Reef Food Chains

Coral reefs are water communities that have many food chains.

Coral reefs are found in tropical areas where the water is shallow, warm, and salty. Even though coral looks like rock, it is a living thing. It is made by tiny animals called coral polyps.

The producers on coral reefs are plants smaller than a pinhead, called phytoplankton. These phytoplankton are eaten by very small animals such as newly hatched shrimps and crabs. These very small animals are called zooplankton. Zooplankton are the first consumers in a coral reef food chain.

Coral polyps are the second consumers in a coral reef food chain because they eat the zooplankton.

Many different species of smaller fish eat the coral polyps, and therefore they are the third consumers.

Large fish such as sharks and barracuda complete this food chain as they eat the smaller fish.

### A Coral Reef Food Chain



Phytoplankton



Zooplankton



Coral polyps



Small fish



Large fish

