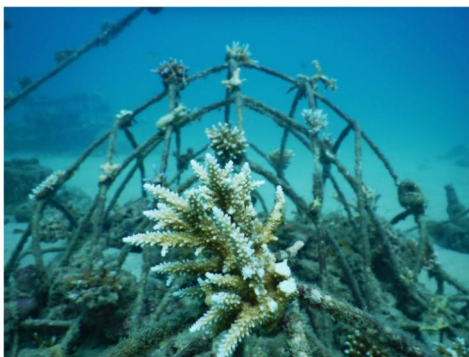
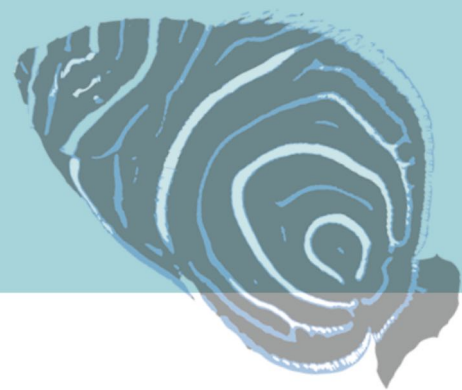


REEF GUARDIAN

Dear Blue Voice,

We would like to thank you once again for becoming Reef Guardians! Your section of restored reef called the Hillock-1 can be found at the coordinates 11.48250 N, 092.70706 E, off the village of Chidiyatapu, South Andaman Island. Here is an update with the latest pictures of your reef and some of its recent inhabitants. We hope you enjoy this update!



Our team dived at the artificial reef after almost four months as the south west monsoon departed and winds turned. The monsoon hits the Andaman Islands every year between June and October, bringing bad weather that makes it difficult for us to dive during this period. In this time of the year the artificial reef sees a lot of algal overgrowth that we will be cleaning in the coming weeks. We had also disconnected the mineral accretion device in May to protect it from harsh ocean conditions, which we will be reinstating in the coming month. On the left are some pictures of the Hillock-1 and its coral fragments.



Corals are colonies of small animals called polyps that belong to the group cnidaria and live in a symbiotic relationship with a type of microalgae called zooxanthellae which reside in their tissues. The polyps provide them with a place to live and in exchange the zooxanthellae use photosynthesis to make food for their coral host during the day. But at night, the coral polyps extend their tentacles and filter feed on organic matter that underwater currents bring to them. That's why corals need both their algal buddies as well as well circulated water to be able to get nutrition and some types of soft coral like sea fans that rely more on filter feeding, are found in areas with very strong currents.

Pictured on the right are some interesting inhabitants of the Hillock-1 - the Cuttlefish and the False Cleanerfish

The cuttlefish is a cephalopod that uses specialised skin cells called chromatophores to completely blend into their surroundings by changing their skin colour and texture. These true magicians of the reef are known to put on a light show of moving patterns on their body to hypnotise their prey. The false cleaner wrasse is the biggest con artist on the reef. It not only looks like, but also mimics the dance of the blue streak cleaner wrasse to get close to larger fish pretending to clean them and takes a bite off their fins instead.



We are immensely grateful to you for lending your support to our reef restoration project and hope that we get to see you and show you your reef in person sometime this year. We invite you to email us on admin@reefwatchindia.org if you have any questions about the reef, you are helping restore or marine life in general. We hope you enjoyed your update!

Warm Wishes,

Nayantraal Jain



REEFWATCH
MARINE CONSERVATION