

“Come on Jackie and get up and out of bed!” shouted my best friend Brianna as she pulled the blanket off me to get me out of bed, “we’ll miss the bus if you don’t hurry up!”. I jumped down from the top bunk of our cabin and quickly got dressed. After, we both grabbed our bags and headed to the meeting hall. Quickly scavenging the hall to see where our two other best friends Sean and Ollie were.

“Took you long enough” Sean whispered as we sat down. “Yea I know it took her forever to get up.” Brianna giggled. “SHHHHHH quiet everybody”, our teachers said to us as they were about to start explaining the activities for the day. “Today is going to be a little bit different to all the other days that we have had so far” Mrs Garcia announced. “Our adventure today is out to the White-coast reef where groups of you will be scuba diving and participating in a competition to find the most animals and corals under the ocean that are located in that reef”.

Finally, where on the bus and luckily up the back “Yassss score” both of the boys yelled as they high fived each other. 5 minutes into the trip and we could already see ocean and I knew that we were close because this is also when the teachers started to talk to us more and more about our “adventure” was. Ollie and the smartass that he is decided to mock the teacher as they were talking, Sean and I started to giggle and laugh and then that’s when the teacher said “what’s so funny huh?”. About 5 minutes after we were there and off the bus walking down to the pier, where we met our instructors.

We reached the pier and the instructors each gave us a sheet and we got to choose our groups, I chose my friends. “Welcome everyone to White-coast scuba adventures. I’m Anthony and this is Michelle and we will be your instructors today.” Anthony started, “We want you to have as much fun as possible but with having fun there also are some rules to keep each and every one of you as safe.” Michelle started talking “Now you may see there are specific things on each of your pieces of paper, things such as the Siamese fighting fish to Elkhorn coral, all these things are in the specific part that you will be diving in.” She continued, “Now if the group would follow myself and Anthony to the shed at the end of the pier, we will get you geared up and teach you how to use the equipment.”

We all went through the equipment and suited up in our diving gear, my heart was screaming with excitement, I had never been Scuba diving before. After we got our gear on it was now time to have a look at the animals and coral. I looked down at the list as where being told what to do, there were 6 descriptions of what the animal or plant was. The list included the following animals and corals:

1. Elkhorn Coral: I am best known for my antler shaped colonies. I lay just under the surface amongst the other shallow water corals.
2. Siamese Fighting Fish: My fish fins span out around the back of me in beautiful colours. I am found amongst the coral in the shallow parts of the reef.
3. Anemone: I am many different colours and I look a bit like coral and jellyfish. When coming to find me I am one of the more difficult ones as I lay at various depths of the reef and ocean so be careful!
4. Sea Turtle: From small to big I am an endangered animal so there is not that many of me. I am found floating and swimming above the reefs and coral beds.
5. Blue Coral: My tentacles make it easier for me to gather food and prey. I am found in the really shallow waters uncovered by the waves.
6. Staghorn Coral: I am found between 15 and 60 feet below the surface of the water. My body looks like horns and antlers.

Finally, it was time to get into the water, “Brrrrrrrrr” the water was freezing. We came to the surface and gathered into our groups waiting for the siren to start our adventure. The siren blew, and we were off and looking through the water to find all 6 of the animals and corals. I saw Sean point over to what looked like the Blue Coral and it was. Ollie took a photo of it with our camera and we went off to find the next one. 20 minutes later and we were on to the last one. I saw the Sea Turtle in the corner of my eye. I pointed to it but none of my friends were looking so I swam off to find it myself. 5 minutes of swimming and I realised I was running out of air. I swam up to the surface and saw that the turtle was heading towards the beach. I followed it to see what it was going to do, and I saw the most amazing sight ever the turtle was laying her eggs on the beach. This was way much better then being in a competition. After about 5 minutes I walked back over to the pier and told my friends what I saw. They agreed even though we did not win what I saw was way better. Michelle and Anthony called us all back into a group and started to talk to us. “So, did anyone end up finding the sea turtle.” we all went silent “ahh if I hadn’t of wondered off then I wouldn’t have let the team down.” I thought to myself. That’s when Sean said “Jackie saw it she followed it on to the beach and saw it lay its eggs.”

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Appendix:

1. Elkhorn Coral: The Elkhorn Corals are best known for its antler shaped colonies. It lays just under the surface amongst the other shallow water corals. The colours of Elkhorn Corals are a golden tan to pale brown with white tips, these colours come from the algae that grows within the coral.
2. Siamese Fighting Fish: The fins of a Siamese Fighting Fish span out around the back of its body in beautiful colours such as red, orange, yellow, blue, steel blue, turquoise/green, black, pastel, white and multi-coloured ones as well. It is found amongst the coral in the shallow parts of the reef.
3. Sea Anemone: Sea Anemone comes in many different colours such as purple, pink, orange and green. They sometimes look a bit like coral and jellyfish. The sea anemone can be found at various depths of the reef and ocean.
4. Sea Turtle: The size of Sea Turtles range from small to big they are currently classified as an endangered animal. They are found floating and swimming above the reefs and coral beds. When laying eggs they nest up on the beach where the baby turtles will hatch and then make there way to the sea.
5. Blue Coral: There tentacles make it easier for them to gather food and prey. They are found in the really shallow waters uncovered by the waves. They are only found in blue shades of colours.
6. Staghorn Coral: They are found between 15 and 60 feet below the surface of the water. There body looks like horns and antlers from a deer. There colours are pale brown and golden tan with white tips, they get this colour from the algae growing on them.

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