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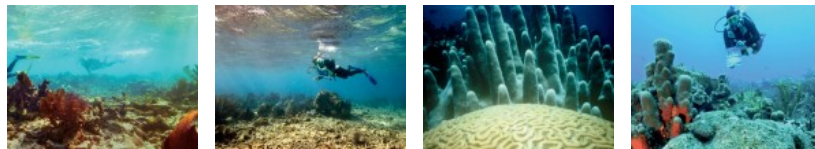
Reefs at Risk

The world's most fragile marine ecosystems are in decline.

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Elkhorn coral, Carysfort Reef South, Florida, 2010
Photograph by David Arnold



by Jonathan Shaw
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Contemporary photographs by David Arnold

SHALLOW-WATER coral reefs are best known for their beauty, and as home to rafts of colorful fish. That these complex ecosystems support a quarter of *all* marine species is less commonly appreciated. If the nutrient-poor open oceans of the world have been compared to lifeless deserts, reefs—which grow beneath just one-tenth of 1 percent of the ocean’s surface—are more often compared to rainforests. That’s not

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