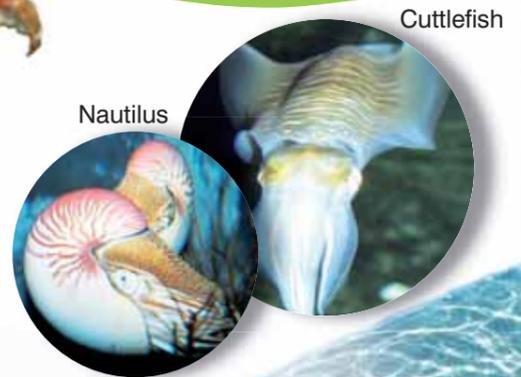


# REEF Beat 6

## Crustaceans and Molluscs

### Creature Features

- Crustaceans have a hard external skeleton which is moulted regularly to allow for growth
- Crustaceans have a segmented body divided in separate parts: for example, prawns, crayfish, crabs, and lobsters
- Molluscs often have a hard shell to protect them: for example nautilus, clams, oysters, and snails
- Most molluscs have a specialised feeding apparatus, for example a radula (scraping tongue)
- Molluscs have a muscular foot used for crawling, burrowing or swimming: for example snails, nudibranchs, octopus, squid, and cuttlefish.



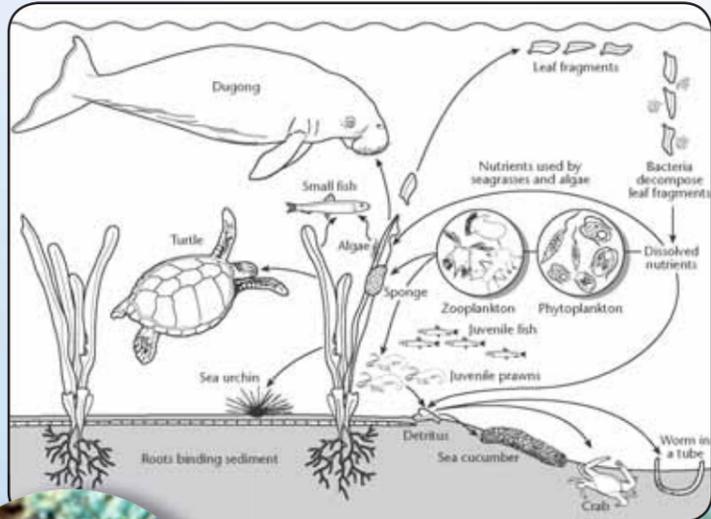
### The blue highway

Did you know 26 major river catchments comprising 25 per cent of the land area of Queensland drain directly into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park? The quality of water entering the Marine Park can affect the health of habitats and ecosystems that are home to many crustaceans and molluscs, for example seagrass beds. If we don't make sure the water reaching the Reef is of a high quality the next time you go out to dinner and order a 'fisherman's basket' it may not contain the beautiful prawns and scallops you are used to.

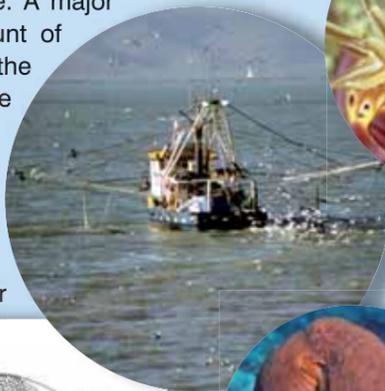
### Filling your fisherman's basket

Crustaceans play a varied role on the Reef, from scavenging on the bottom to cleaning parasites off fish. Molluscs play many roles on the reef from coral burrowers and destroyers, to plant grazers and active hunters. Most importantly both groups of animals ensure there is an ecological balance within the Reef ecosystem.

These crusty critters are some of the most loved invertebrates, particularly when they are on our dinner plate. The East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery is a commercial fishery that operates in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Trawling for tiger, endeavour and eastern king prawns is the largest part of this fishery, scallops and bugs are also caught. To move this industry towards ecological sustainability the number of otter trawl vessels has been reduced significantly from its peak in the early 1980s, when some 1400 operators were licensed to fish. Today about 400 vessels operate in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, landing around 6000 tonnes of product annually. The estimated value of this is about \$80 million. All trawl vessels operating in the fishery are monitored via a satellite-based Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), which allows managing agencies to locate a boat's position at any time. A major issue with trawling is the large amount of unwanted by-catch and impact on the seabed. All trawlers must carry Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and By-catch Reduction Devices (BRDs) in the trawl nets to minimise the bycatch and impact of trawling on the sea floor.

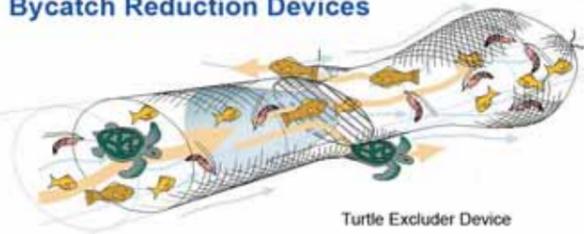


Seagrass Foodweb



Trawler

### Bycatch Reduction Devices



Turtle Excluder Device



Octopus



Nudibranch



### Keeping the Blue Highway Clean

- Keep gutters, sinks and drains free of chemicals and rubbish, as what washes down sinks and drains could end up on the Reef
- Wash your car on the lawn, not on the driveway or road, to minimise detergent runoff into drains
- Minimise water runoff by planting trees, garden beds and ground cover around your home
- Use environmentally-friendly cleaners and fertilisers.