

Brain Coral

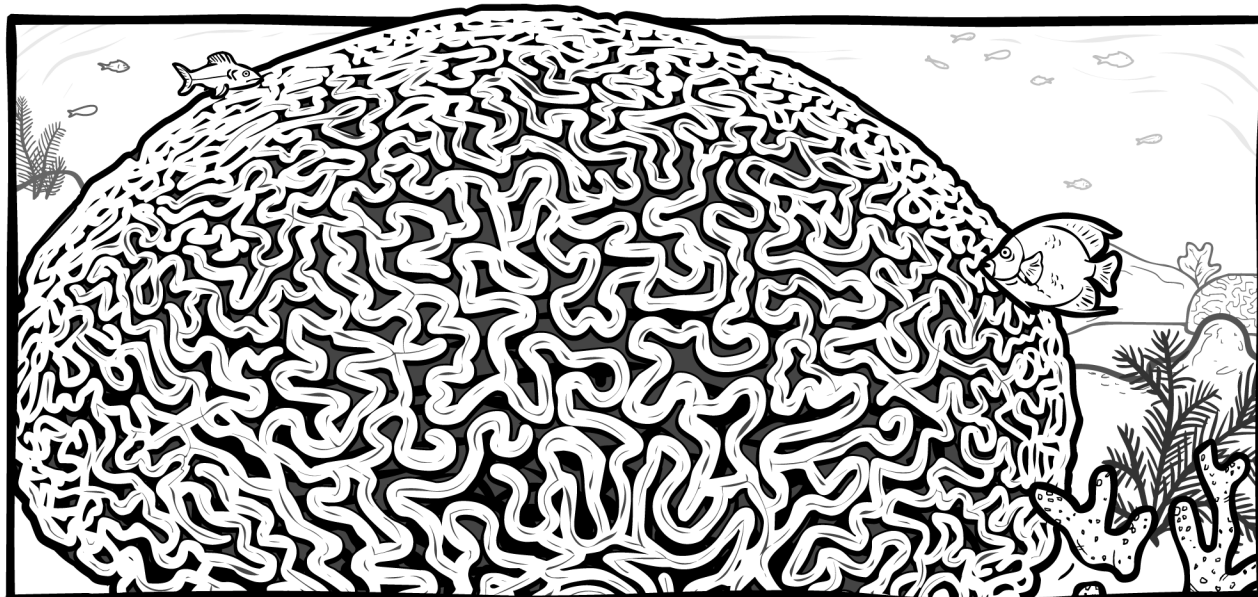
# Brain Coral *(Colpophyllia natans)*

## Instant ID

- Massive, dome-like invertebrate (animal without a backbone)
- Has ridges and valleys that look like the folds in a brain
- A thin groove runs along the top
- There are three other species called brain coral found in Florida
- Can be brown, tan, gray while living, turns white when dead

## Native Niches

- Colonies grow in shallow water
- Found in reefs of the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico
- Fossils date back to over four million years ago



Brain Coral

# Brain Coral *(Colpophyllia natans)*

## Favorite Foods

- Get nourishment from symbiotic (living together and benefiting each other) algae living in their tissues
- Catch tiny floating animals called zooplankton

## Critter Characteristics

- Skeleton adds rocky structure to the reef
- Sticky tentacles come out at night to catch food
- Can live more than 200 years

## Population Protection

- Seven diseases can impact populations
- Learn more at <https://floridascoralreef.org>