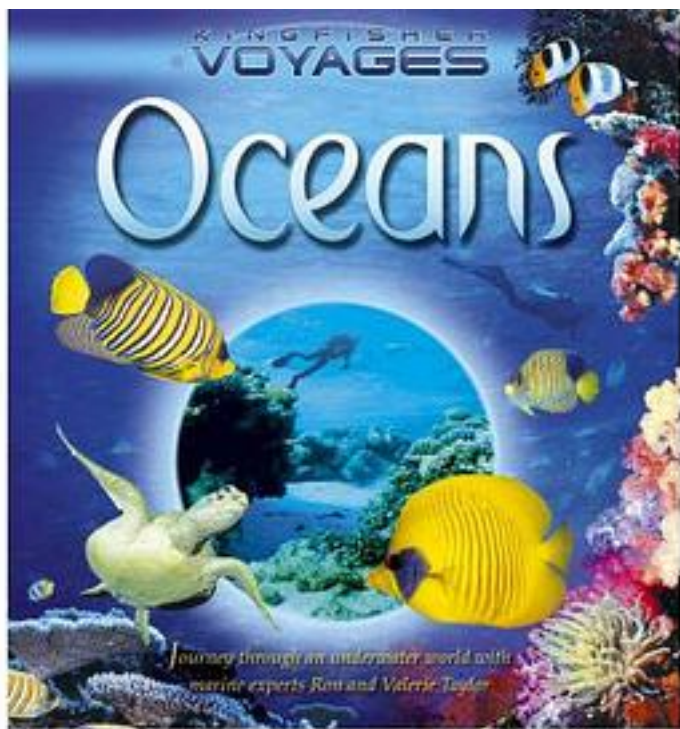


Oceans



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Four billion years old, the oceans formed as the Earth's scorching surface cooled, the primordial atmosphere condensed, and torrential rains fell. Their color is the unique signature of our blue planet, their composition a chemical cocktail of remarkable variety, their waters a theater of constant change. "Oceans: An Illustrated Reference" tells the story of this last great frontier. With hundreds of beautiful full-color photographs and explanatory diagrams, charts, and maps, "Oceans" combines the visual splendor of ocean life with up-to-date scientific information to provide an

invaluable and fascinating resource on this vital realm. Covering all major areas of oceanographic knowledge and research, "Oceans" is divided into two parts. The first, "Ocean Systems," examines the physical nature of the oceans, including plate tectonics, temperature and climate, waves and tides, natural resources and much more. The second, "Ocean Life," explores biodiversity, evolution and adaptation, marine ecosystems and complex communities, and the preservation of fragile marine environments. "Oceans" also offers readers a host of tools to better understand the magnificent world of the sea. A special section of bathymetric maps-made possible by satellite observation, deep-towed surveying craft, and remotely operated submarine vessels-provides a view of the depth and texture of ocean floors around the globe, giving us a glimpse of worlds rarely seen. And throughout the book, engagingly written special features delve into specific marine environments and phenomena such as the lost Tethys Ocean, from which the Himalayas were born. Cross-references and a detailed index help readers navigate this multifaceted volume, and a glossary provides clear definitions of scientific vocabulary. Although the oceans are vast, their resources are finite. "Oceans" clearly presents the future challenge to us all-that of ensuring that our common ocean heritage is duly respected, wisely managed, and carefully harnessed for the benefit of the whole planet. Lavishly illustrated and filled with current research, "Oceans" is a step in that direction: a rich, magnificent, and illuminating volume for anyone who has ever heard the siren song of the sea.

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