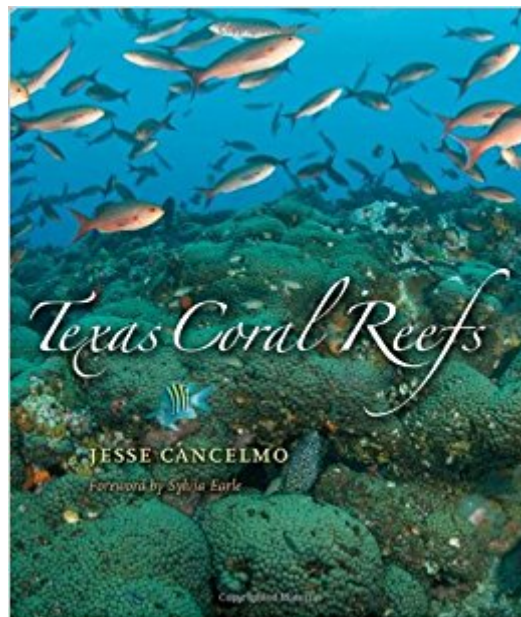


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# Texas Coral Reefs (Gulf Coast Books, Sponsored By Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi)



## Synopsis

Just one hundred and ten miles south of the Texas-Louisiana border, beneath the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, lie two coral reefs, together called the Flower Garden Banks. This coral community, the northernmost reef system in the United States and a national marine sanctuary, is home to hundreds of kinds of fish and other tropical sea life. Manta rays and turtles visit regularly, as do whale sharks and schools of hammerhead sharks. Other wonders include the annual mass coral spawns and a briny depression called Gollum Lake. Nearby are two other reefs. Stetson Bank, its top spotted with hard corals, mollusks, and sponges, is known for its diversity—from black sea hares to golden smooth trunkfish. At Geyer Bank, thousands of butterfly fish dominate a huge population of tropical fish whose density rivals that of the coral reefs in the South Pacific. Protruding from the flat, muddy continental shelf, these and thirty other natural reefs support an exceptional amount and variety of sea life in Texas waters. They sit amid hundreds of oil and gas platforms, which create their own special reef ecosystems. These reefs, equal in their profusion of life and color to the storied reefs of Florida and Hawaii, have not been widely known to Texans outside of a small group of scientists and divers. With extraordinary photographs and a knowledgeable first-person narrative, author Jesse Cancelmo instills an appreciation for the beauty and fragility of one of the state's least-known natural environments. *Texas Coral Reefs* will inspire adventurers—both the underwater and armchair varieties—to enjoy these spectacular but little-known sites that lie so close to home.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Jesse has captured some of the most spectacular species and events that are to be seen at these locations. . . It’s a great compilation of world with nice descriptions of much of the habitat and larger residents.”—Gregory S. Boland (Gregory S. Boland)

JESSE CANCELMO is an accomplished underwater photographer and photojournalist. His articles and photos have appeared in diving and wildlife publications, and he is the author of two diving guides. Cancelmo, who lives in Houston, leads diving tour groups in the Caribbean and Pacific and is a contributing writer and photographer for Dive Training Magazine.

This book would do beautiful duty as a coffee table book for those who just want great photographs of marine life. However, it doesn’t stop there. It also covers the wide variety of life forms found in the reefs of the Gulf Coast, mostly off the Texas coast, but it also covers the Stetson and Sonnier Banks off the coast of Louisiana. The history of the formation and discovery of these unusual reefs, and how they became some of the first National Marine Sanctuaries also merits a few pages. The writing is clear enough to satisfy marine hobbyists or aquarists, but technical enough to satisfy marine scientists.

The reefs off of the Texas coast are a treasure and Jesse gives us fantastic look at them in both pictures and words. I have dived the banks many times and this book makes me appreciate them all the more.

Really love the beautiful pictures. Book is well made too.

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