



## Coral Spawning • Study Guide

How does an animal like coral that lives attached to the bottom (and can't move around) create new colonies far away? Jonathan spends a week in Bonaire studying coral spawning. He learns how these animals release eggs into the water at the right time of the year to create new coral colonies. But they only do it at night, at certain times of the year. Jonathan's film expedition requires careful timing.

### Objectives

1. Introduces viewers to the biology of coral reproduction.
2. Explains how tides and the phases of the moon relate to the behavior of coral reefs.

### Questions for before watching the program

1. What is a reef? What is coral?
2. Is a coral reef alive, or dead? Plant or animal?
3. Can a coral reef move? If not, how could it create new coral reefs far away?
4. Coral polyps are Cnidarians. What are some characteristics of Cnidarians? What are some other Cnidarians and how are they similar to coral or different?
5. How does the moon affect the tides? What is a spring tide and a neap tide?

### Discussion for after watching the program

1. How do coral colonies reproduce?
2. Why are the tides important in coral reproduction?
3. Why do you think coral prefers to spawn at night?
4. Most corals are *hermaphroditic*. What does that mean? What about *gonochoric*?
5. Why do corals try to all spawn at the same time? (two important reasons)
6. The fertilized eggs drift in the water column for while until they are ready to settle down. What do they then need in order to successfully grow into a reef?
7. Internet research: If the corals of the Caribbean tend to spawn a week after the full moon in September, when will they likely spawn next September?