

CORAL REEF RECOVERY FOLLOWING *ACANTHASTER* INFESTATIONS

by

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ABSTRACT

Since late 1971, data have been obtained on coral recolonization on reefs of the Great Barrier Reef which had been damaged by *Acanthaster* infestations during the 1960's. There is now considerable evidence of recovery with the most conspicuous recolonizers being species of tabular *Acropora*, particularly on the seaward reef slope in the depths of less than 10 meters. Many such corals now measure 50 cm to 100 cm in diameter. However, recent observations indicate that these corals can be dislodged by strong wave action thus providing an opportunity for both further coral settlement and for the survival and growth of previously "overtopped" colonies.

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