

# Protecting Herbivorous Fish on Christmas Island



Apply your new knowledge about the bumphead parrotfish to answer the following questions:

1) **Where do bumphead parrotfish usually sleep at night**

- a. In the open ocean
- b. On top of coral
- c. In small caves and crevices
- d. In schools near the surface

2) **What physical adaptation do bumphead parrotfish have that helps them bite coral?**

3) **Why might bumphead parrot fish be described as ‘reef builders’?**

3) **Fishing for parrotfish can reduce reef health.**

☐ True ☐ False

4) **What is one threat that herbivorous fish face on Christmas Island?**

5) **What could happen if too many herbivorous fish were removed from the reef?**

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Suggested answers:

- 1) C
- 2) They have a beak-like jaw made of fused teeth that lets them bite and scrape coral.
- 3) Because when they bite coral, they break it down into sand, which helps build up the reef and beaches over time.
- 4) True
- 5) If too many herbivorous fish like bumphead parrotfish are removed, algae can grow too fast and take over the reef. This blocks sunlight and stops coral from growing properly. Without these fish keeping the algae in balance, coral reefs can become unhealthy, lose biodiversity, and may even collapse over time. The whole reef ecosystem, including other fish and marine life, would be affected.