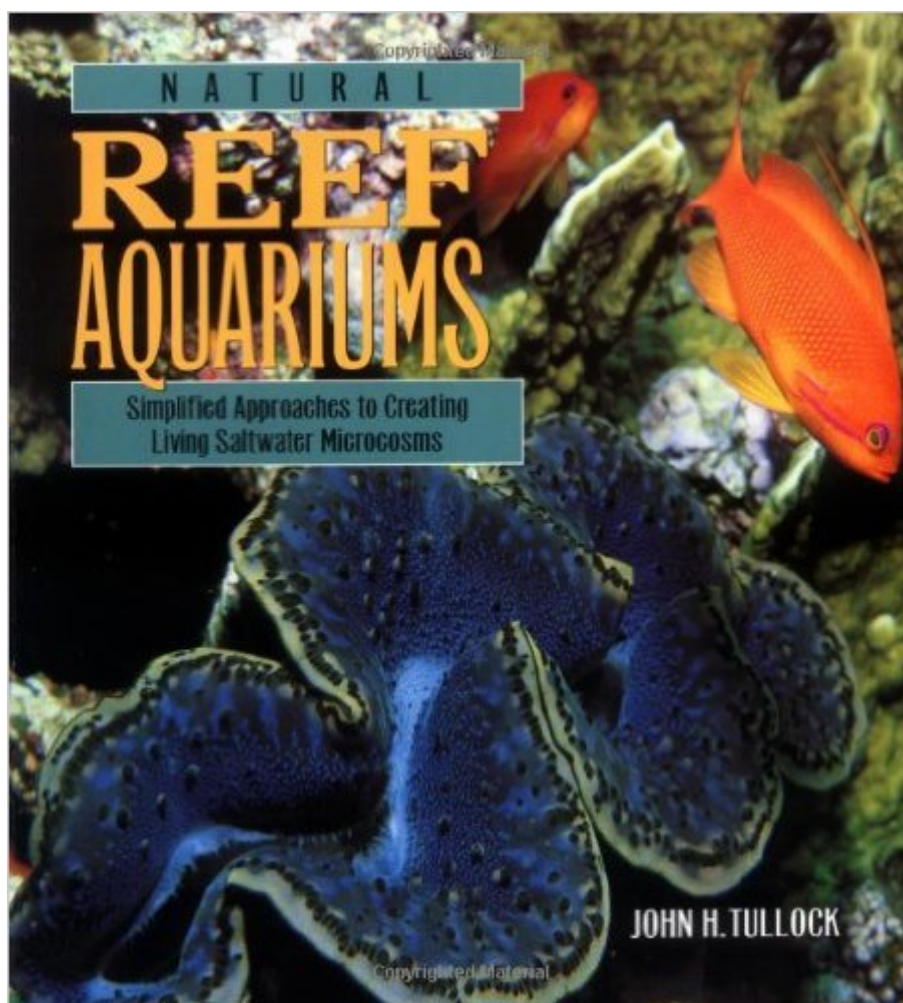


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# Natural Reef Aquariums: Simplified Approaches To Creating Living Saltwater Microcosms



## Synopsis

Debunking the myth that reef aquariums need to be wildly expensive and technologically complex, John Tullock offers a new, radically simple approach to producing beautiful, captive microcosms. Using live rock and live sand as part of a natural filtration system, the home aquarist can now create vibrant reef tanks that are biologically stable and simple to maintain. With Tullock's suggestions, the reefkeeper can now mimic natural habitats such as a Florida Keys Lagoon, a Caribbean Turtle Grass Flat, an Indo-Pacific Deep Cave, or a Red Sea Patch Reef. With more than 200 color photographs and illustrations, *Natural Reef Aquariums* provides inspiration for both beginning and expert marine reef hobbyists.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

John Tullock has created a significant work. This excellent book should become a benchmark in the hobby. I am a beginner in the marine realm but experienced in freshwater. Mr. Tullock has managed to allay my fears of adding saltwater fish and reef-keeping to my hobby interests. In researching the marine aquarium, I have heard conflicting opinions over and over regarding how the environment should be built and maintained. This has been frustrating, furthered my confusion, and left me with little confidence and understanding concerning successful methods or that I could even hope to succeed. "Natural Reef Aquariums" is a work which satisfactorily answers my questions and compels me to continue my course without trepidation. This up-to-date book contains "fact" concerning the mechanical and biological factors in maintaining a successful reef system and provides a much needed ecological perspective as well. Without being an extensive encyclopedia of invertebrate and fish species, it gives a clear view of which creatures will thrive in the various

environments suited for the reef-keepers system and which species should support each other while successfully sharing the environment. Tullock's book is full of in depth descriptions concerning filter mediums - including very detailed "live rock" and "live sand" information - lighting options, water quality, nutrients, disease, temperature, equipment options, feeding, etc., and is chocked full of gorgeous photographs and includes maps diagramming the world's major reef systems. The reader may be particularly interested in the descriptions of various reef biotypes that may be created to provide the most natural reef system imaginable. Don't miss this book. It's solid.

This is a wonderfully comprehensive book on the challenging project of keeping a salt-water reef aquarium. Although still technology dependent, it emphasizes natural materials and methods to simulate this complex environment. Plumbing, temperature control, lighting & filtration systems are covered in detail with step-by-step instructions on setting up the aquarium and establishing a living reef colony utilizing live rock & sand. My favorite feature of the book is the detailed analysis of the reef biology of different regions with recommendations for simulating them in the aquarium. These include Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico and Pacific reefs. There are great color photos throughout the book of the fascinating & beautiful corals, invertebrates and fishes that can inhabit the reef aquarium. A superb list of sources completes this essential reference.

John Tullock has written several books in plain English before. This one is elegant, clear, and concise with beautiful photography. He explains the basics for beginners and intermediate reef aquarists. He spells out exactly what equipment is needed, and what fish and invertebrates will and will not work. I have read the other books recommended here. They are all enjoyable. But Tullock writes the books that every marine aquarium store should sell with each live coral display tank. After reading it, I bought a copy for my local Aquarium Society. No one will ever complain about this book. It is that good. I strongly recommend it. It is not too complex or obtuse. Only Julian Sprung writes books that are more technical and advanced (good for the ardent stony coral keeper). A delightful and informative book that will put any hobbyist on solid ground. He will tell you what works and what doesn't.

Many aquarium books seem to be targeted at 12 year old kids who need a picture to text ratio of at least 2 to 1 and no real explanations of what's going on. At the other end of the spectrum are a few written like graduate textbooks that are just too much effort to read for those of us who view aquariums as a relaxing hobby to enjoy. This book, in contrast, hits the perfect happy medium: the

writing is only as technical as it needs to be to present salient information. It is a book with a very high information content, but the clarity of the writing makes it a fun read as well as a good example of what other aquarium books should be, but usually are not. I recommend it highly to any adult reader who is interested in marine aquaria.

The book is incredibly comprehensive on not only the technical aspects of mini-reef keeping, but also delves into the ecology of the coral reefs. While strictly speaking these ecological discussions are "off-topic", I found them to be extremely entertaining and they also helped me to understand more about the animals I am keeping. The grouping of various livestock into ecological zones is also unusual. I would have much preferred grouping animals of a similar class (i.e, butterflyfish, angels) into one section rather than spreading them over each ecological zone. As might be expected from the title of the book, the author is a strong proponent of the live rock system of reef keeping. The reader is asked to accept that minimal intervention from the aquarist is the best method. Therefore, some of the more technical aspects of reefkeeping are not discussed in detail and the pros and cons of various technical gadgets such as UV sterilizers and ononers. By the absence of these discussions, I would then assume that the author is against the use of these devices, but I would have liked to hear his views on why they are not needed. The discussions on various necessary equipment such as skimmers, lighting, chemical additives, etc, while present, could have been more comprehensive. But all in all, this is a very excellent starter book on reef keeping. You definitely can't go wrong buying it.

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