

MIXED SPECIES GROUPS OF REEF FISH IN THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS

Mixed-species groups are temporary alliances formed by various reef fish species. Such groups come together and dissolve with remarkable fluidity, creating a captivating spectacle beneath the waves.



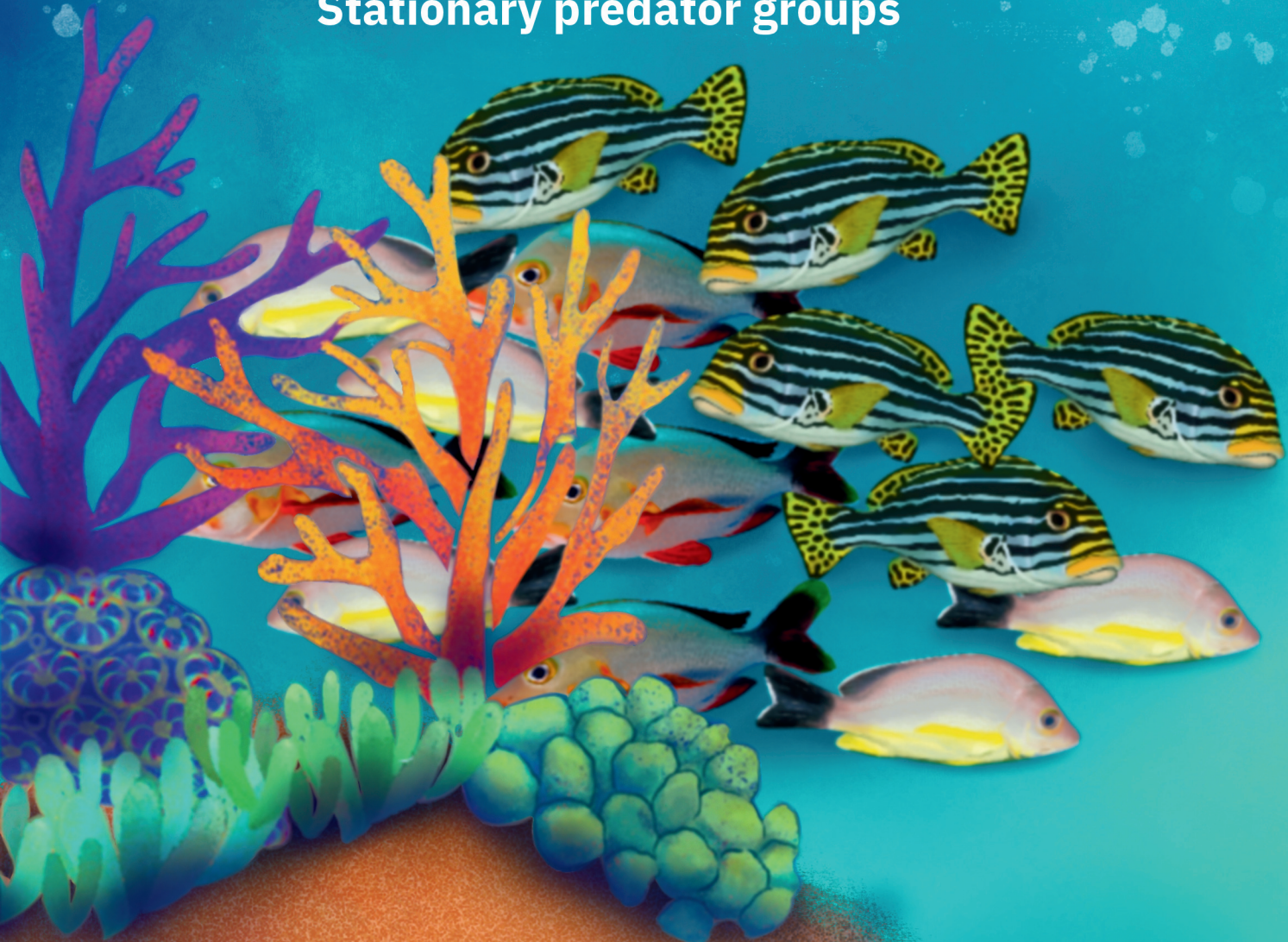
Joint hunting association

Shoaling group of surgeonfish

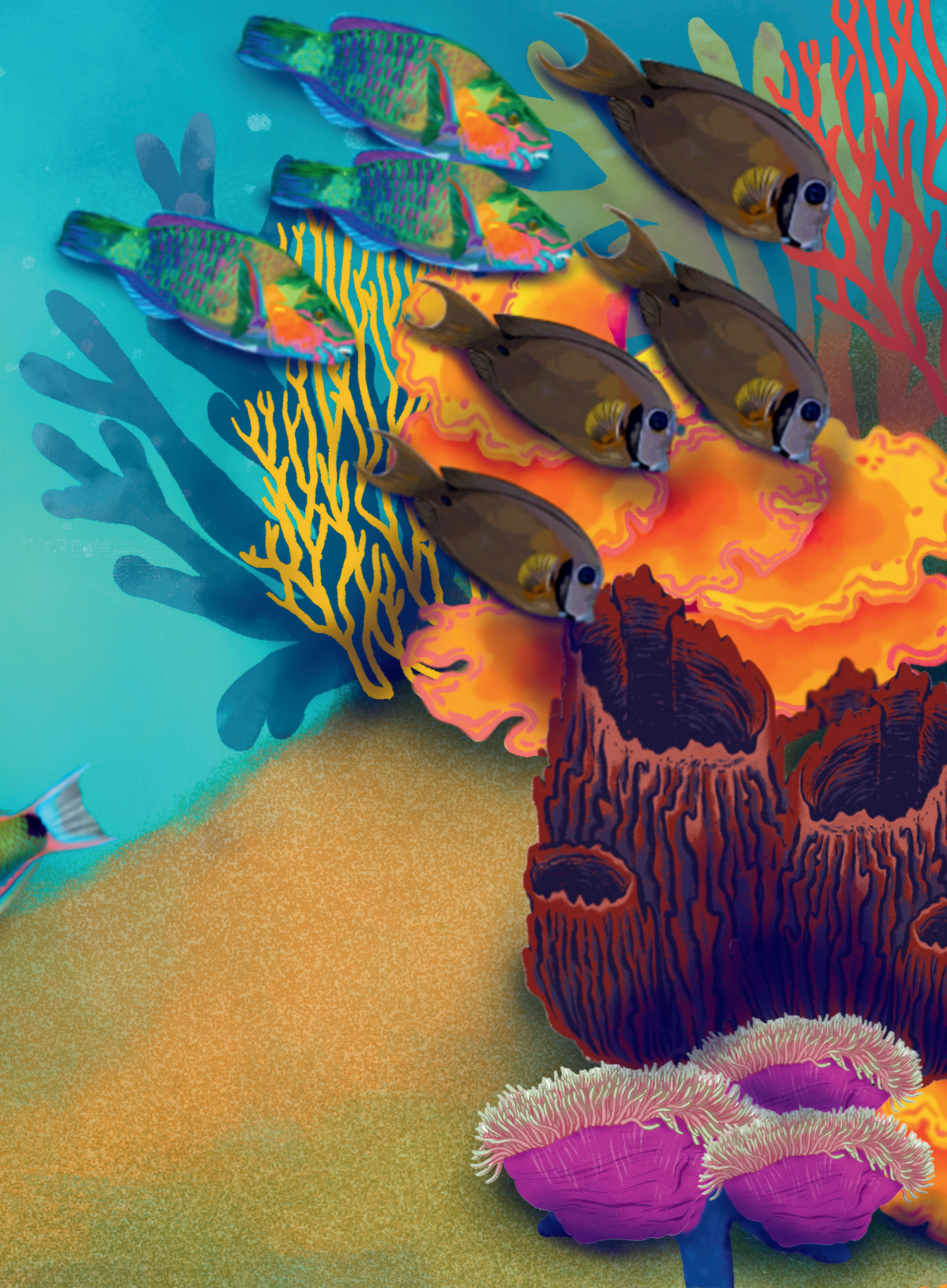


Seen throughout the water column and near the reef, these groups are a reflection of the intricate, ever-changing dynamics of cooperation and survival. Some associations, like the shoaling groups, may form for protection against predators or to overcome territorial damselfish, while participants of attendant groups gain foraging benefits by following fish that feed on the substrate and stir up invertebrates from the sand. These alliances not only provide essential benefits to the participating species but also contribute to vital reef processes such as herbivory, nutrient cycling, and biodiversity.

Stationary predator groups



Shoaling groups of parrotfish and surgeonfish



Attendant group



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