



**NOAA**  
**FISHERIES**

Pacific Islands Region

**corals**

# *Acropora pharaonis*

## :: Biological Information

### MORPHOLOGY

Colonies of *Acropora pharaonis* are large horizontal tables or irregular clusters of horizontal or upright interlinked contorted branches. Branches are pointed and have short branchlets that link main branches. Colonies are grey-brown in color, usually with pale branch tips.



Photos copyright: J.E.N. Veron

### REPRODUCTION

*Acropora pharaonis* is a hermaphroditic (having both male and female gametes) spawner with lecithotrophic (yolk-sac) larvae.

## :: Spatial Information

### GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

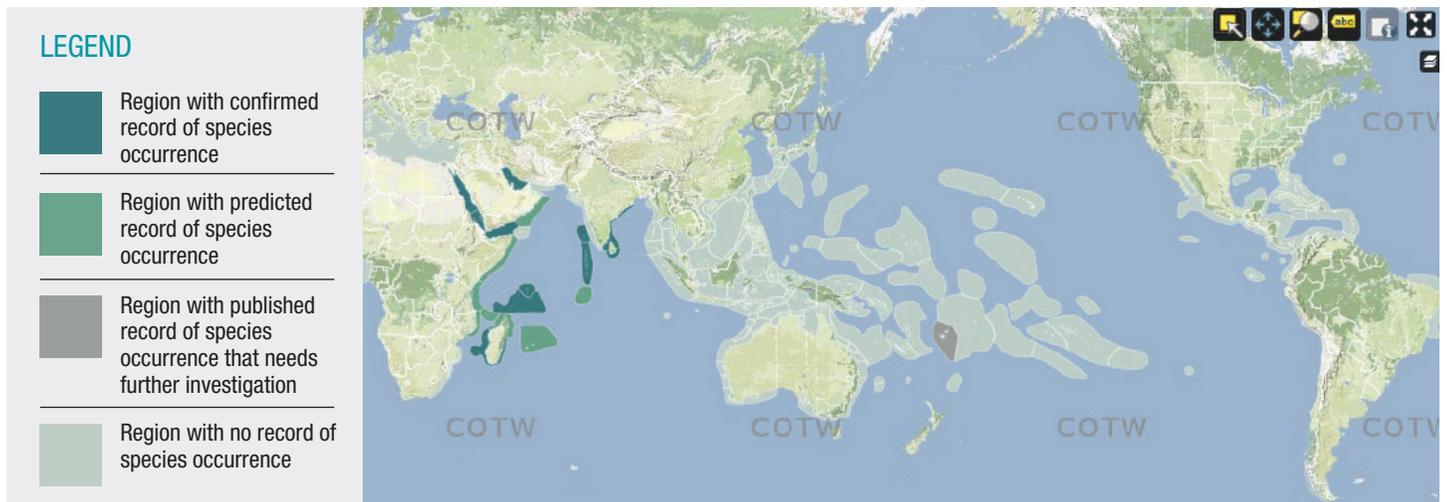
Based on confirmed observations and strong predictions of occurrence in areas that have not yet been surveyed sufficiently, *Acropora pharaonis* is likely distributed along the east coast of Africa, islands in the western and central Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and as far east as the east coast of India.

#### For more information contact:

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Veron JEN, Stafford-Smith MG, Turak E and DeVantier LM (in prep.) Corals of the World [www.coralsoftheworld.com](http://www.coralsoftheworld.com)

## OCCURRENCE IN U.S. JURISDICTIONS

*Acropora pharaonis* has not yet been reported from any U.S. jurisdictions in the Indo-Pacific.

## HABITAT TYPES AND DEPTH

*Acropora pharaonis* is found in reef slope and back-reef habitats, including at least upper reef slopes, mid-slope terraces, and lagoons, in a depth range of 5 to 25 meters.

## :: Demographic Information

### RELATIVE LOCALIZED ABUNDANCE

Relative localized abundance refers to how commonly a species is observed on surveys in a localized area. Veron (2014) reports that *Acropora pharaonis* occupied 3.6 percent of 2,984 dive sites sampled in 30 ecoregions of the Indo-Pacific. It was given an abundance rating on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) at each site where it occurred, based on how common it was at that site. *Acropora pharaonis* had a mean abundance rating of 1.80. Based on this semi-quantitative system, the species' abundance was characterized as "uncommon."

### ABSOLUTE OVERALL ABUNDANCE

Absolute overall abundance refers to a rough qualitative minimum estimate of the total number of colonies of a species that currently exist throughout its range. These estimates were calculated based on results from Richards *et al.* (2008) and Veron (2014). The absolute abundance of *Acropora pharaonis* is likely at least millions of colonies.

## :: Why is this Species Threatened?

*Acropora pharaonis* is susceptible to the three major threats identified for corals including ocean warming, disease, and ocean acidification, as well as many of the other threats to corals. Its current known geographic range consists of the Red Sea, Arabian Gulf, and western and central Indian Ocean where projections of ocean warming and local threats are both frequent and severe over the foreseeable future compared to other areas of the Indo-Pacific. A range constrained to a geographic area that is likely to experience severe and increasing threats indicates that a high proportion of the population of this species is likely to be exposed to those threats over the foreseeable future. This, in combination with its other biological, demographic, and spatial characteristics, contributes to a risk of extinction within the foreseeable future for *Acropora pharaonis*.

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### Literature Cited

- Richards, Z. T., M. J. H. van Oppen, C. C. Wallace, B. L. Willis, and D. J. Miller. 2008. Some Rare Indo-Pacific Coral Species Are Probable Hybrids. PLoS ONE 3(9):e3240.
- Veron, J. E. N. 2014. Results of an update of the Corals of the World Information Base for the Listing Determination of 66 Coral Species under the Endangered Species Act. Report to the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, Honolulu.

