



Fun Fact Sheet - Magnificent Mangroves

1. Mangroves can be found in over 100 countries around the world in tropical and sub-tropical locations, with India having the most mangroves covering more than 32,000 square kilometres (Hamilton and Casey 2016).
2. A group of Mangrove trees are called a “mangle” (Hovenden and Allaway 1994).
3. In 2000, it was calculated that mangroves cover 137,800 square kilometers worldwide (Giri et al. 2010).
4. Mangrove prop roots are an important nursery habitat for many different ornamental reef fishes and commercially important fishes such as groupers, snappers, and jacks (Nagelkerken et al. 2000).
5. Mangrove forests help to protect coastlines from erosion, storm surge, and even tsunamis (Danielsen et al. 2005).
6. Mangroves are specialized halophytes, meaning they can live and thrive in or near saltwater (Popp 1995).
7. Some types of mangroves secrete salt from salt glands at the base of their leaves while others secrete salt through the bottom of some “sacrificial” leaves called salt slaves (Atkinson et al. 1967).
8. Many mangrove species live in anoxic (no oxygen) soil conditions, so they have evolved to obtain oxygen in unique ways. Some mangrove species adapted roots to prop themselves above the water and others have special roots that stick up out of the soil like snorkels called pneumatophores (Hovenden and Allaway 1994).
9. Bacteria living on the roots of mangroves help them to absorb nutrients that are important to the growth and survival of the mangrove such as nitrogen and iron (Sasekumar et al. 1994).
10. Mangroves have special seeds called propagules that start growing as soon as they are produced. Once large enough, these propagules drop into the water below the mangle and travel great distances for up to a year. Even after all that time, the propagules are still able to grow a new tree as soon as they find the right environment (Rabinowitz 1978).
11. In the past two decades, at least 35% of mangroves worldwide have been destroyed to make way for agriculture, human development, industry, and aquaculture (Valiela, Bowen, and York 2001).