

Sun Coral (azooxanthellate)

Class Anthozoa, Subclass Hexacorallia, Order Scleractinia, Family Dendrophylliidae, Genus *Tubastraea*



photo by Stephen Hubbard

Common names: yellow or orange sun coral, orange or yellow sun polyp, black sun coral

Natural origin: Indo-Pacific

Sensitivity (Level 4): Azooxanthellate sun coral have demanding feeding requirements that can make them difficult to care for. They are prone to tissue recession which may be a sign of starvation.

Feeding: These corals need frequent and careful target feeding. Some aquarists use an inverted bowl (or other container) placed over the coral during target feeding to help the coral capture enough food. Cyclopeeze (micro crustaceans) and baby brine shrimp are some good food choices. Variety is also helpful.

Lighting (Level 0 to 3): The azooxanthellate sun corals don't need light. Low intensity and/or indirect light is best. Too much light may encourage nuisance algae to grow over the surface of coral.

Water flow: Moderate to strong water flow is important.

Placement: These are not aggressive corals. They are usually placed at the bottom of an aquarium and away from aggressive, stinging corals.

General: These corals have unfortunately high mortality rates in captivity. That said, frequent and successful feeding can greatly improve chances of survival.