

Saudi Red Sea - Shark Reef (Thuwal)

Thuwal · 2 visits, 2024-08-31 – 2024-09-14



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Coral Health Index: TBD

What was done. The figure is the author's own manual point count, annotated by hand over 421 photographs. 2 further methods were run on the same frames and are reported on the site page. The written account of the site is a review of its photographs, not a second survey.

HARD CORAL COVER
16%
manual point count (421 photos) · other methods on the site page

TODAY'S HEAT LOAD
33.4°C **3.6°C-weeks**
16 Sep 2026 · +2.9°C vs the annual mean (30.5 °C)
· [NOAA Bleaching Warning](#)

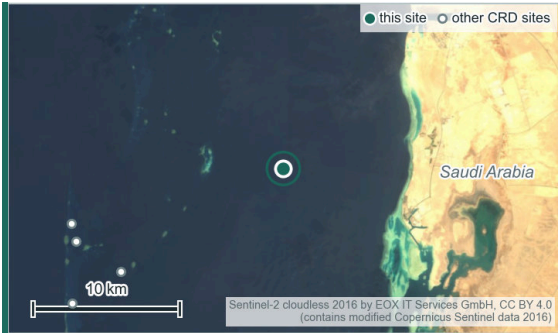
HEAT STRESS (5-YR MEAN ANNUAL MAX. DHW)
14.3°C-weeks 🔥
[NOAA](#) annual peaks averaging 12–16 °C-weeks

MAX. DEPTH
32.4 m
dive-log maximum

WATER TEMP. (SURVEY)
—
not logged

PHOTOGRAPHS
9
on file for this site

POSITION
22.4317, 38.9969



Shark Reef is the worst-hit site in this entire Red Sea set: two visits at the peak of the 2024 bleaching event found roughly seven in ten corals bleached (72.7% and 70.9% of tissue), with whole slope faces of massive *Porites*, faviids, and *Acropora* glowing uniform white in frame after frame, plus two crown-of-thorns starfish photographed amid the dying reef. Anderson's own captions from the dives - 'severe bleaching,' 'dead corals,' 'dying reef' - match what the images show; cover itself held around 16%, since bleached-but-alive coral still counts as cover.

العربية. شعبة القرش هي الأشد تضرراً في مجموعة البحر الأحمر بأكملها: وجدت زيارتان في ذروة حدث الابيضاض لعام 2024 أن نحو سبعة من كل عشرة مرجانيات مُبيضة (72.7% و 70.9% من الأنسجة)، مع واجهات منحدر كاملة من *Porites* الكتلي ومرجانيات فصيلة *Acropora* و *Faviidae* تتوهج ببياض موحد في صورة تلو الأخرى، إضافة إلى تصوير نجمي بحر من نوع تاج الشوك وسط الشعبة المحتضرة. ترجمة هذا الملخص بالنكاء الاصطناعي: النص الإنجليزي هو المعتمد.

CV model comparison (hard-coral cover, %): Manual (published) 15.9 · In-house DINOv3 47.5 · Claude 23.9

Photographs: Anderson Mayfield/Coral Reef Diagnostics — 1 of 9 on file; watermarked · Full site record: <https://api.coralreefdiagnostics.com/site-pages/saudi-red-sea-shark-reef-thuwal.html> · Heat stress is the mean of the latest five annual maxima of [NOAA Coral Reef Watch](#) degree-heating weeks for this reef's [NOAA CRW](#) virtual station (Makkah-Madine Saudi Arabia) — a five-year heat history for the station's waters, not a measurement at this site on the dive date.