

Plankton: Wonders of the Drifting World

Christian Sardet



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Ask anyone to picture a bird or a fish and a series of clear images will immediately come to mind. Ask the same person to picture plankton and most would have a hard time conjuring anything beyond a vague squiggle or a greyish fleck. This book will change that forever.

Viewing these creatures up close for the first time can be a thrilling experience—an elaborate but hidden world truly opens up before your eyes. Through hundreds of close-up photographs, *Plankton* transports readers into the currents, where jeweled chains hang next to phosphorescent chandeliers, spidery claws jut out from sinuous bodies, and gelatinous barrels protect microscopic hearts. The creatures' vibrant colors pop against the black pages, allowing readers to examine every eye and follow every tentacle. Jellyfish, tadpoles, and bacteria all find a place in the book, representing the broad scope of organisms dependent on drifting currents.

Christian Sardet's enlightening text explains the biological underpinnings of each species while connecting them to the larger living world. He begins with plankton's origins and history, then dives into each group, covering ctenophores and cnidarians, crustaceans and mollusks, and worms and tadpoles. He also demonstrates the indisputable impact of plankton in our lives. Plankton drift through our world mostly unseen, yet they are diverse organisms that form ninety-five percent of ocean life. Biologically, they are the foundation of the aquatic food web and consume as much carbon dioxide as land-based plants. Culturally, they have driven new industries and captured artists' imaginations.

While scientists and entrepreneurs are just starting to tap the potential of this undersea forest, for most people these pages will represent uncharted waters. *Plankton* is a spectacular journey that will leave readers seeing the ocean in ways they never imagined.

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