

Commensalism Encyclopedia Article

Commensalism

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Commensalism

A type of symbiotic relationship. Many organisms depend on intimate physical relationship with organisms of other **species**, a relationship called **symbiosis**. The larger organism is called the host and the smaller organism, the symbiote. The symbiote always derives some benefit from the relationship. In a commensal relationship, the host organism is neither harmed nor benefitted. The relationship that exists between the clown fish living among the tentacles of sea anemones is one example of commensalism. The host sea anemones can exist without their symbiotes, but the fish cannot exist as successfully without the protective cover of the anemone's stinging tentacles.