

## How many known species in the Ocean and in WoRMS?

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Since the time of Linnaeus 250 years ago, 239,000 marine species have been described and classified into 89 Phyla. The World Register of Marine Species (Appeltans *et al.*, 2012) is the most complete register of all marine species names worldwide. It holds accepted names, but also synonyms, common misspellings, and a hierarchical classification. Its online database is edited by over 200 world-leading taxonomists from 27 countries. WoRMS currently has 360,000 names for 213,000 species. The number of marine species described as new to science is growing at a current rate of 2,000 species per year. The Ocean's biodiversity contains the following Kingdoms, (number of phyla) and currently described species:

	Phyla	Number of Species
Plantae	6	7,600
Chromista	11	20,000
Protozoa	7	500
Fungi	5	1,000
Bacteria	26	1,700
Archaea	4	117
Animalia	30	208,000

The most species rich groups of marine animals are:

<b>Annelida</b>		<b>13,700</b>	
	Polychaeta		12,600
<b>Crustacea</b>		<b>51,700</b>	
	Brachyura		7,000
	Amphipoda		7,000
	Isopoda		6,200
	Copepoda		10,000
	Ostracoda		9,000
<b>Bryozoa</b>		<b>5,900</b>	
<b>Pisces</b>		<b>17,000</b>	
<b>Cnidaria</b>		<b>10,200</b>	
	Hexacorallia		3,100
	Octocorallia		3,100
	Hydrozoa		3,400
<b>Echinodermata</b>		<b>7,400</b>	
<b>Mollusca</b>		<b>56,700</b>	
	Bivalvia		9,000
	Gastropoda		45,000
<b>Nematoda</b>		<b>11,400</b>	
<b>Platyhelminthes</b>		<b>11,700</b>	
<b>Porifera</b>		<b>8,500</b>	

A full overview of the number of species described, the number of times species have been described, how many more species are collected, but not yet described and how many remain undiscovered (including those that are only distinguishable by molecular techniques) will be published in a multi-author paper lead by Ward Appeltans and Mark Costello.

### References

Appeltans W., P. Bouchet, G.A. Boxshall, K. Fauchald, D.P. Gordon, B.W. Hoeksema, G.C.B. Poore, R.W.M. van Soest, S. Stöhr, T.C. Walter and M.J. Costello. (Eds). 2012. World Register of Marine Species. Accessed at <http://www.marinespecies.org> on 2012-01-23.