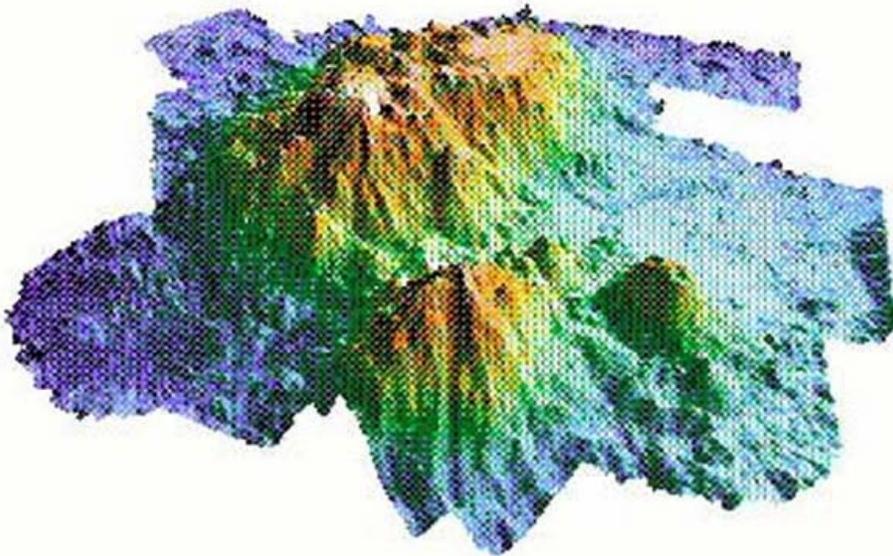


Seamounts

Seamounts, as their name sounds like, are mountains in the sea. The peaks are often found thousands of feet below the surface of the water. They are the remains of underwater volcanoes which are no longer active. These areas are special because they provide habitats for many different plants and animals that don't live anywhere else. New species are being discovered whenever scientists explore a seamount that no one has seen before.

Corals are the most numerous organisms on most seamounts. These corals live in deep water, unlike the corals that we think of in the shallow, tropical coral reefs. In some parts of the world, certain types of deep-water corals are collected to make jewelry, but the methods used to collect them can damage the environment.

Some commercially important fish species live on seamounts, so fishermen go to these areas to fish. Sometimes the fishermen's huge nets can destroy some of the fragile corals that live there. Seamount communities are also home to some organisms that may be sources of new medicines to treat human disease.



This map of a seamount was created by explorers using a tool called multi-beam sonar. The colors represent the different depths where the seamount sticks up off the sea floor.

These rocks are typical of the type of rocks found on a seamount.

