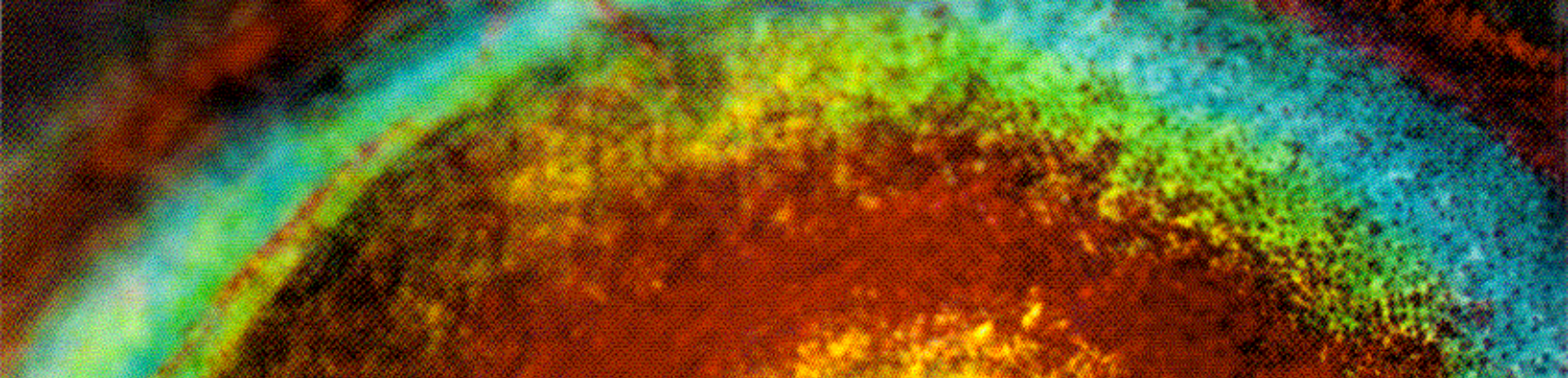




When you first gazed upon the colorful image on the front of this book, did you wonder what it was? A close-up of an apple seed, maybe? An avocado or possibly an exotic bird egg? An overhead view of a thermal pool? The eye-spot design of an ostrich feather or butterfly wing?

It is, in fact, a very close view of the eye of a fish, specifically an axillary wrasse (*Symphodus mediterraneus*). Found throughout the Mediterranean Sea and in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean, the relatively small size and bright colors of this species make it a popular aquarium fish.

We chose a common hobby fish for the cover because it illustrates that nearly everyone has an inborn attraction to the beauty found throughout the natural world—which is why, after all, people build and keep aquariums. This same attraction leads many of us to tend gardens and houseplants, enjoy national parks, visit zoos, keep pets, and watch TV shows about sharks. We all have an innate curiosity about life on Earth. This desire to learn forms the heart of biology, and it is the inspiration behind this textbook.

The image on the cover was selected because *Biology: The Core* is all about seeing—seeing the big picture, seeing the point, seeing the connections between biology and your life. This book will help you clearly visualize the most important aspects of biological concepts—the core of each subject—and to bring into focus the connections to real-life issues that affect you and those you care about. The text is visual and accessible, inviting you in to explore and understand the natural world. The hope is that this book excites your interest in biology and allows you to see the world with new eyes.

MasteringBiology™

MasteringBiology pairs with *Biology: The Core* to help students master key concepts, and see how biology applies to real life. Activities feature videos, animations, real data, and current events that coach students to success with personalized wrong answer feedback. For instructors, MasteringBiology allows you to maximize class time with easy-to-assign and automatically graded assessments that motivate students to arrive prepared for lecture. Learn more at www.masteringbiology.com.

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