Oceanic Flux Program Coloring Pages

Illustrated by Alana Thurston

Sketches of microscopic particles collected in the deep ocean traps of the Oceanic Flux Program

Coloring fun for all ages!
The Oceanic Flux Program, funded by the National Science Foundation, is the longest running oceanographic time series of its kind. For over 40 years, the OFP has continuously collected particles sinking through the depths of the ocean. By studying these particles, researchers have learned much about the science and ecology of the deep ocean. Connected to the upper ocean, the deep ocean experiences seasons of particle rain and sudden events. The types of particles, often shells of microscopic animals, also change throughout the year and can be quite beautiful.

(above) The OFP mooring
**Atlanta peronii shell**

**Fun Fact:** This gastropod has extremely well defined eyes, which helps it be a dangerous (but tiny!) predator of the deep. It spots prey from afar, uses its single swimming fin to swim directly beneath the prey, and then launches a deadly attack from below.
Aggregates & Fine Particulate Material

Fun Fact: Aggregates are tiny particles make up most sinking material. Some are smaller than 125 micrometers — about as wide as a strand of your hair!
Copepods

Fun Fact: Copepods are crustaceans and some undertake the largest daily migration on Earth. They feed near the surface at night, and descend to depths of hundreds of meters during the day, a daily journey of over a mile!
Diacria trispinosa shell

Fun Fact: This is one of the few pteropods that has color in its shell. Most of the shell is transparent, but the top is dark red — so it has bright red lips!
Foraminifera shells

Fun Fact: These one-celled organisms record the ocean’s history! When they make their shells, they incorporate elements from the surrounding water, which scientists can use to reconstruct the climate of the past.
Limacina bulimoides shell

**Fun Fact:** Humans, crabs, mice, and many other critter experience handedness — in which there is dominance in either the right or left hand/paw/claw/etc. Pelagic snails (pteropods) can also be left or right coiled, but all *Limacina* are left-coiled.
**Fun Fact:** Although it doesn’t look like it, this is a pelagic snail called a pteropod or sea butterfly. Juvenile *C. pyramidata* start out as just the tip of the shell (marked with a ◆), and grow outward from there.
**Fun Fact:** These single celled animals can live in groups on geodesic spheres made of glass. The geometric pattern acts as a net for catching food.
Viperfish

Fun Fact: These fish have special organs called photophores, which produce light. They use them to lure prey and communicate with other viperfish.