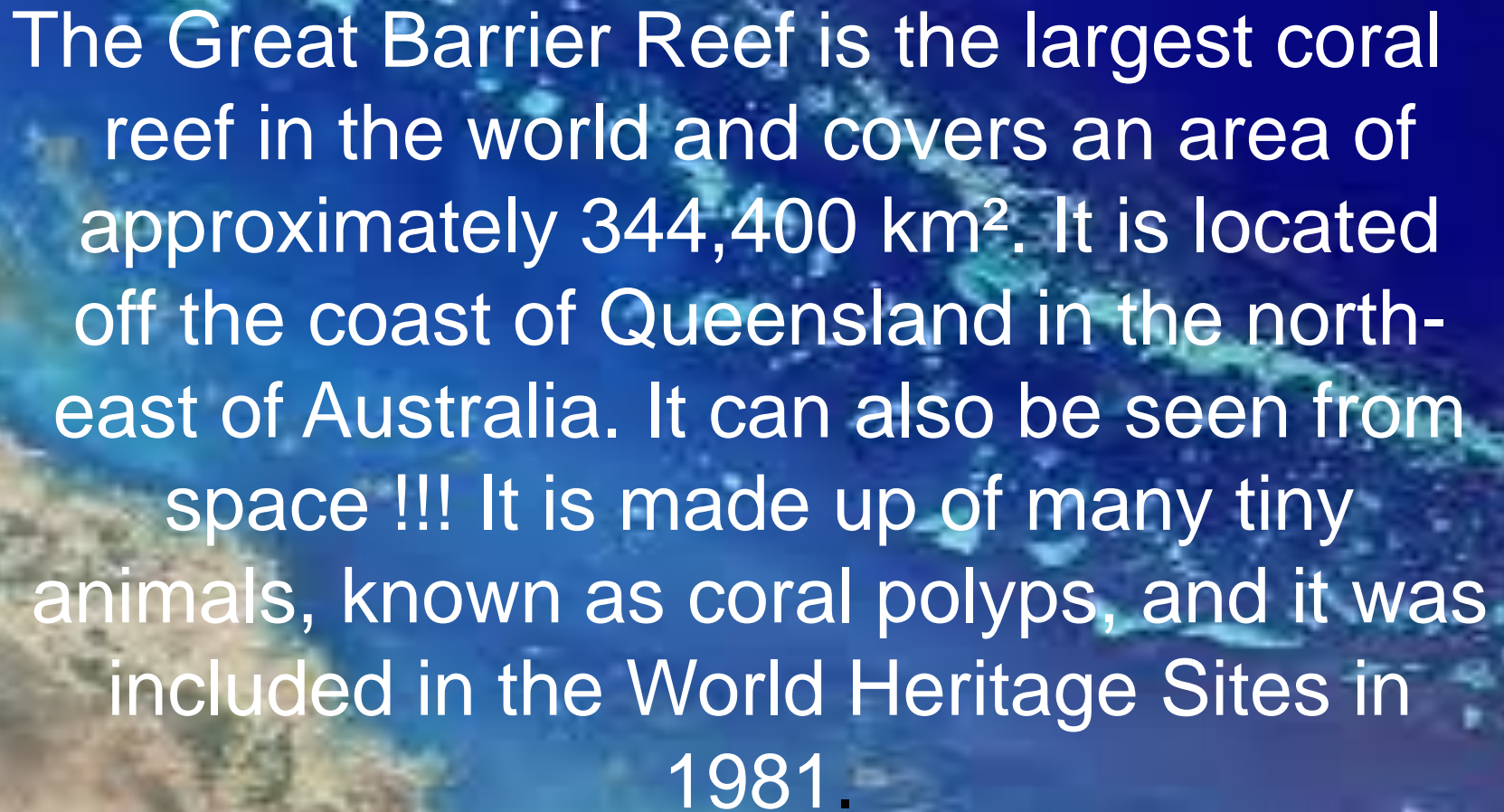


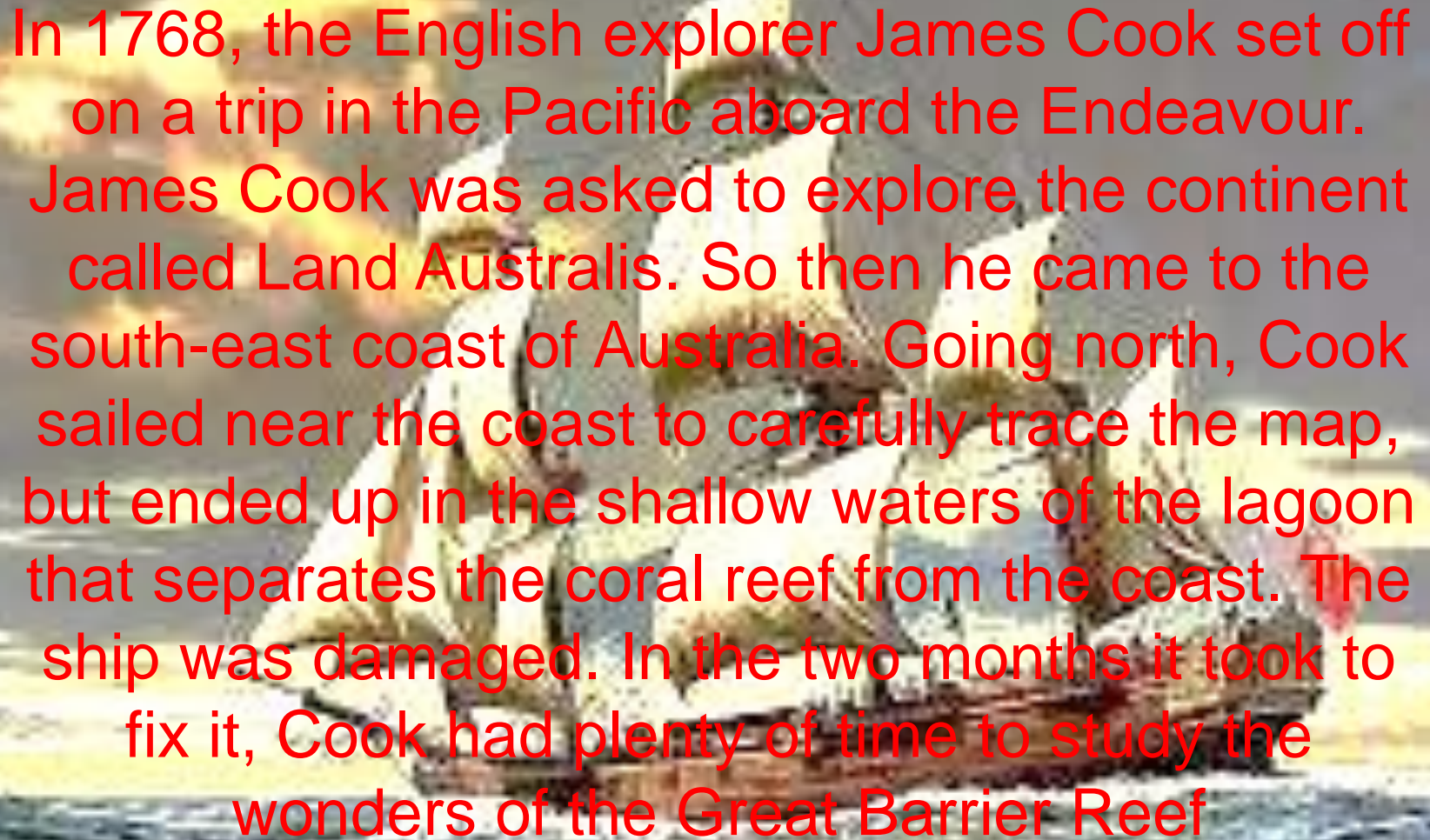


# **THE GREAT BARRIER REEF**

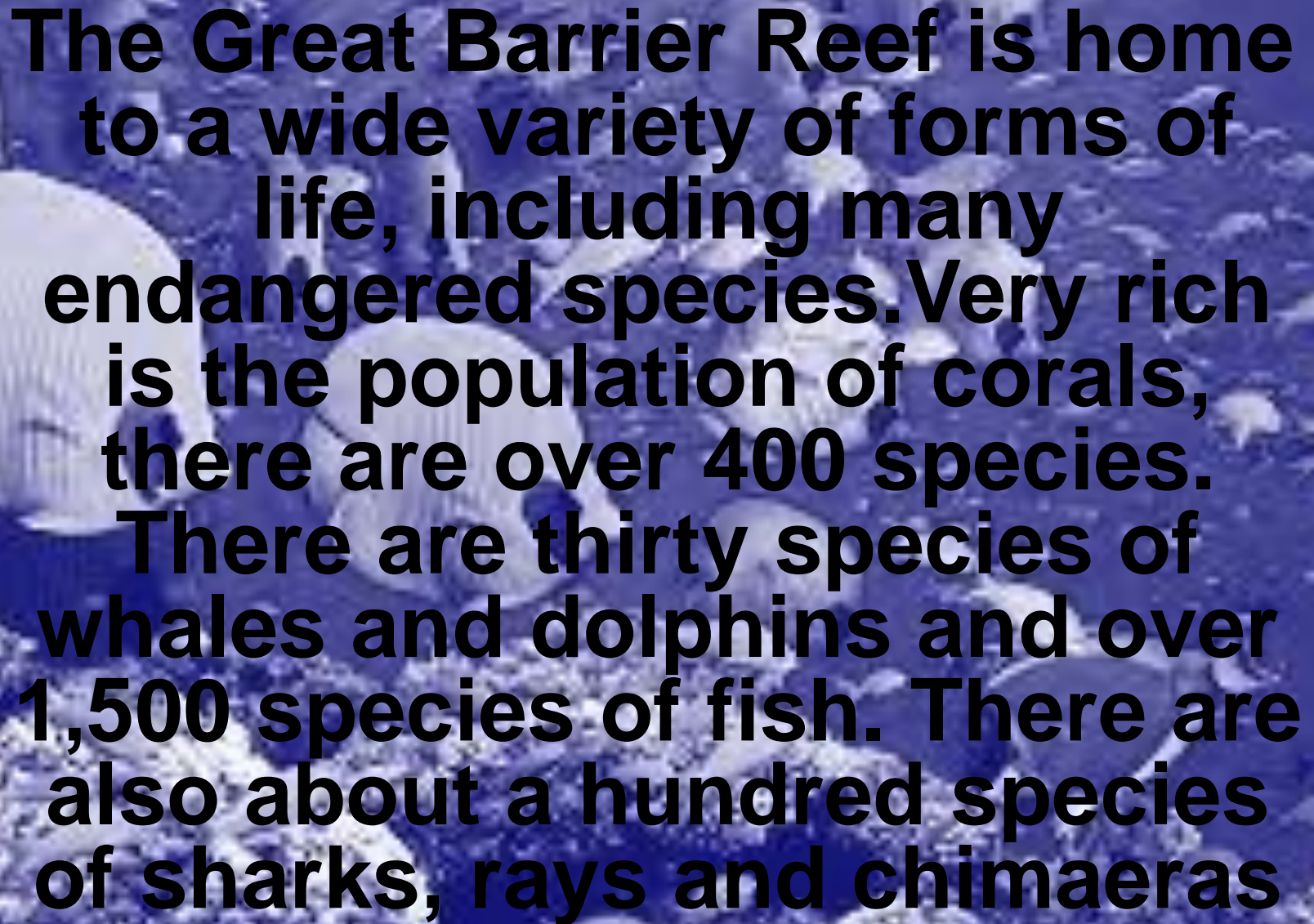
**by Lorenzo A.**



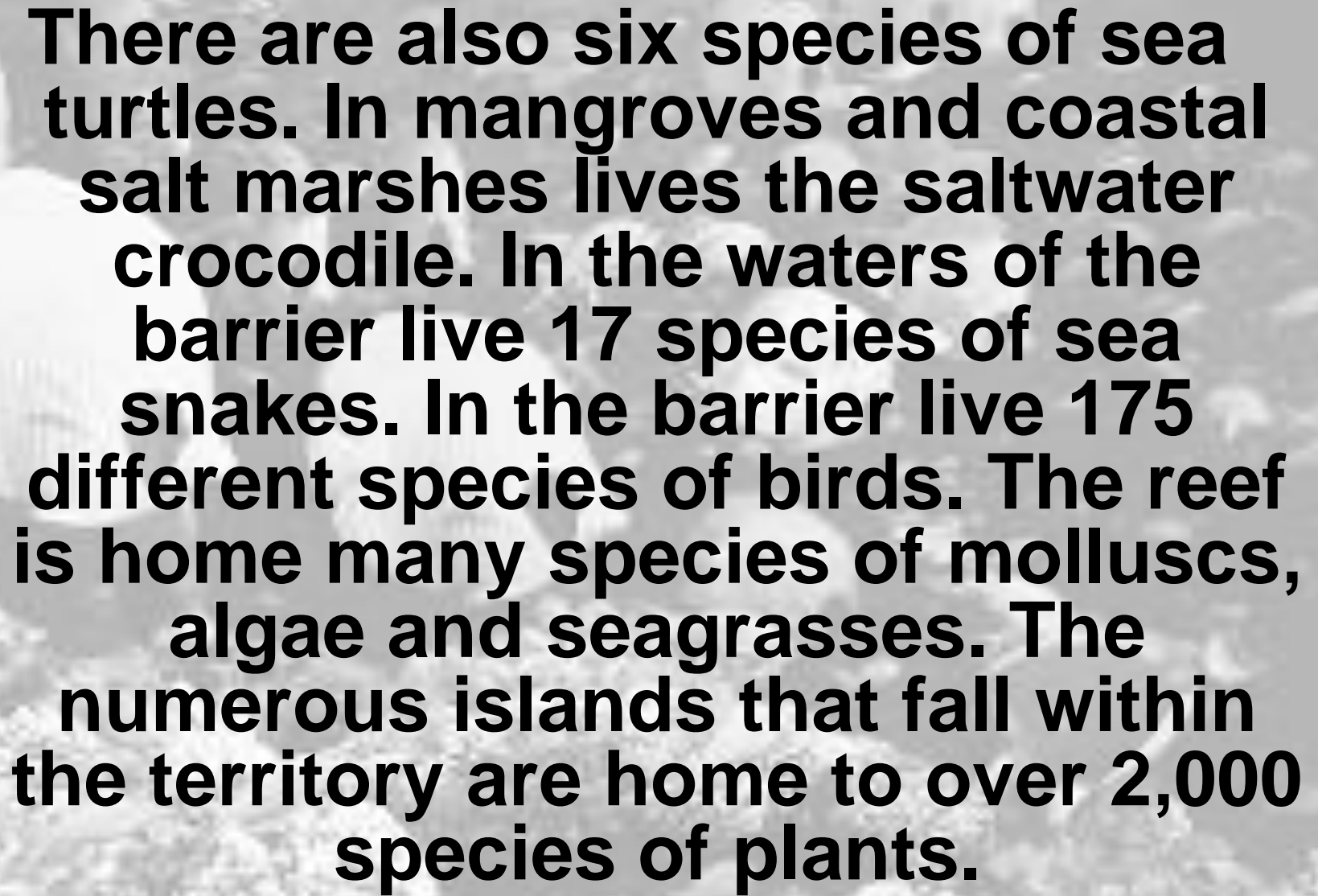
The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef in the world and covers an area of approximately 344,400 km<sup>2</sup>. It is located off the coast of Queensland in the north-east of Australia. It can also be seen from space !!! It is made up of many tiny animals, known as coral polyps, and it was included in the World Heritage Sites in 1981.

A three-masted sailing ship, the Endeavour, is shown on the ocean. The ship is white with a dark hull and is sailing on a blue sea under a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the image in red.

In 1768, the English explorer James Cook set off on a trip in the Pacific aboard the Endeavour. James Cook was asked to explore the continent called Land Australis. So then he came to the south-east coast of Australia. Going north, Cook sailed near the coast to carefully trace the map, but ended up in the shallow waters of the lagoon that separates the coral reef from the coast. The ship was damaged. In the two months it took to fix it, Cook had plenty of time to study the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef



**The Great Barrier Reef is home to a wide variety of forms of life, including many endangered species. Very rich is the population of corals, there are over 400 species. There are thirty species of whales and dolphins and over 1,500 species of fish. There are also about a hundred species of sharks, rays and chimaeras**



**There are also six species of sea turtles. In mangroves and coastal salt marshes lives the saltwater crocodile. In the waters of the barrier live 17 species of sea snakes. In the barrier live 175 different species of birds. The reef is home many species of molluscs, algae and seagrasses. The numerous islands that fall within the territory are home to over 2,000 species of plants.**