

**Source:** Serie Educacion Ambiental "Sian Ka'an, Introduccion a los Ecosistemas de la Peninsula de Yucatan," Modulo "El Mar y sus Recursos." © 1993 by Amigos de Sian Ka'an A.C., Mexico. Used with permission.

## 8. TWO TYPES OF CORAL

Besides hard corals, there are others called soft corals or gorgonians. These are also commonly known as sea fans, sea feathers or sea whips. They also form polyps, but of a different kind. The skeleton of soft corals is not massive but flexible and it does not have the little holes. Furthermore, it is flattened and branched like a small tree. In the drawing included in this exercise, you will see examples of hard and soft corals. It is very easy to tell them apart. The hard ones look like stones and the soft ones resemble plants. But they are not; remember, they are colonies (in other words, assemblages) of animals.

**Correlation to National Standards from McREL ( <http://www.mcrel.org> ) :**

### Life Sciences

5. Understands the structure and function of cells and organisms
7. Understands biological evolution and the diversity of life

## IDENTIFY THE TYPES OF CORAL

This activity involves identifying coral types. Study the drawing below and mark the hard corals with an **H** and the soft corals with an **S**.

