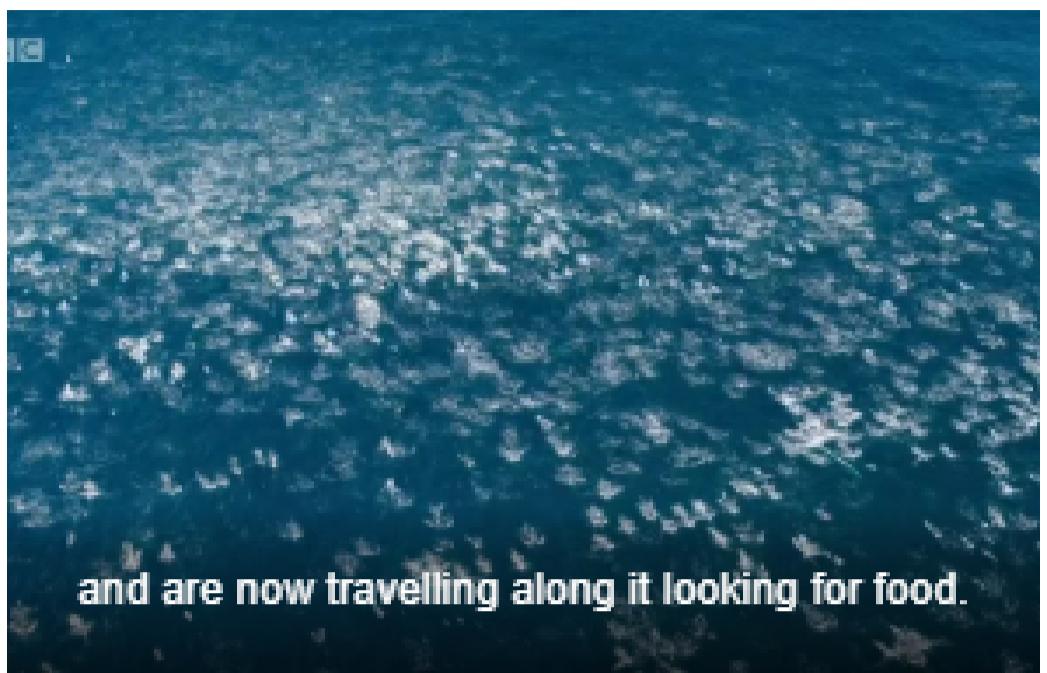


# A Perfect Planet



They have found a cold-water current



and are now travelling along it looking for food.



Gannets follow them.



They know that doing so is the fastest way to a meal.



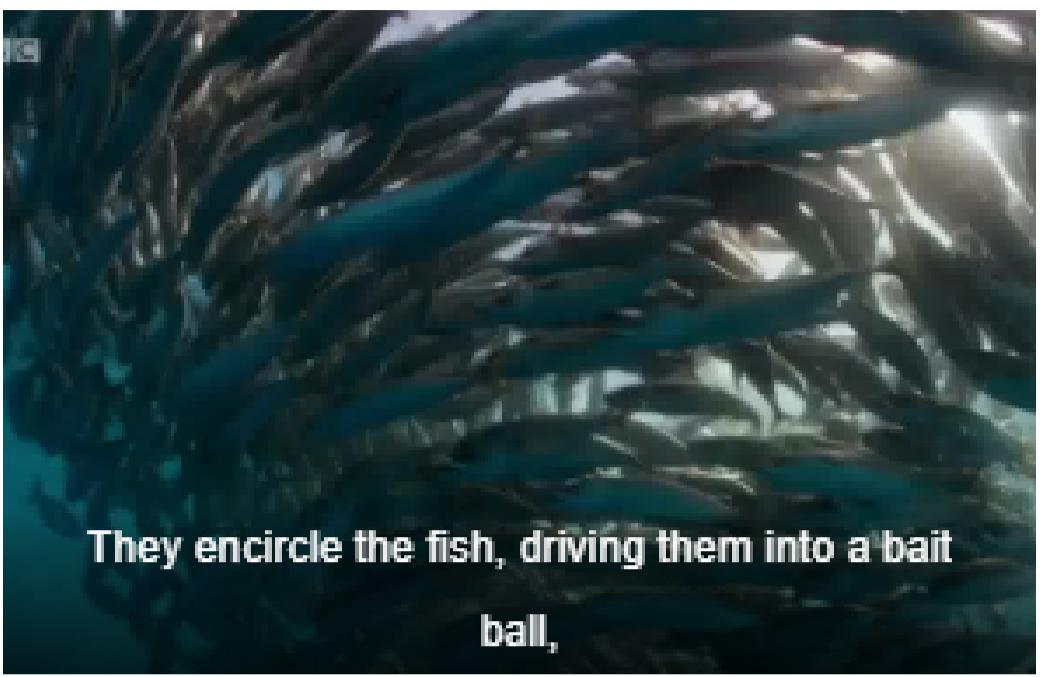


A shoal of mackerel...



...just what the dolphins have been looking for.

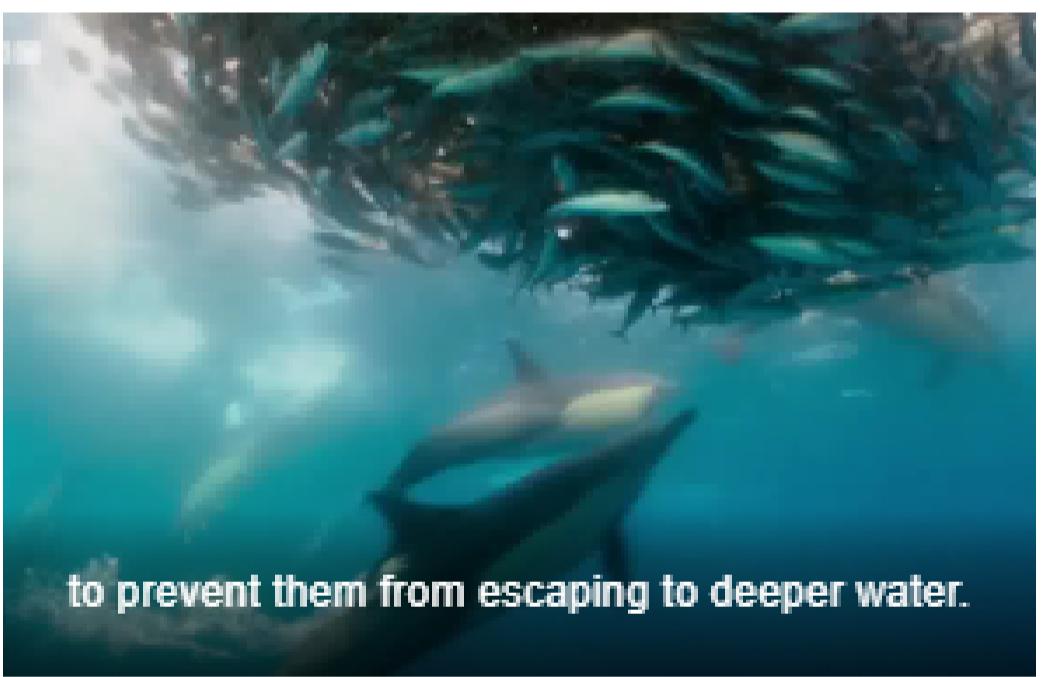




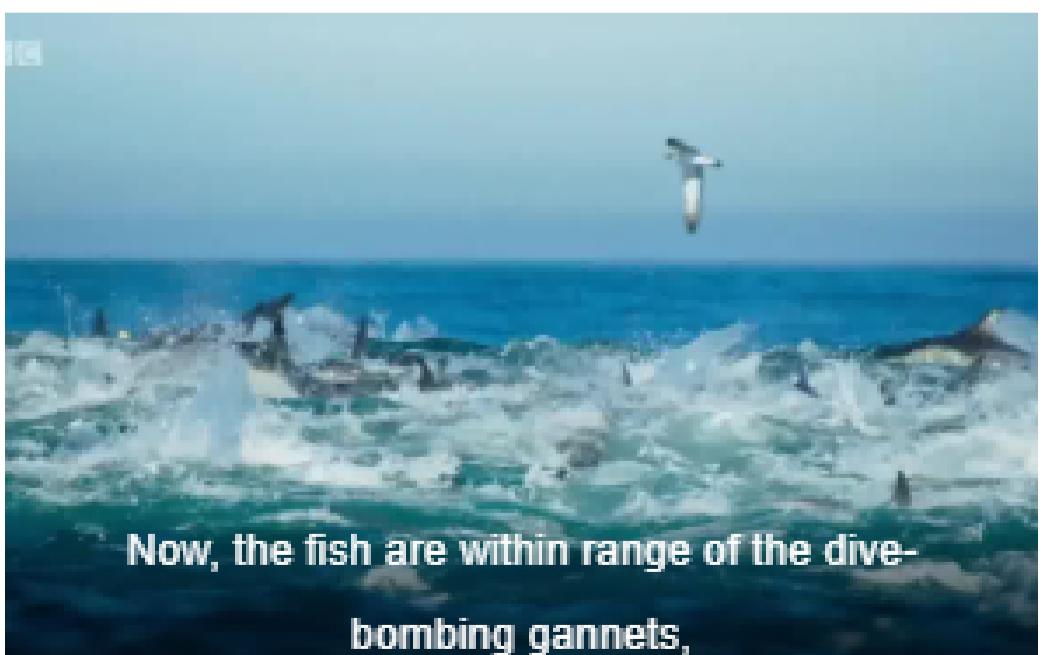
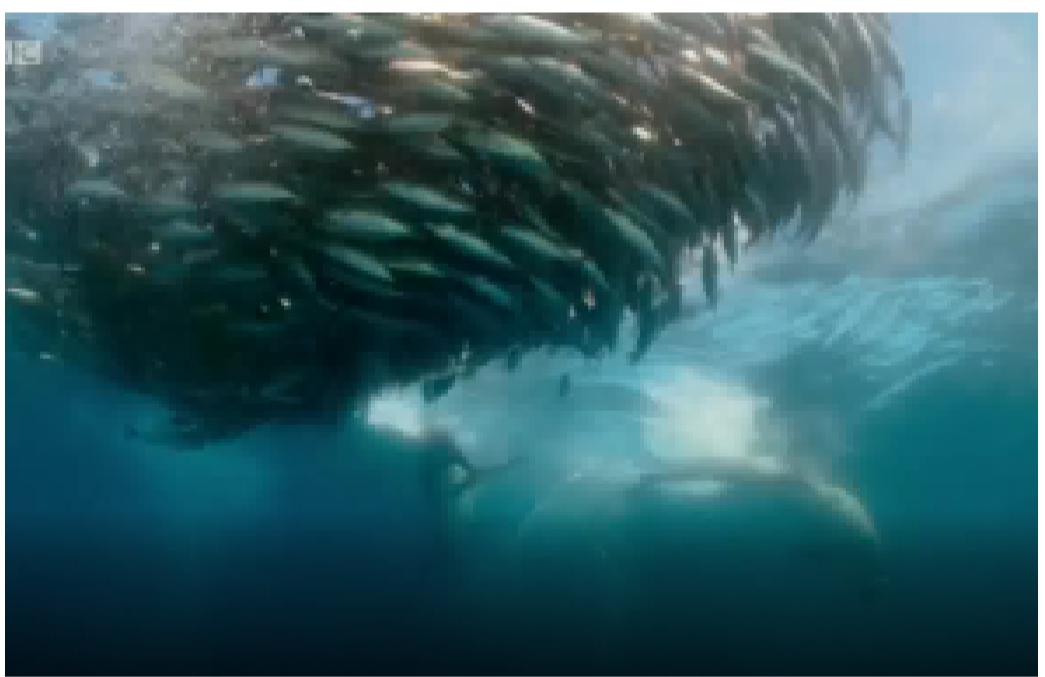
They encircle the fish, driving them into a bait ball,



and then trap them against the surface

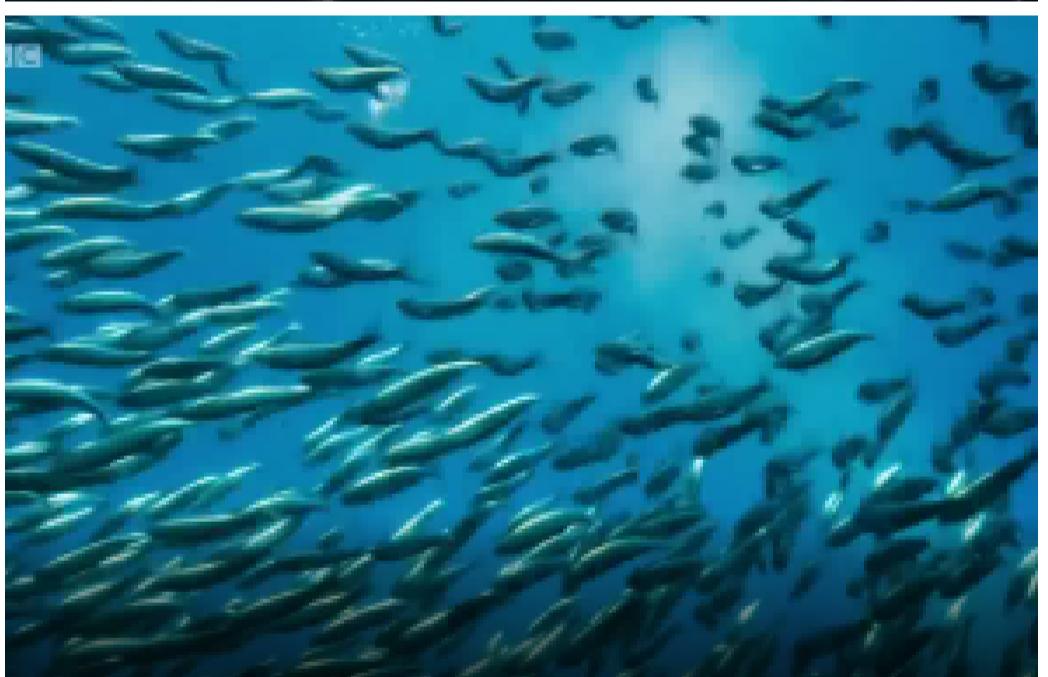
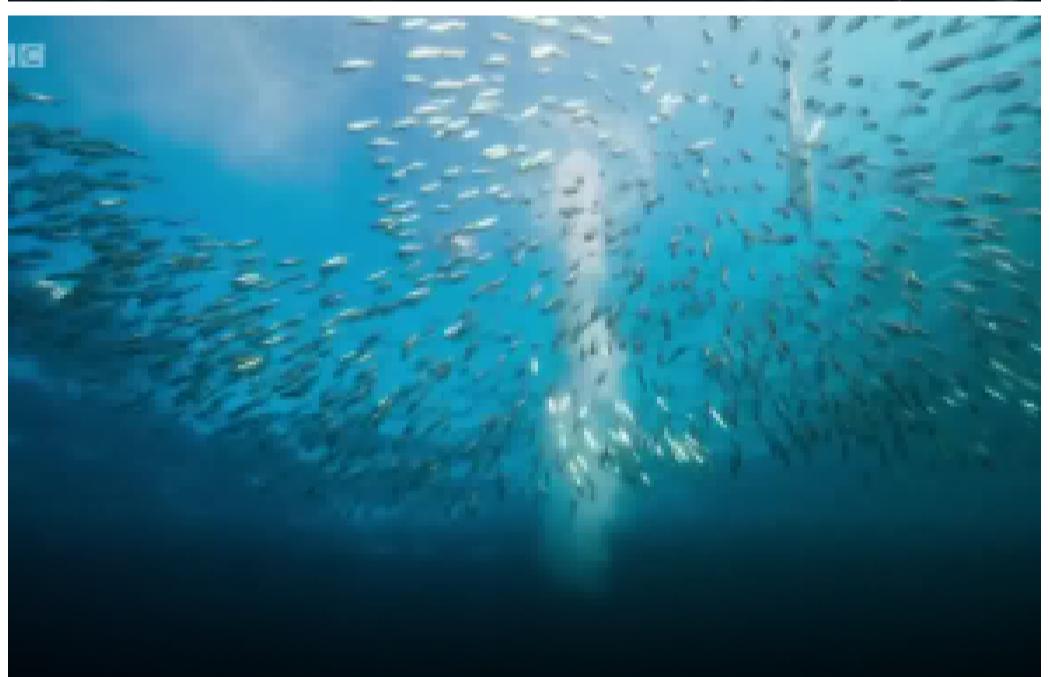


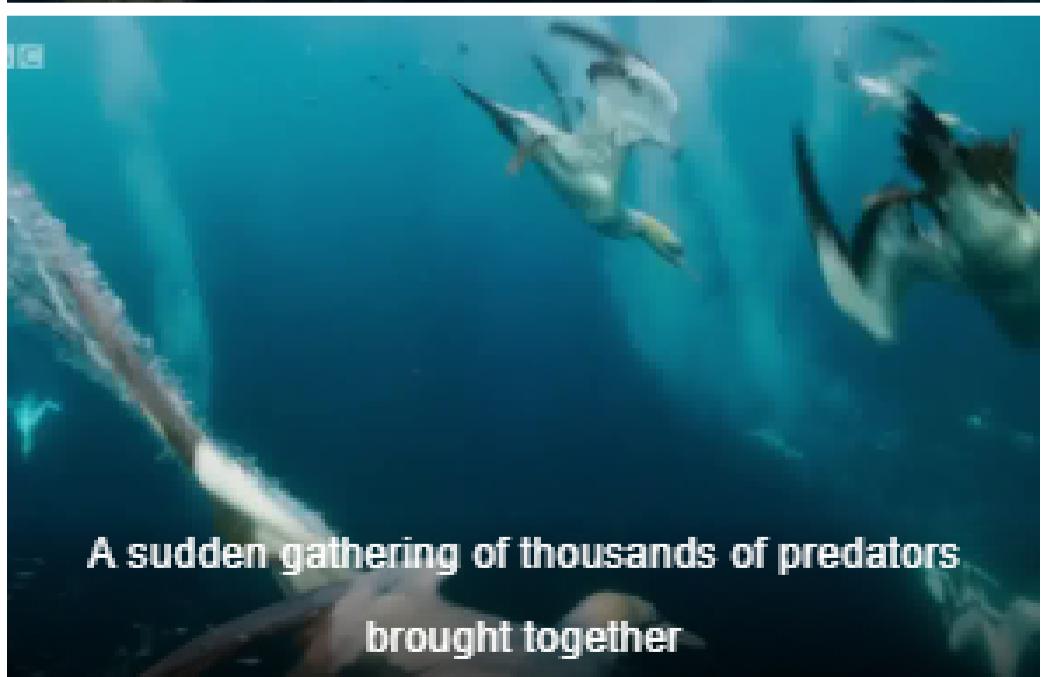
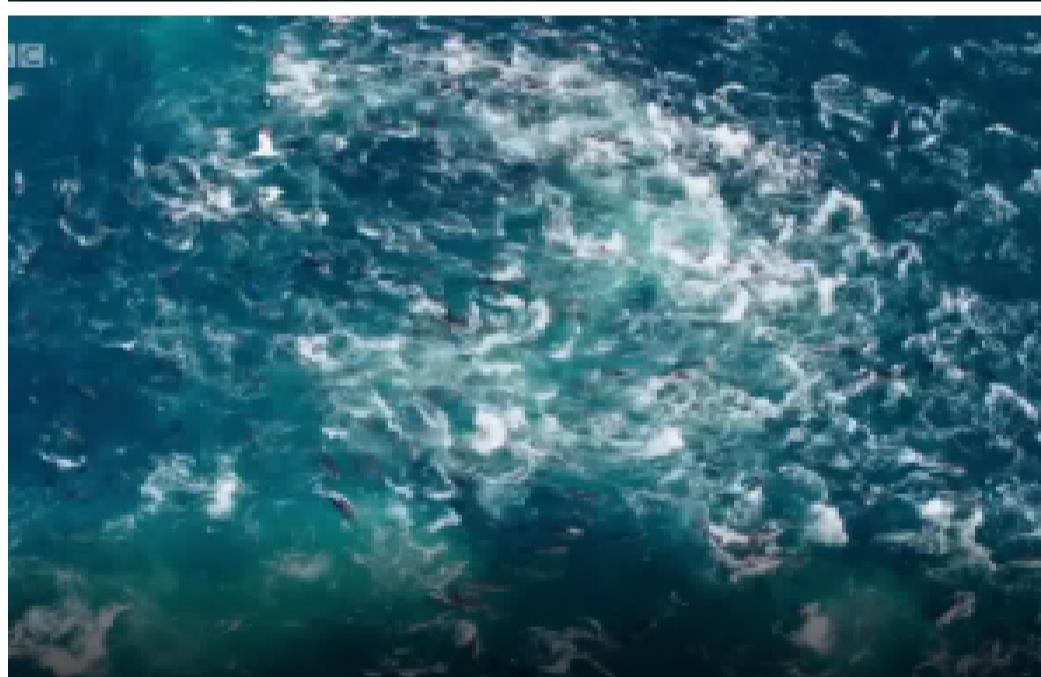
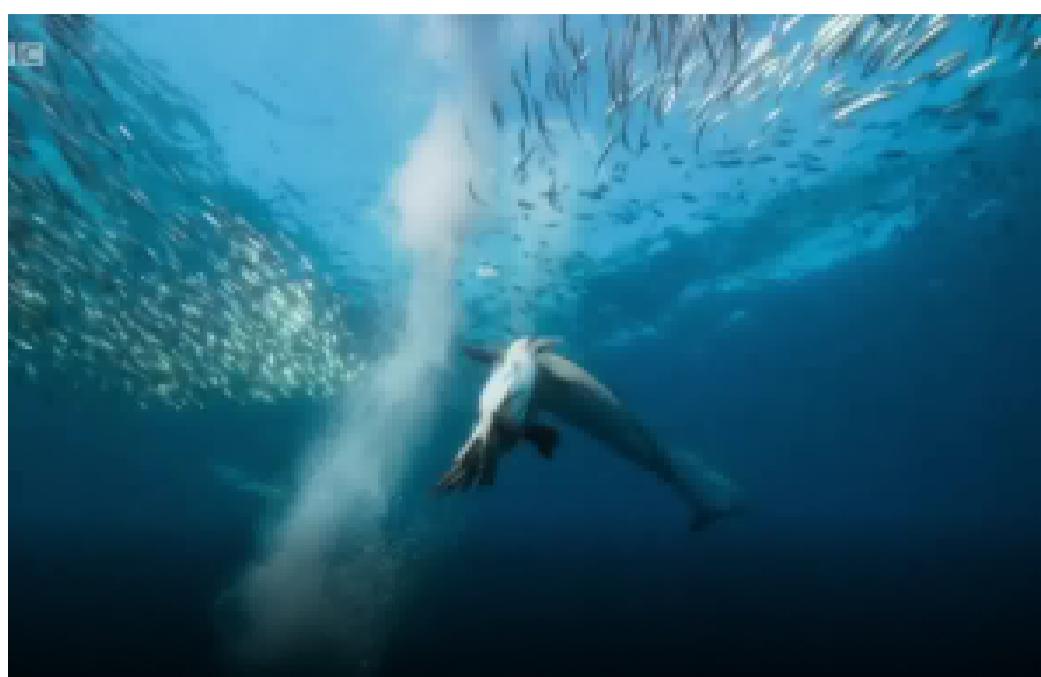
to prevent them from escaping to deeper water.



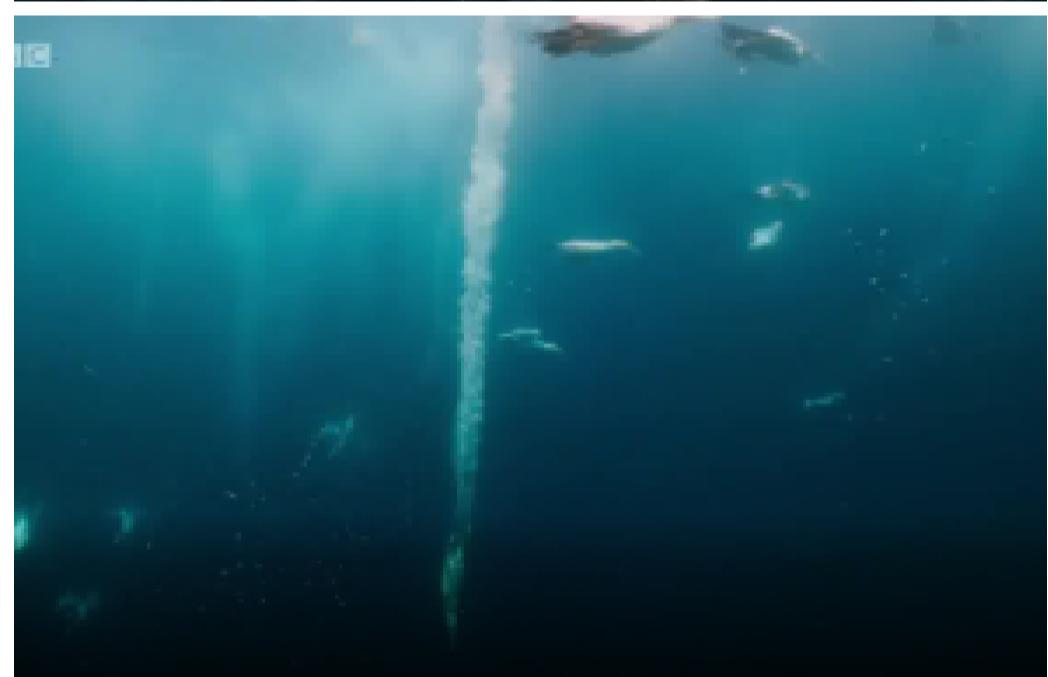
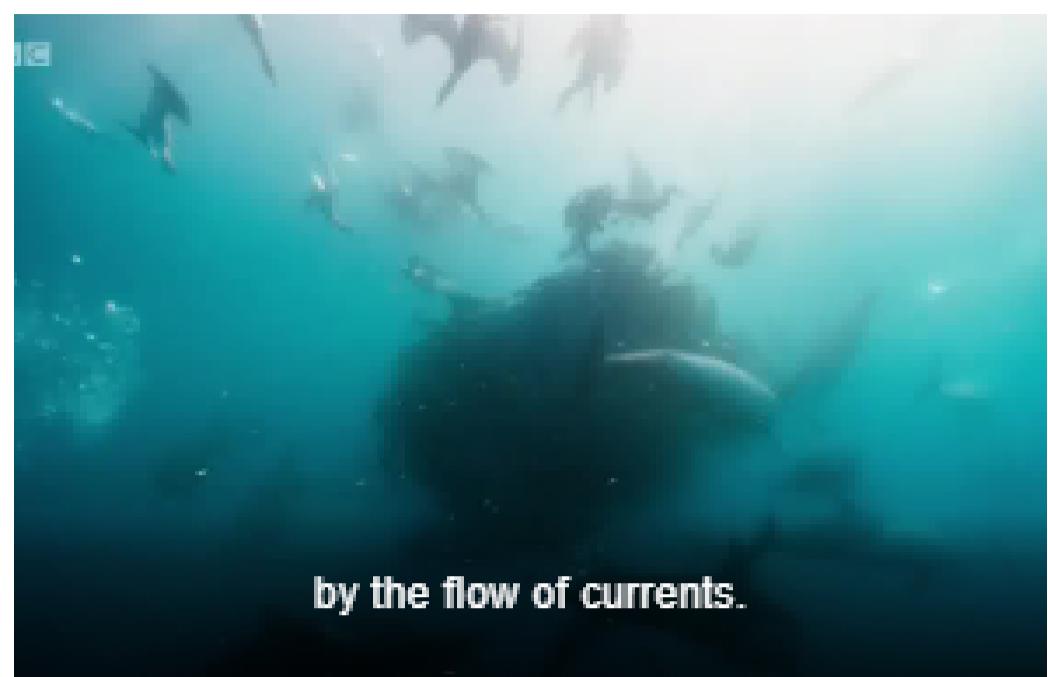
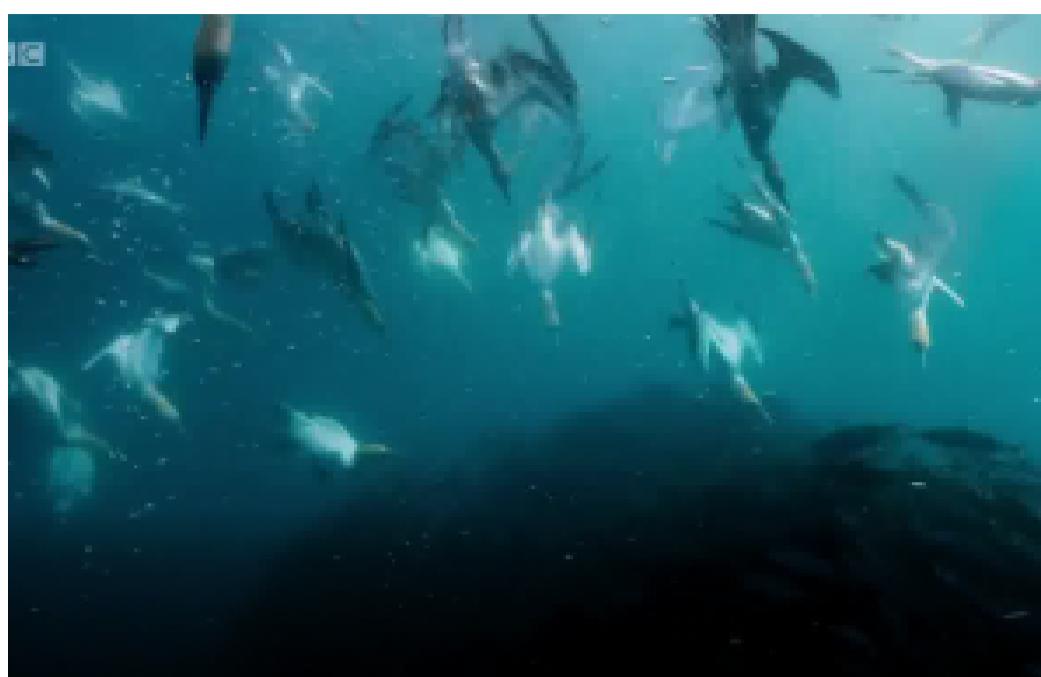
Now, the fish are within range of the dive-bombing gannets.

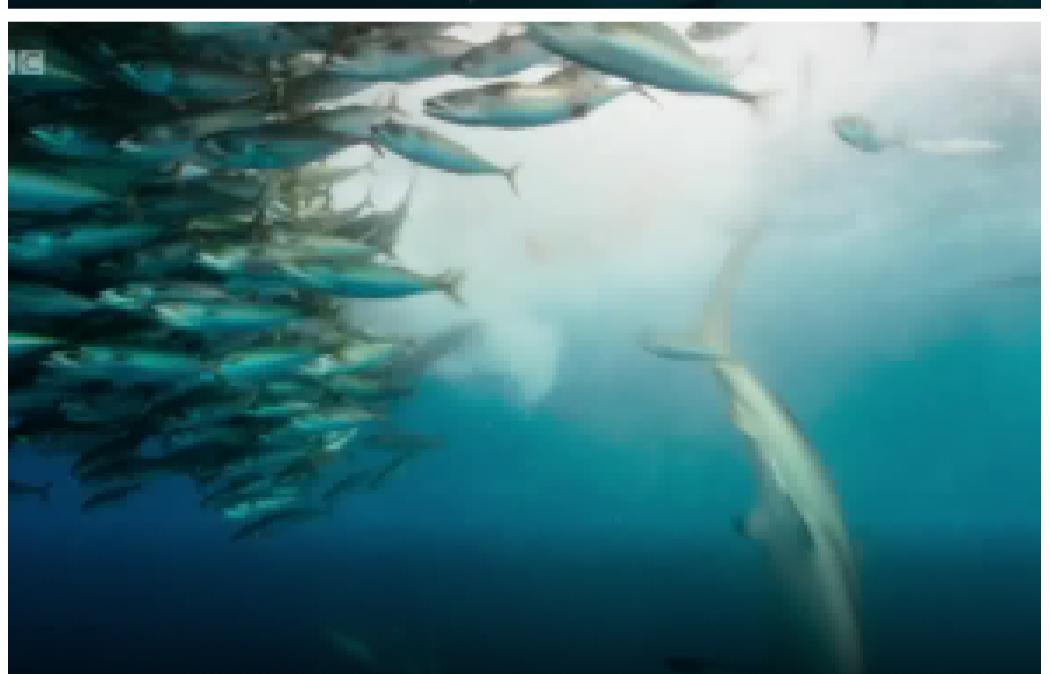
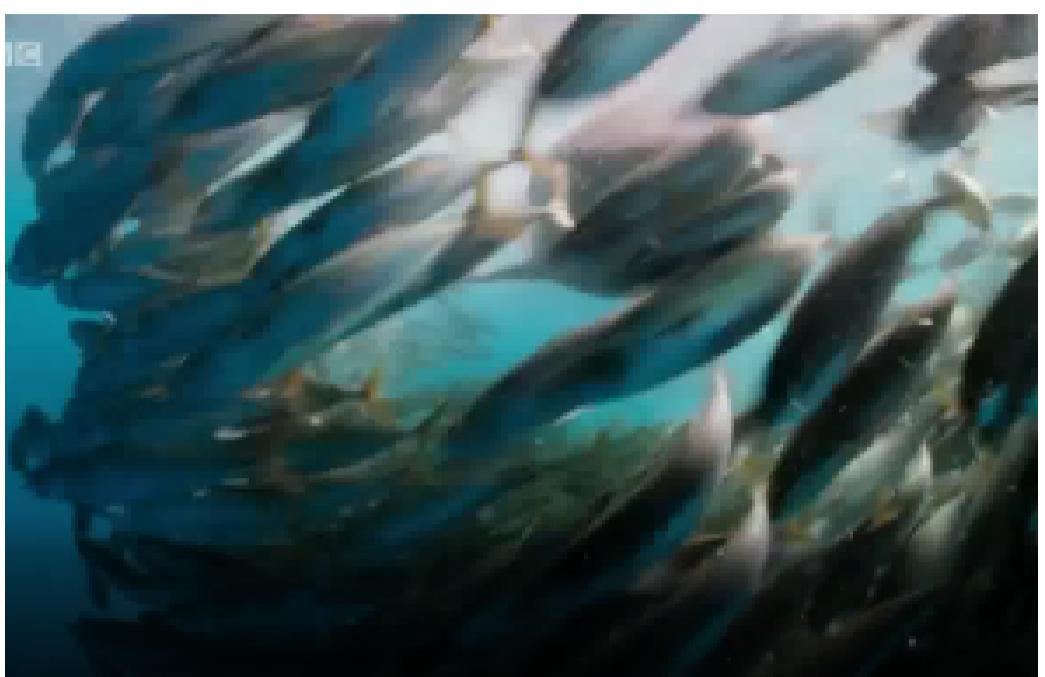




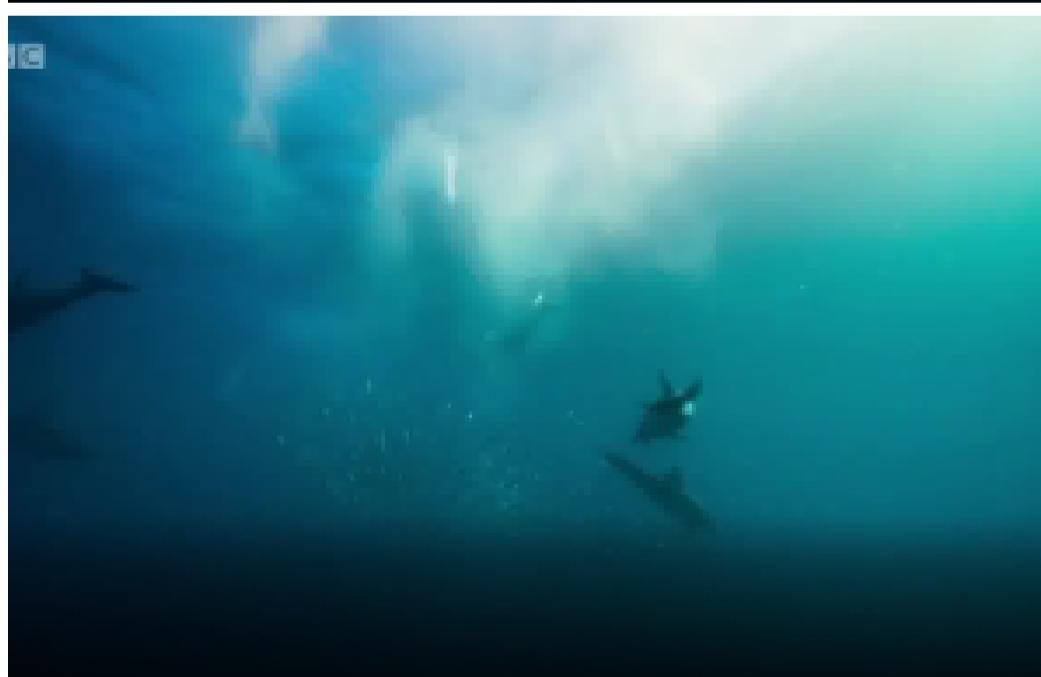
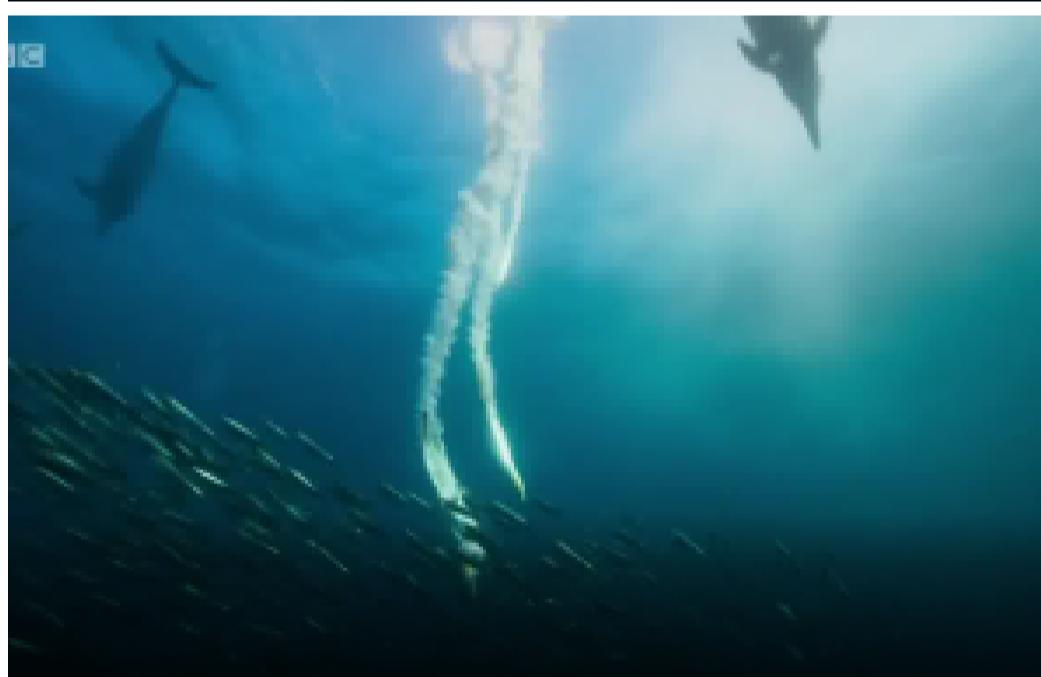
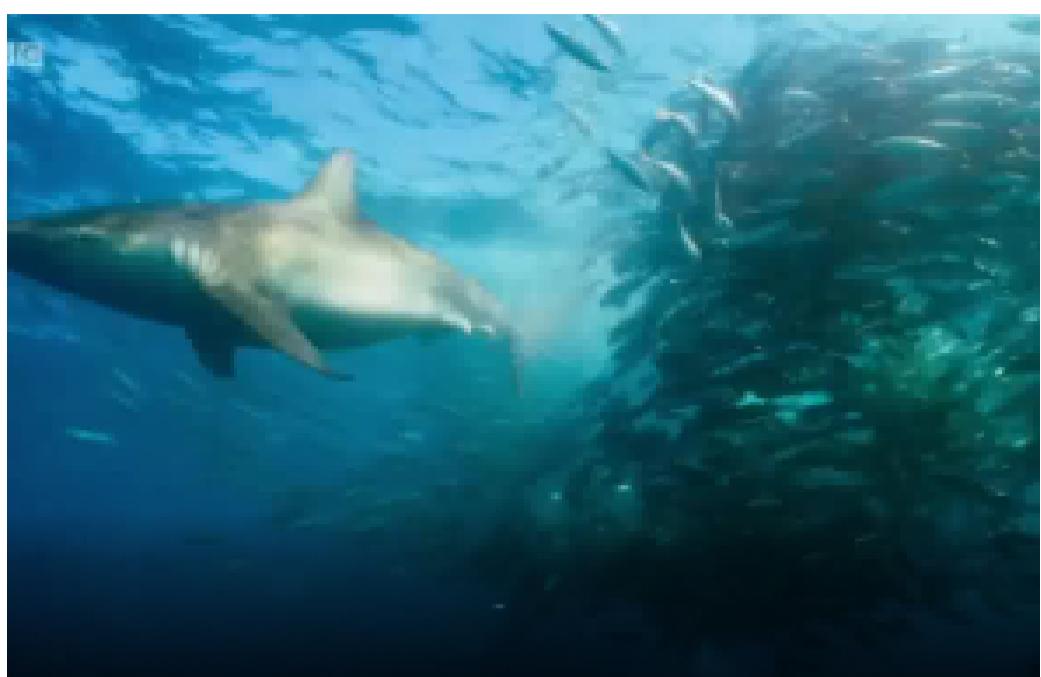


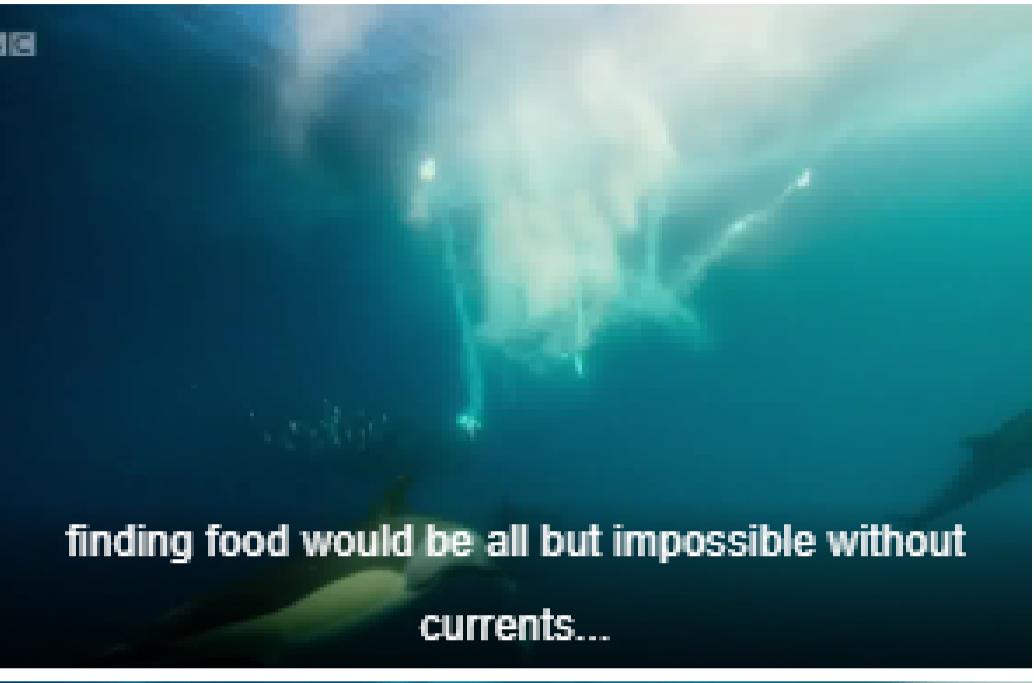
A sudden gathering of thousands of predators  
brought together





Last to the feast are sharks.





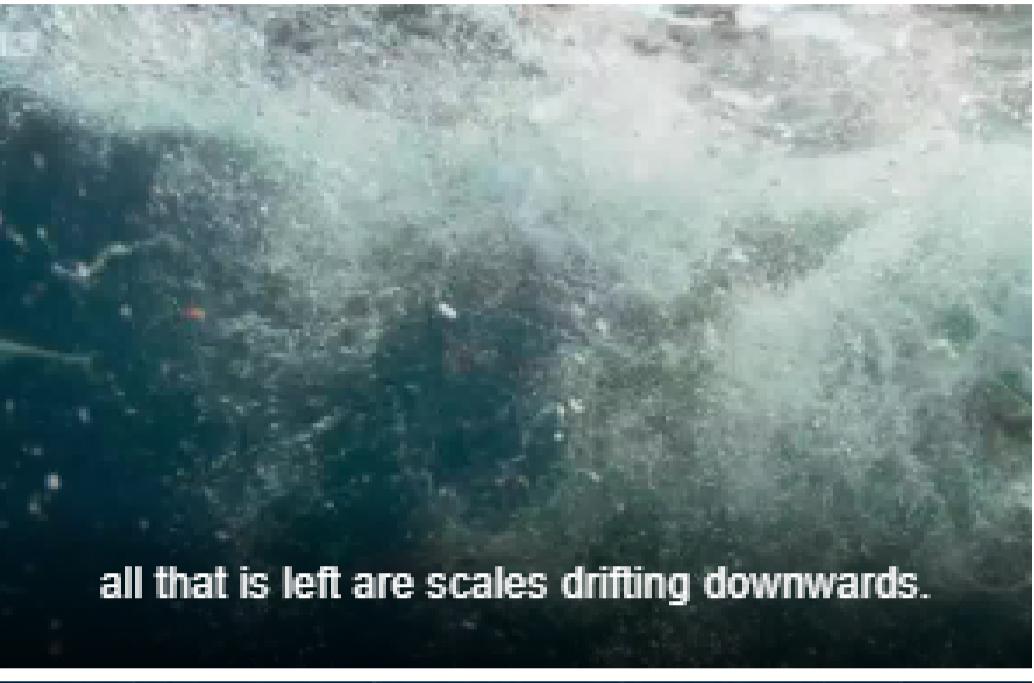
finding food would be all but impossible without currents...



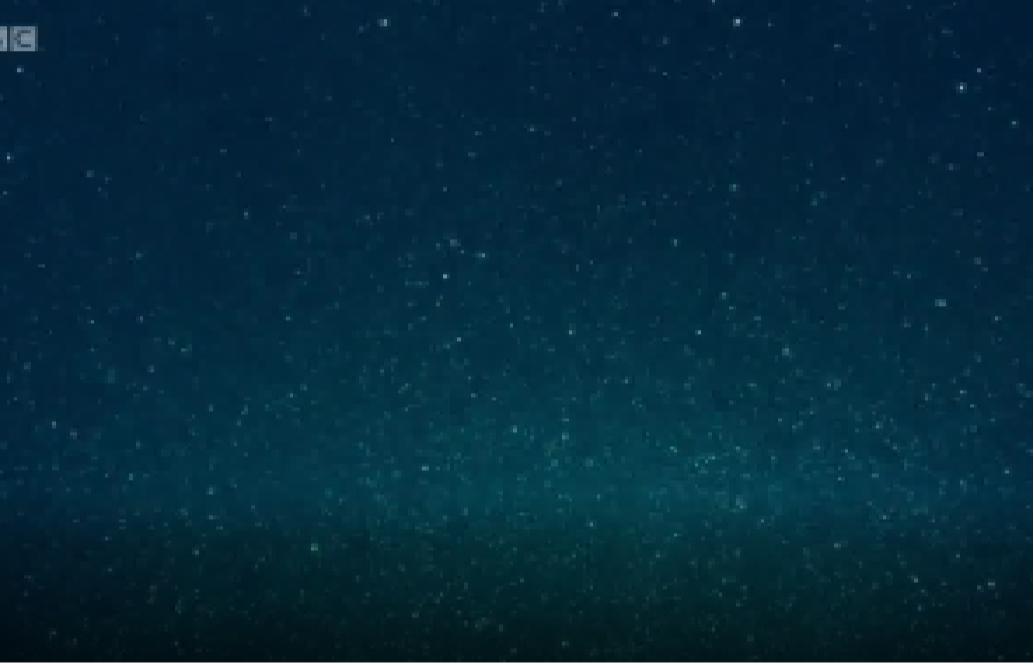
..the highways of the seas that bring this life together.



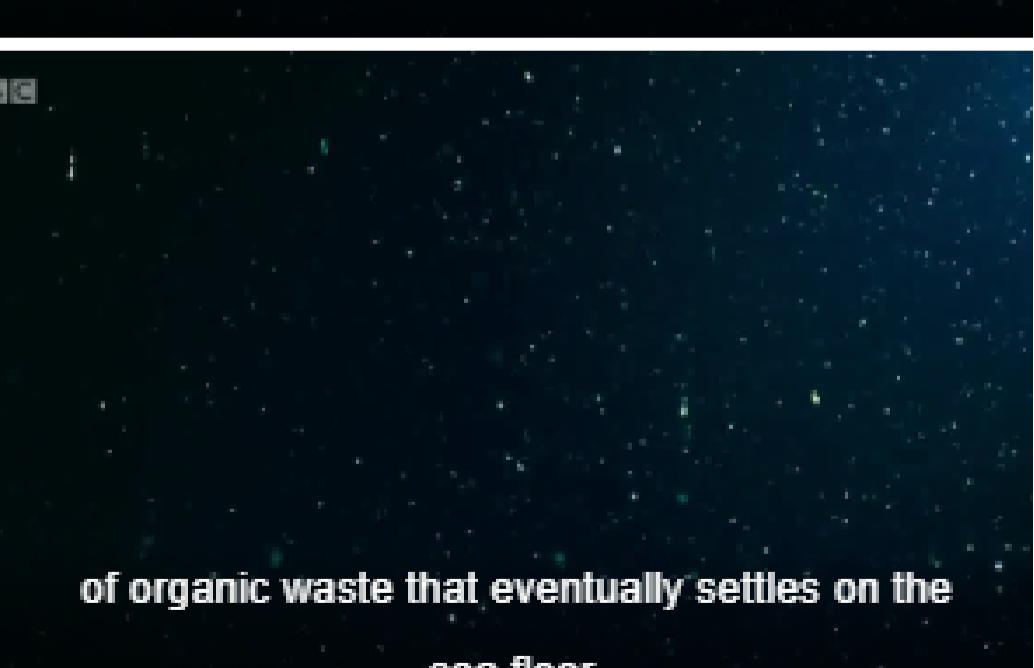
When the bait ball has been dispersed,



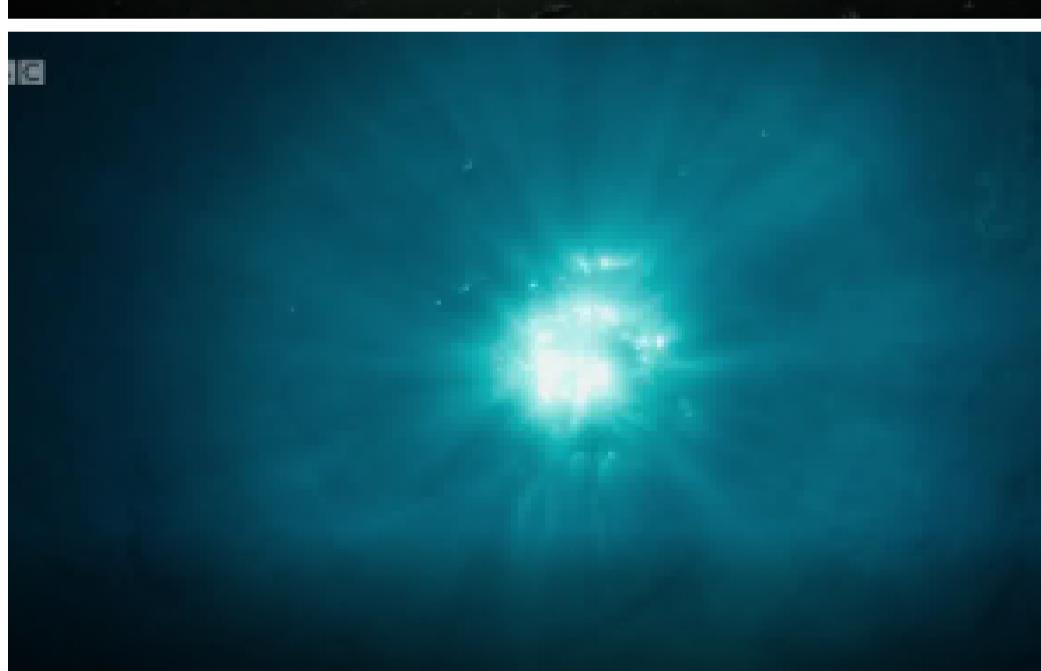
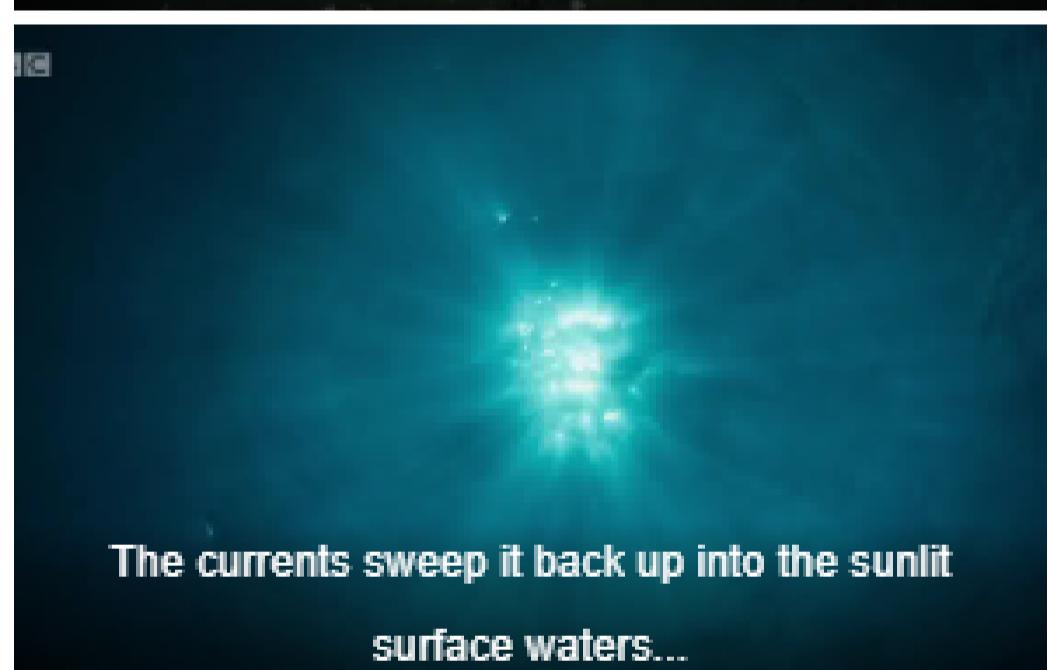
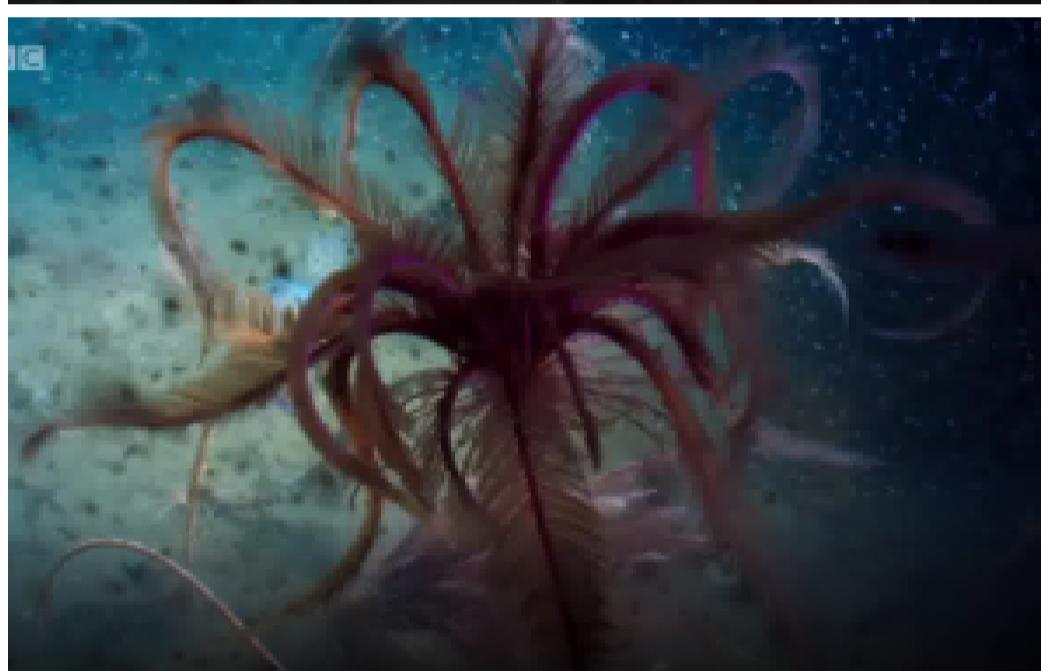
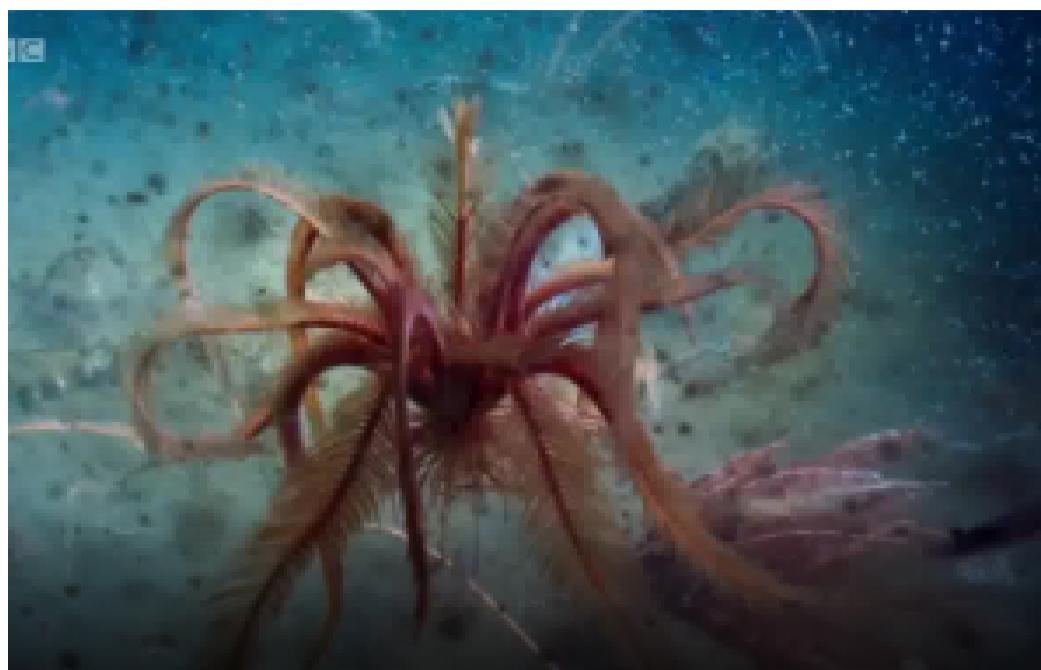
all that is left are scales drifting downwards.



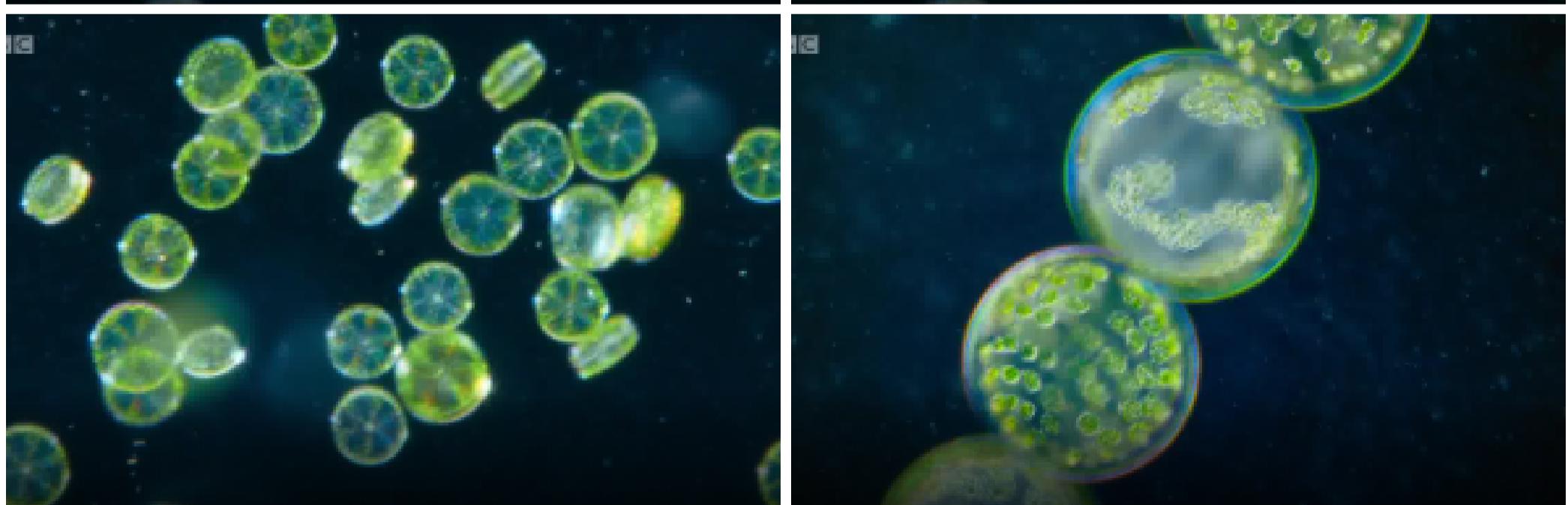
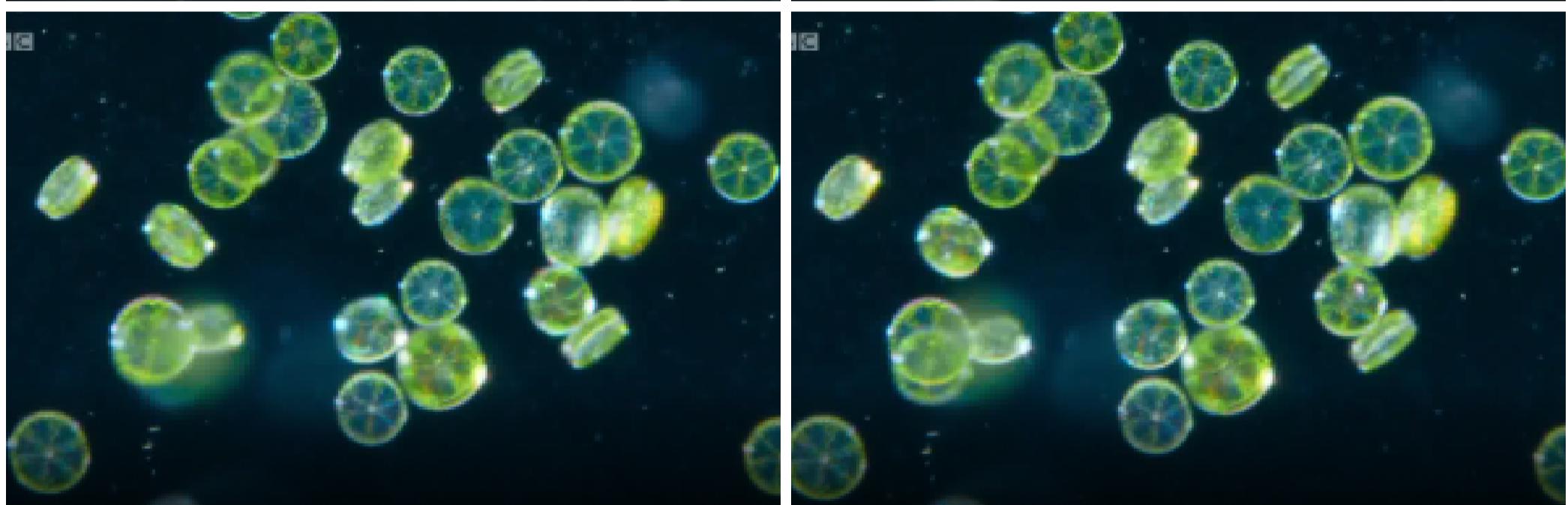
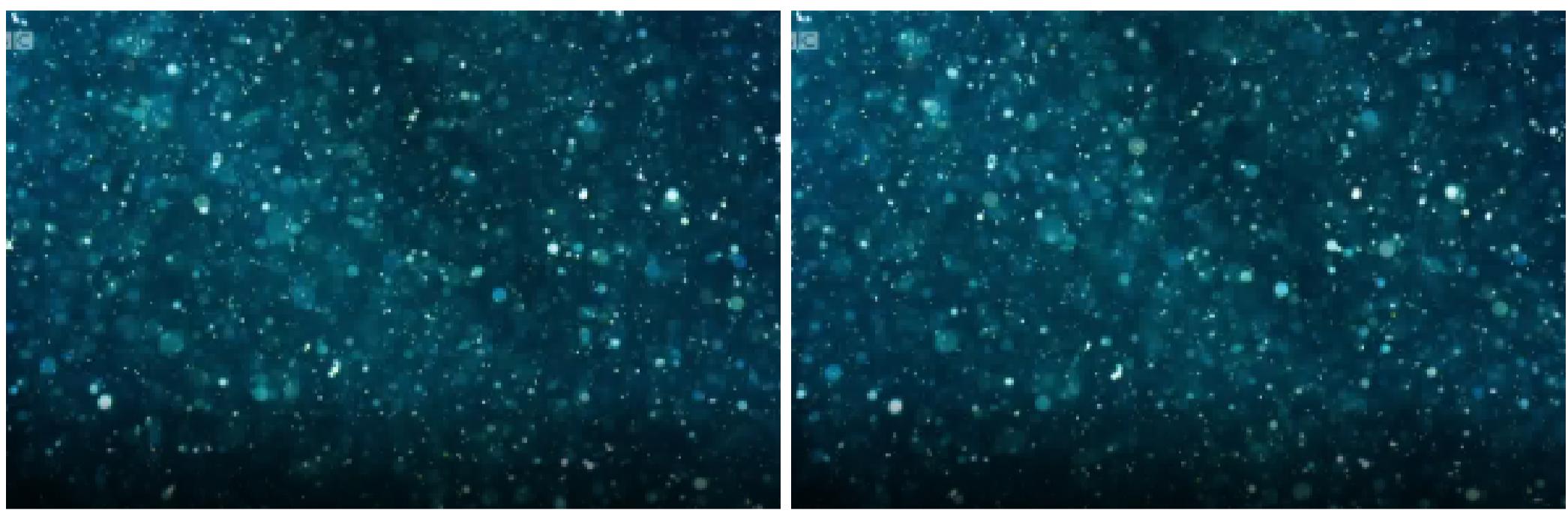
They are part of a slow, never-ending blizzard

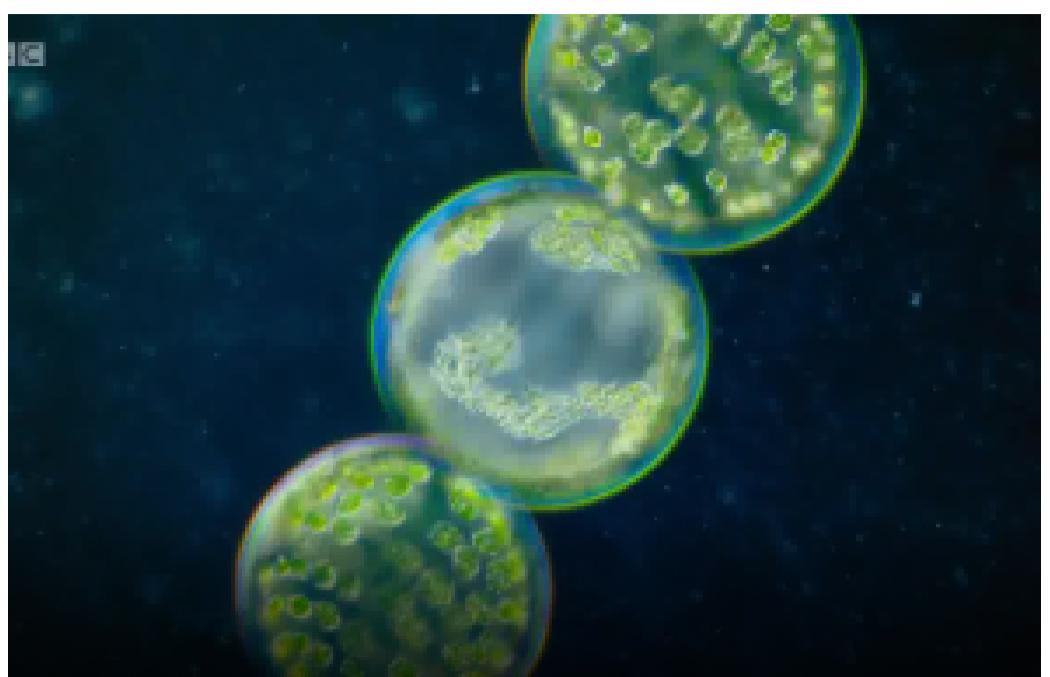


of organic waste that eventually settles on the sea floor.



...where it nourishes clouds of phytoplankton...

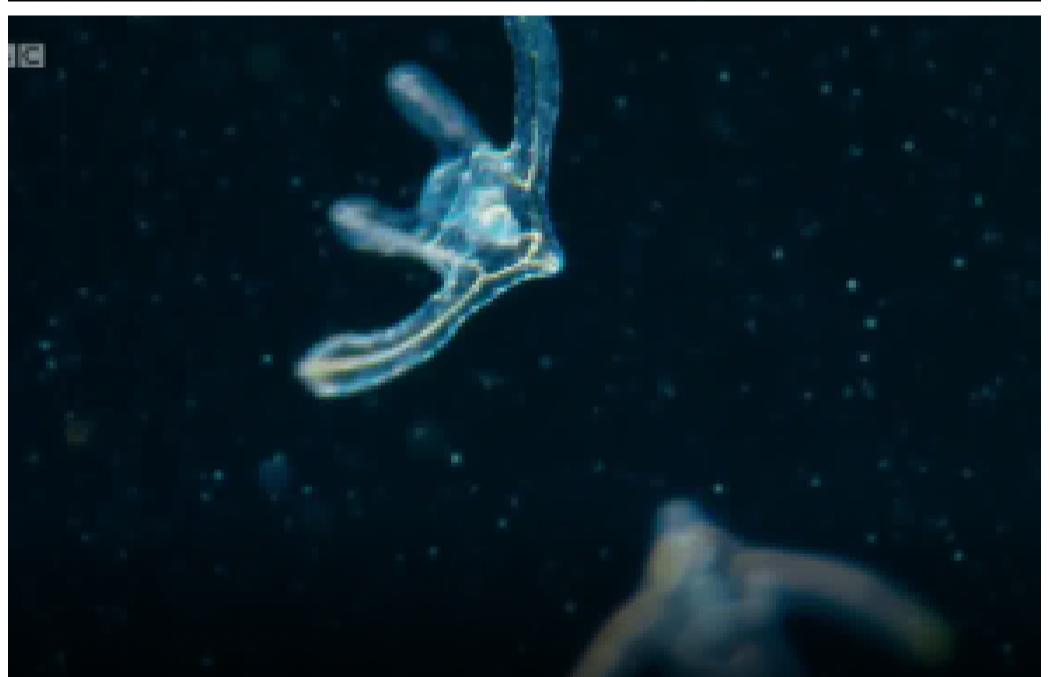




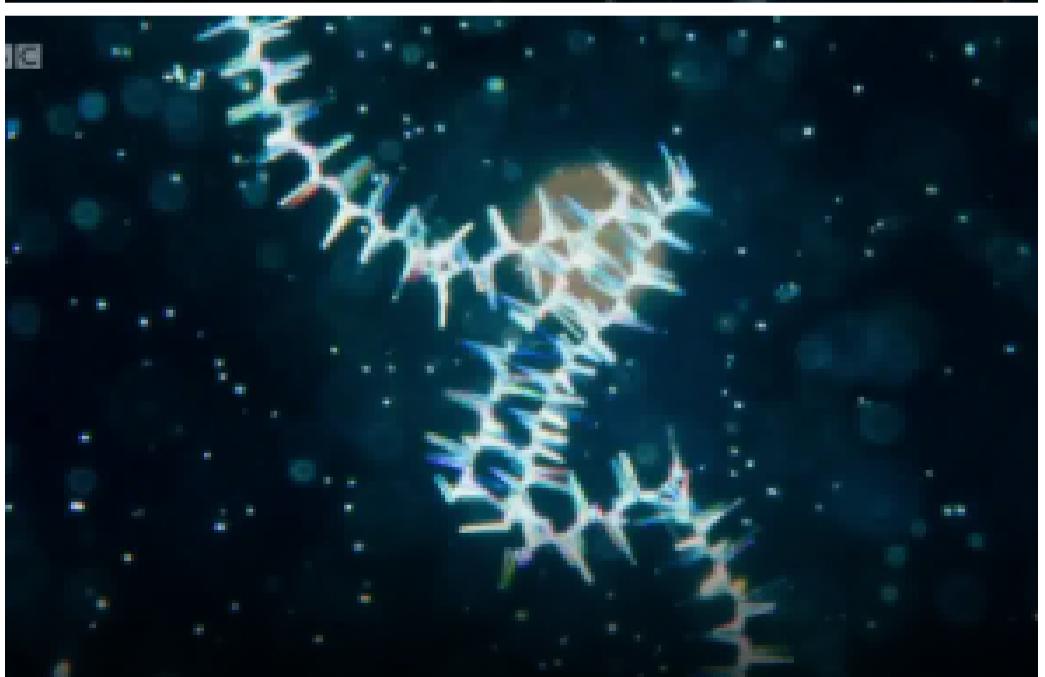
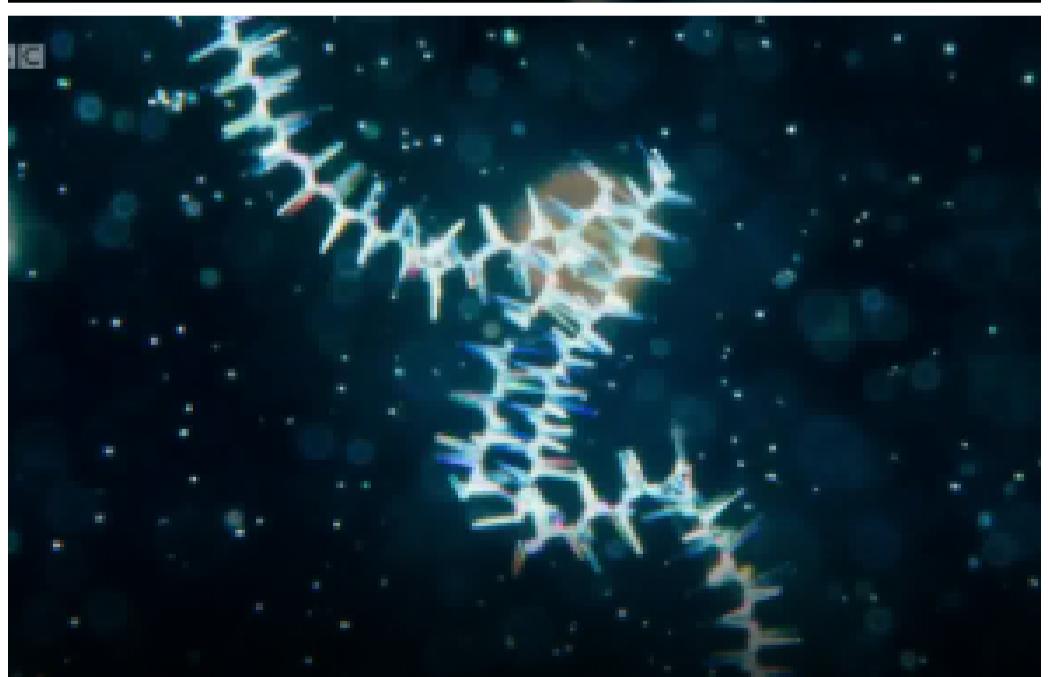
There are thousands of different kinds,



and together they produce half of all the oxygen  
in the atmosphere...



...more than all our forests and jungles  
combined.

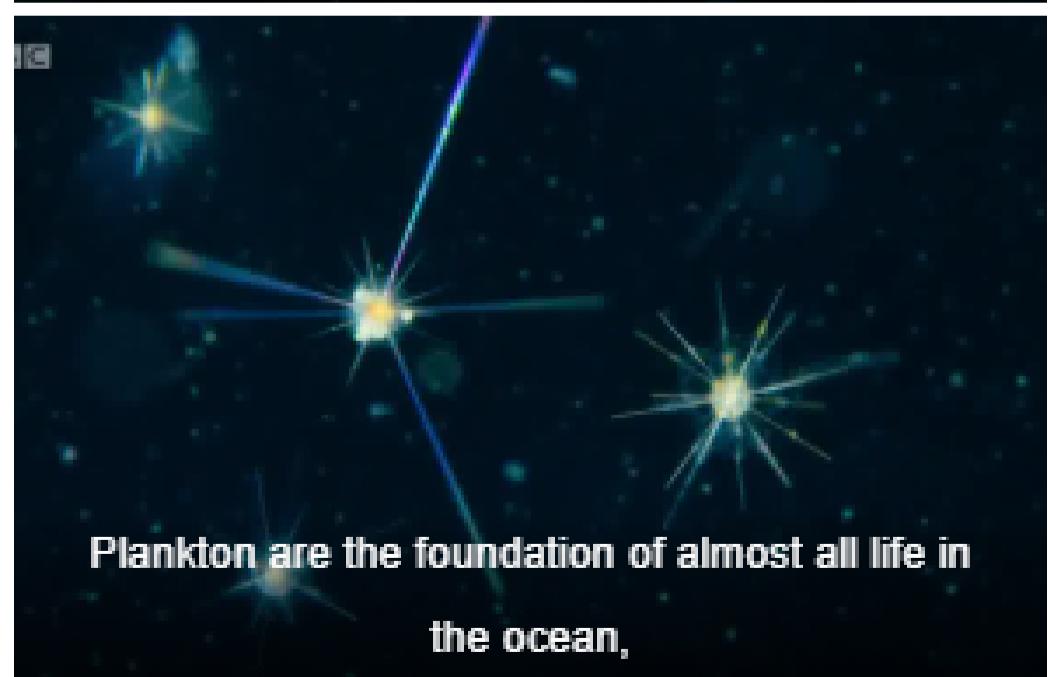
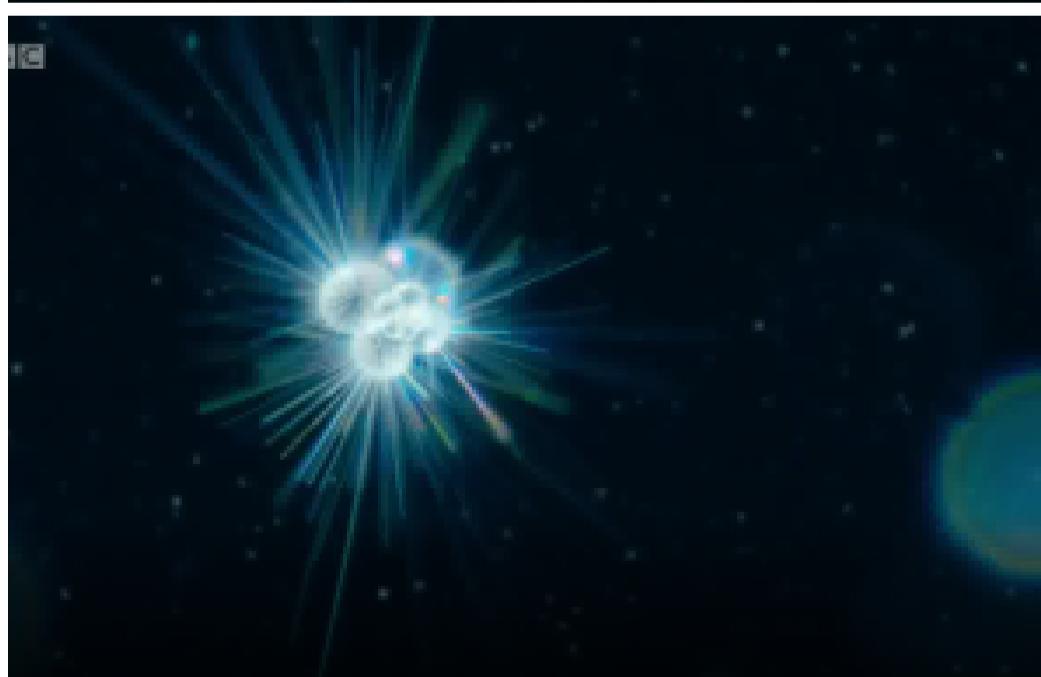
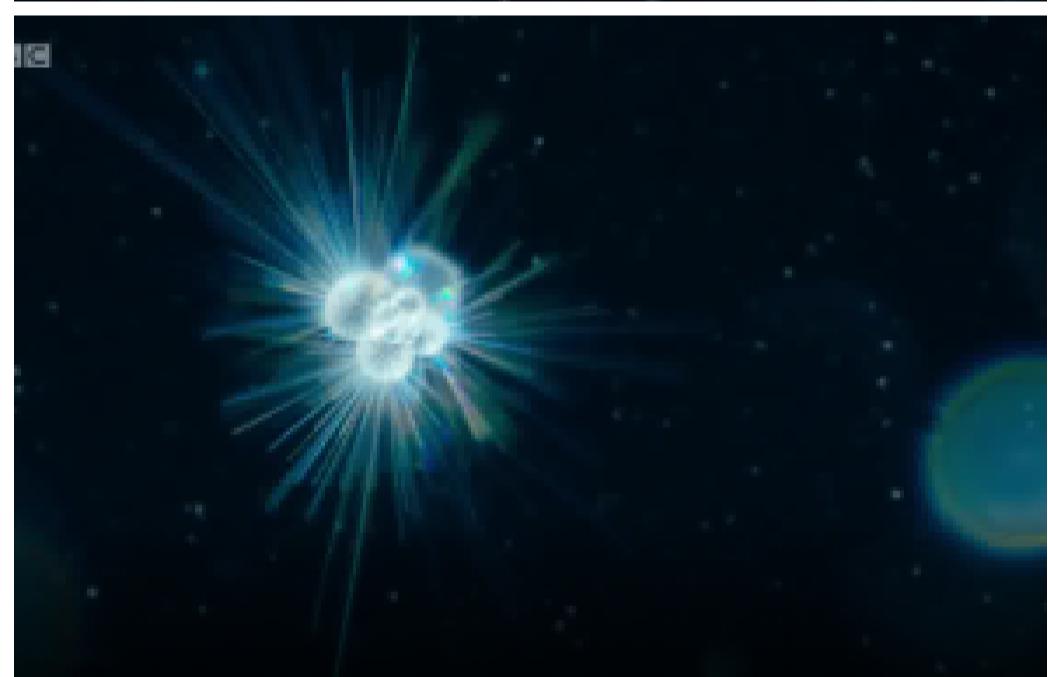
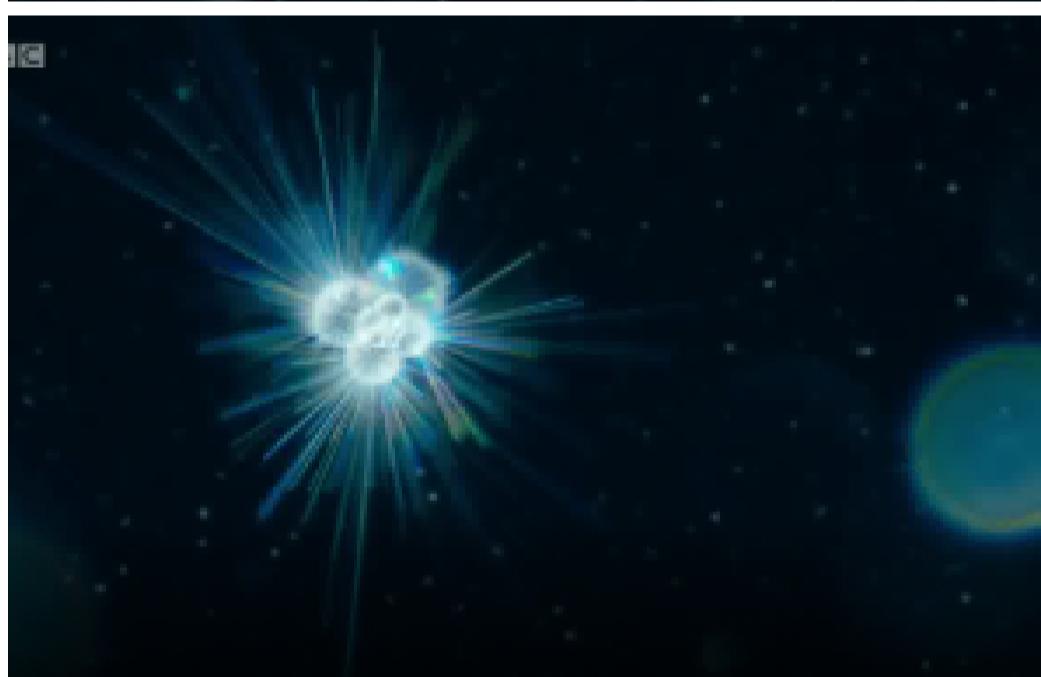




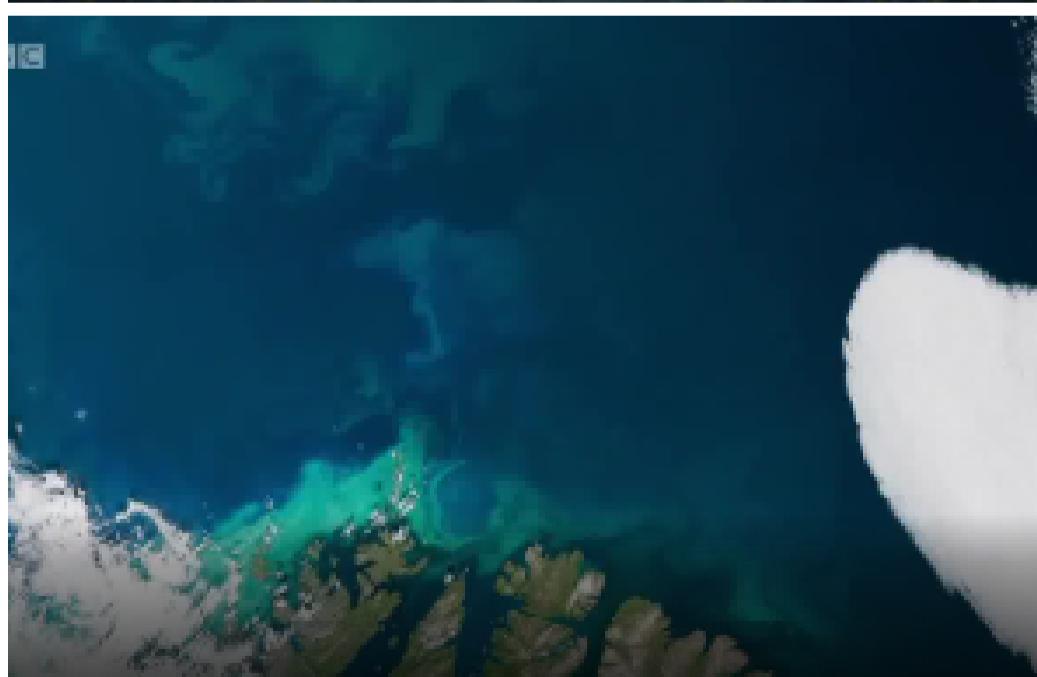
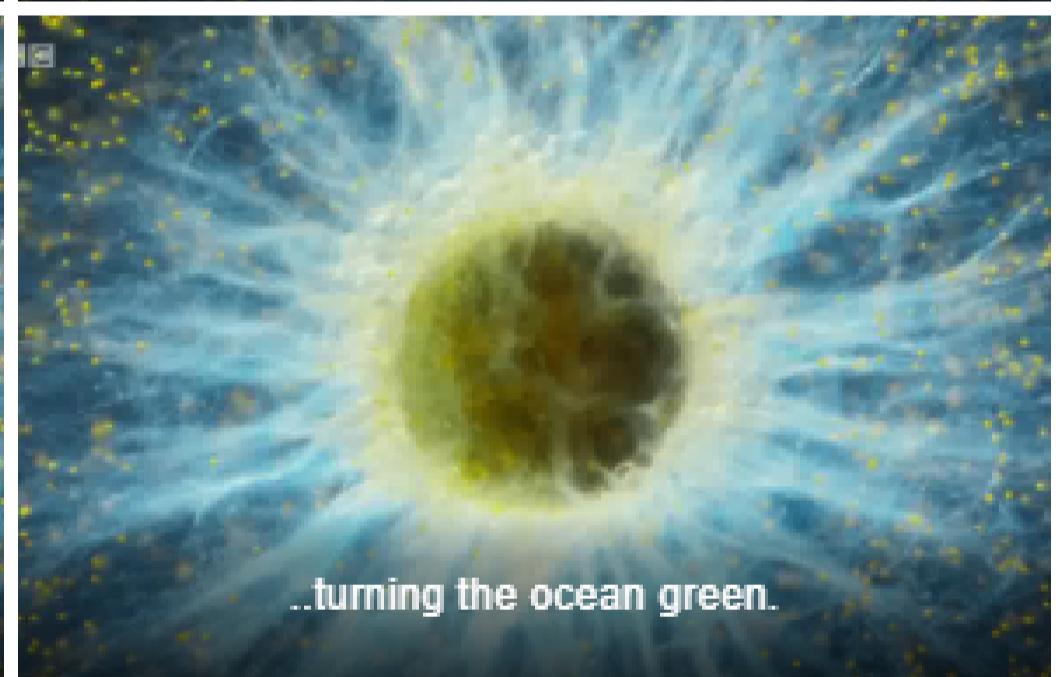
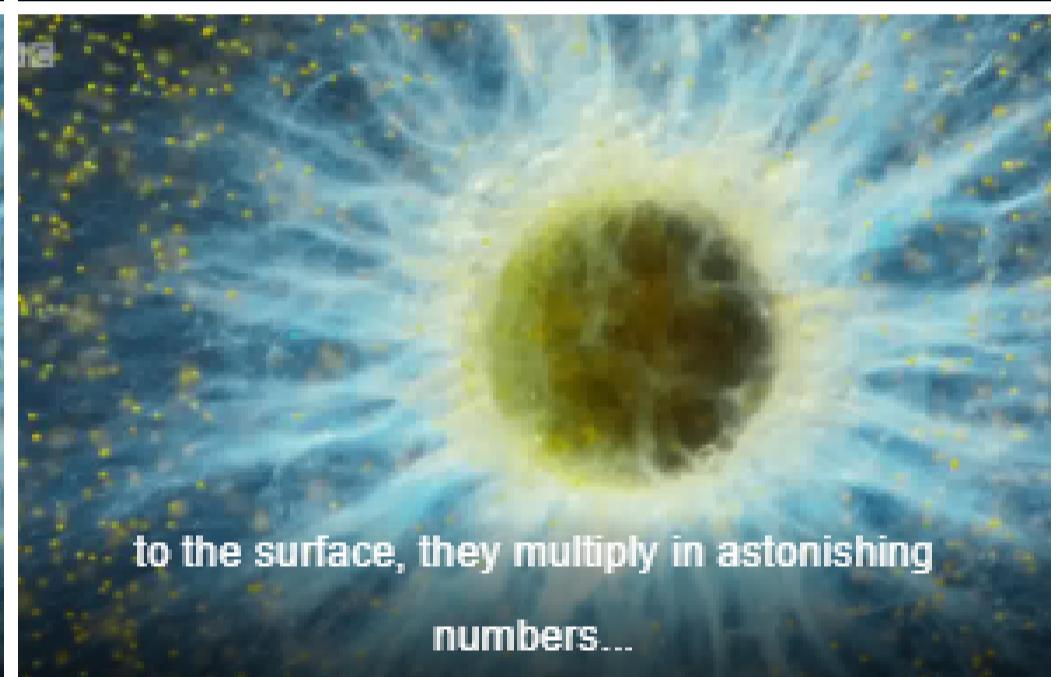
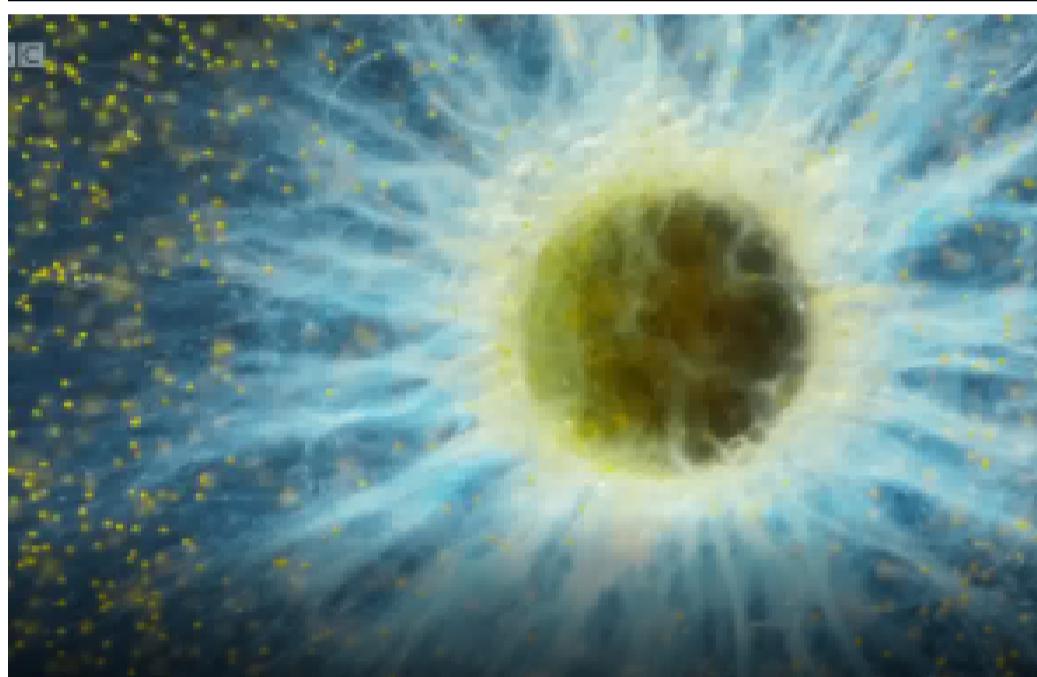
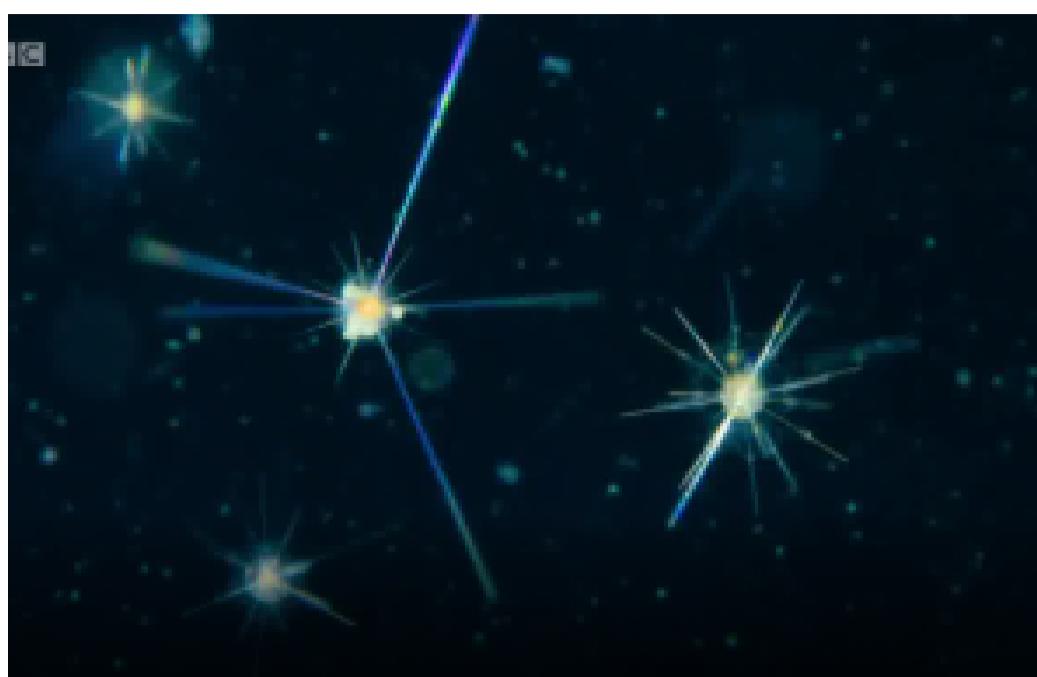
And, by absorbing carbon,

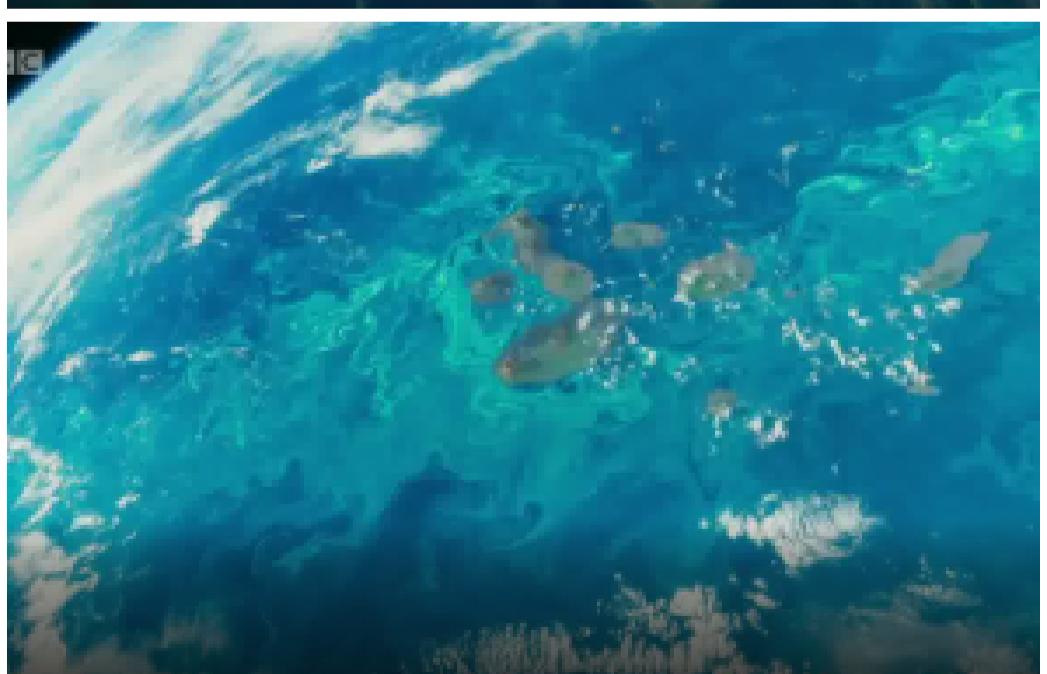
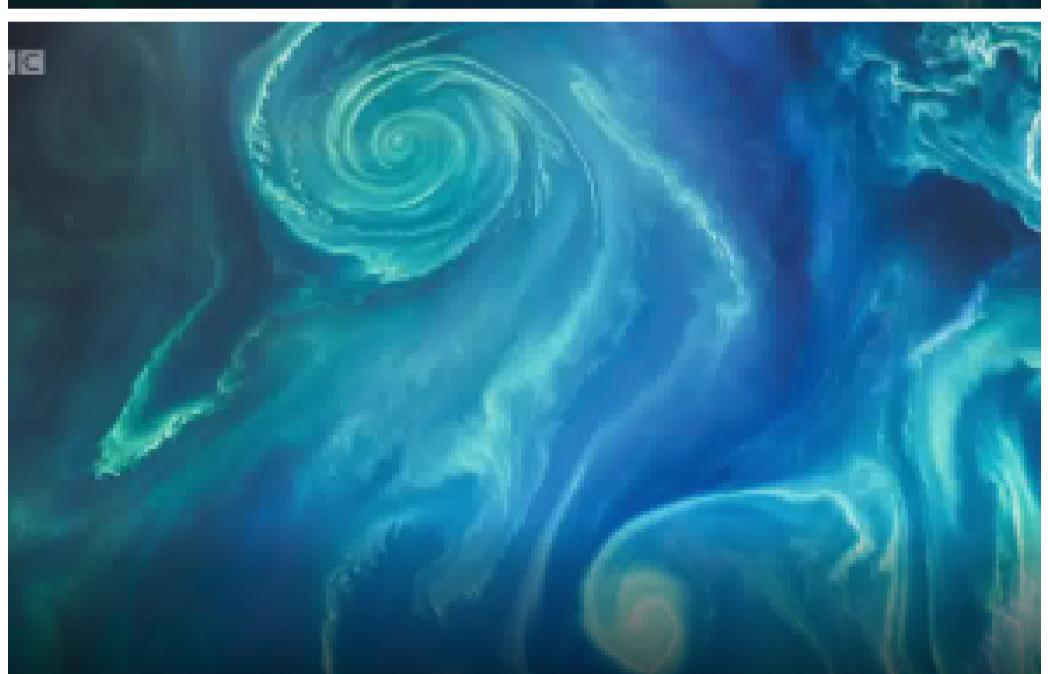
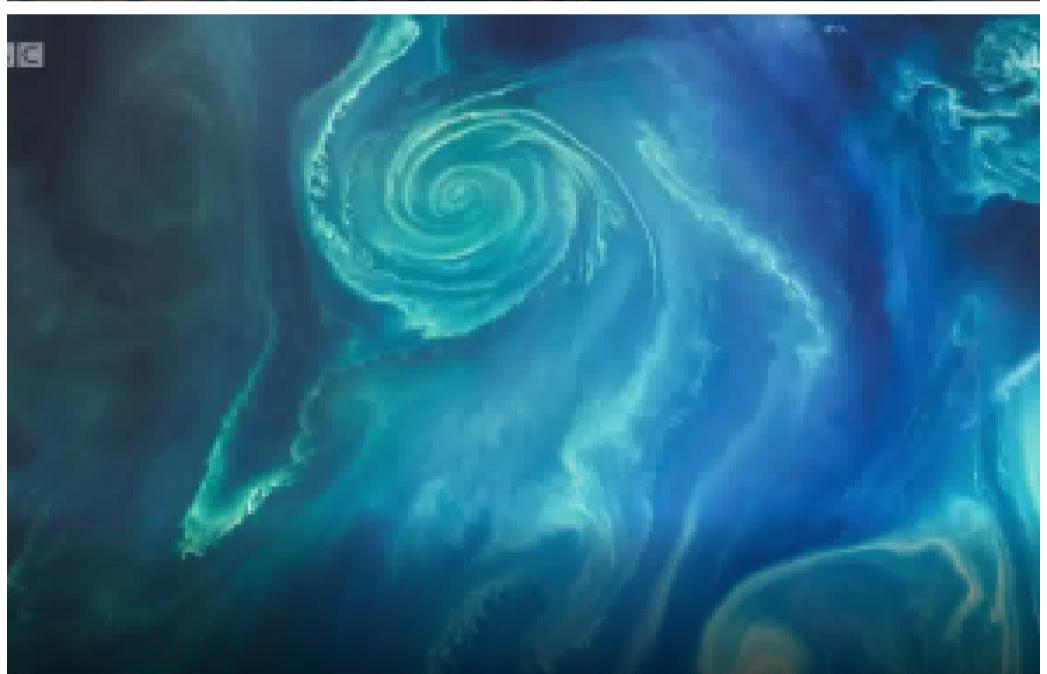
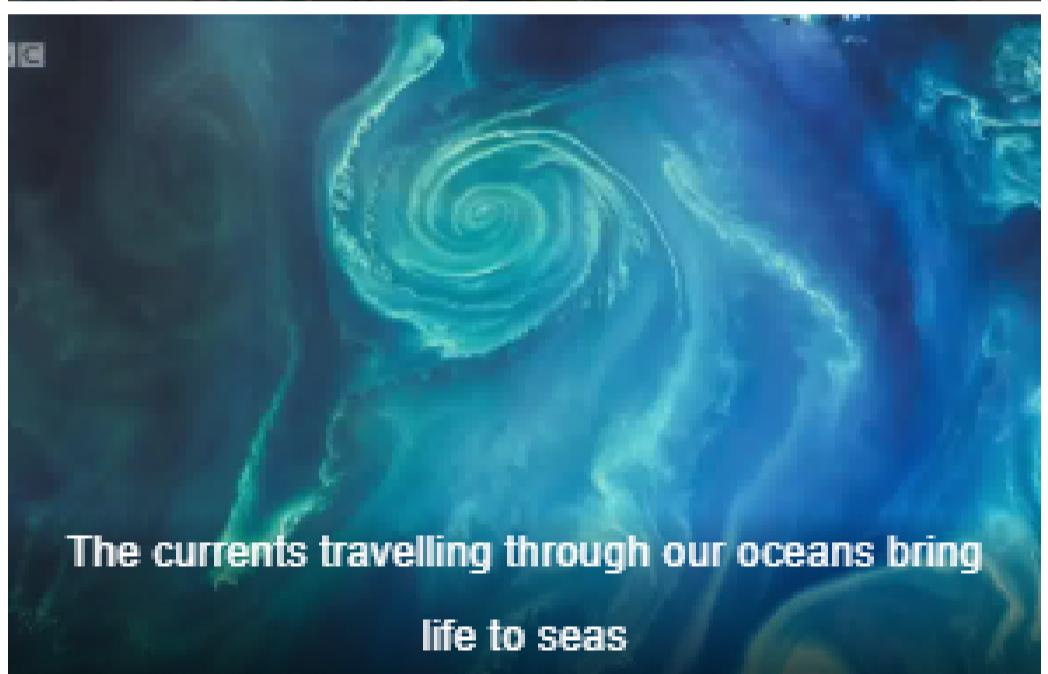


they are our greatest ally in combating climate  
change.



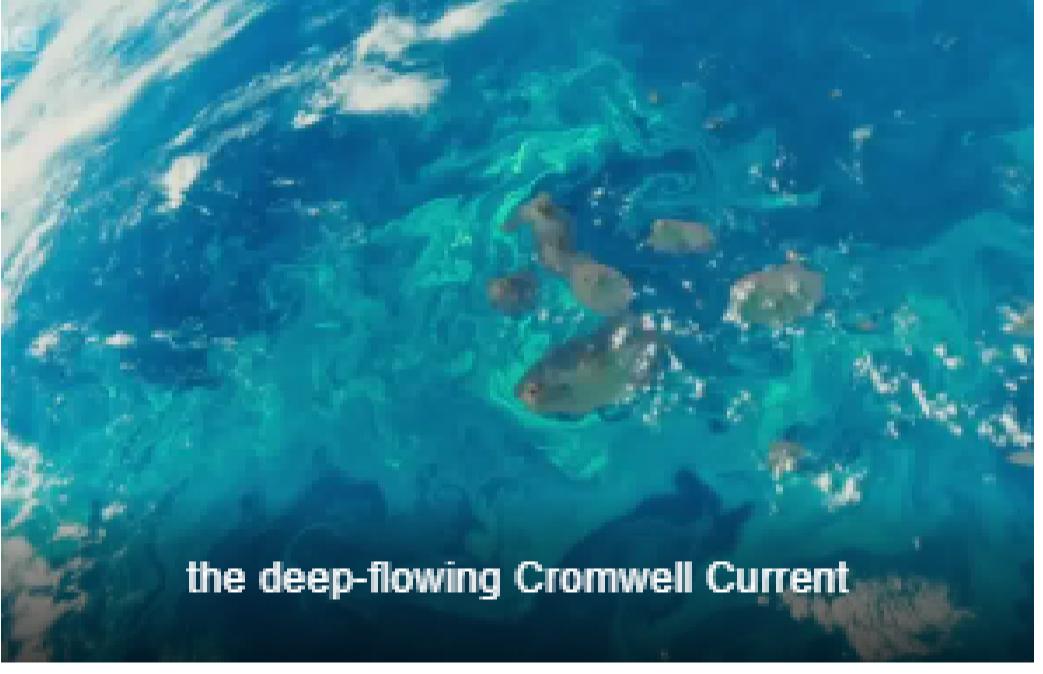
Plankton are the foundation of almost all life in  
the ocean,







The Galapagos Islands lie in the path of one of them,



the deep-flowing Cromwell Current



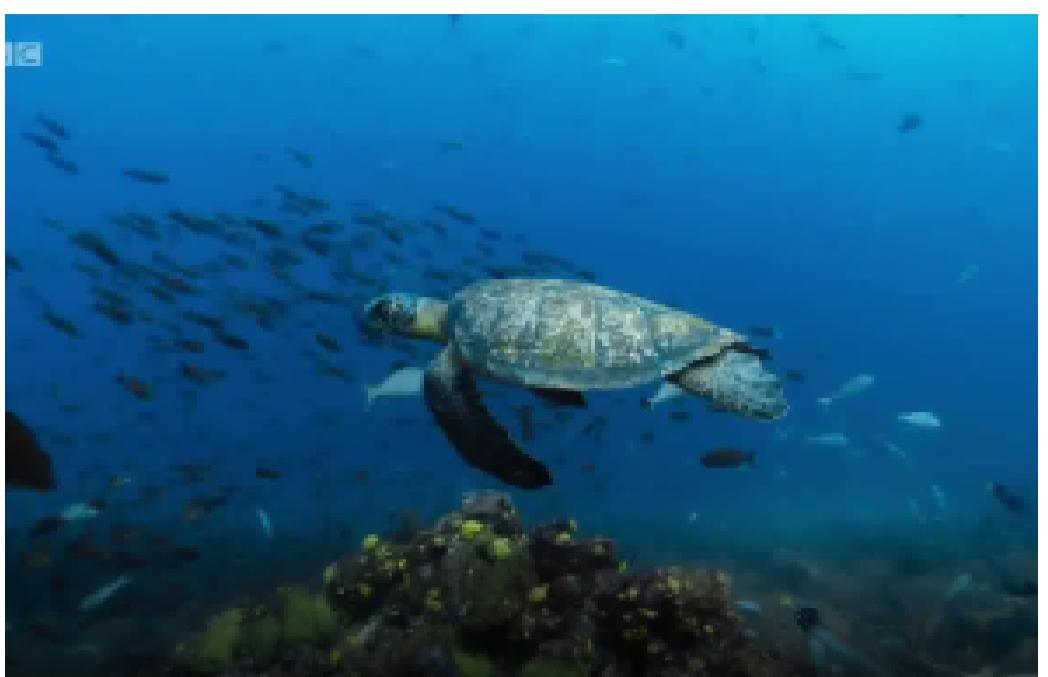
that runs for 6,000 miles across the Pacific.



As it approaches Fernandina Island,

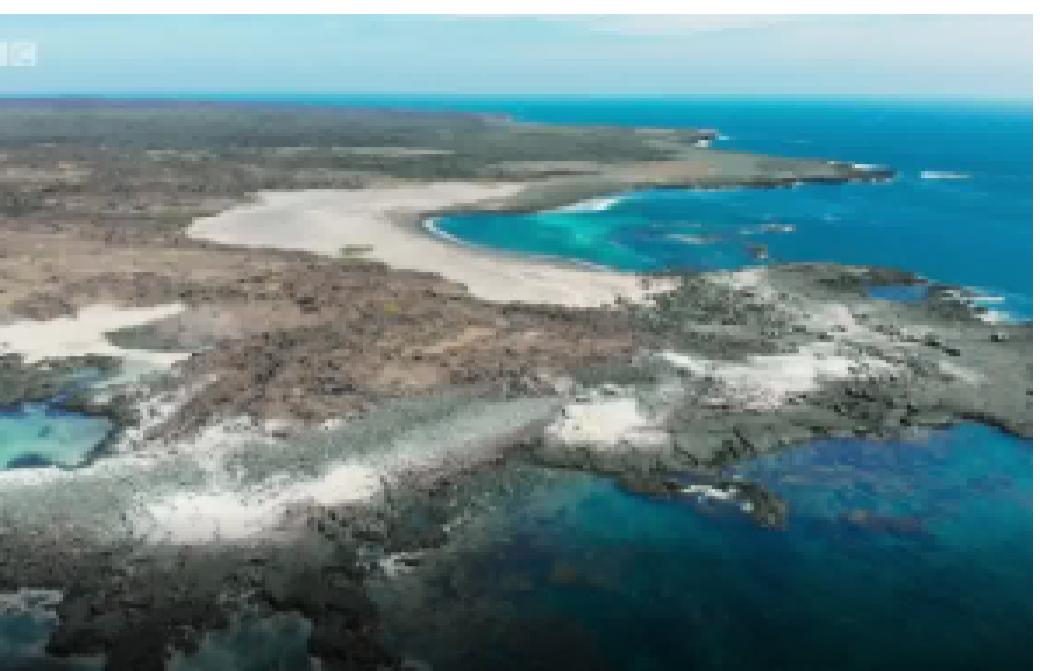


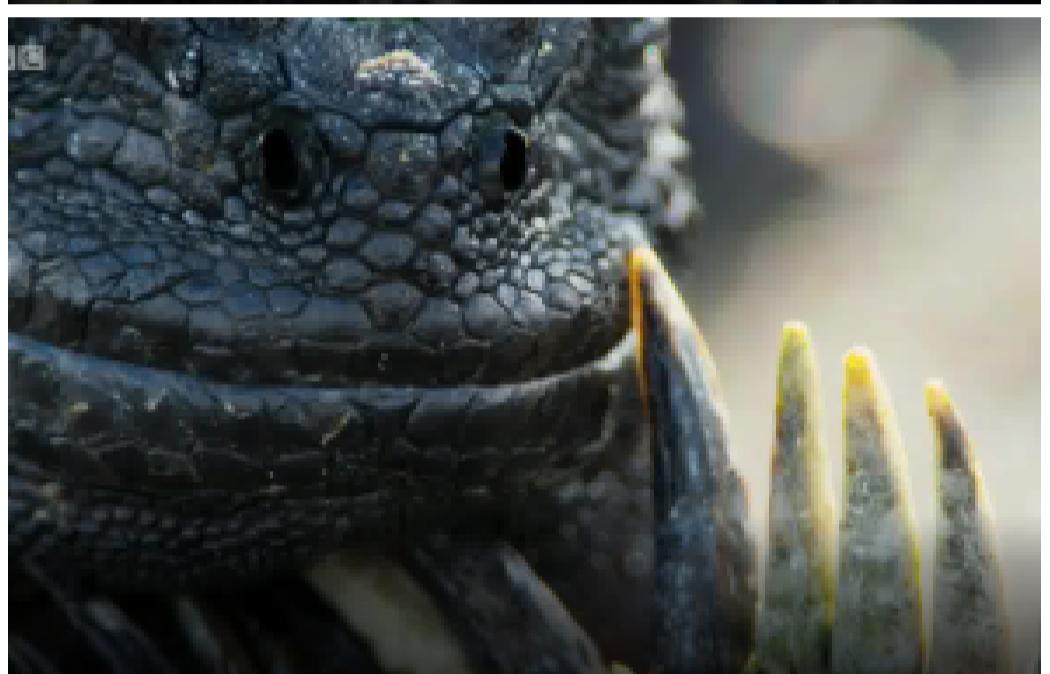
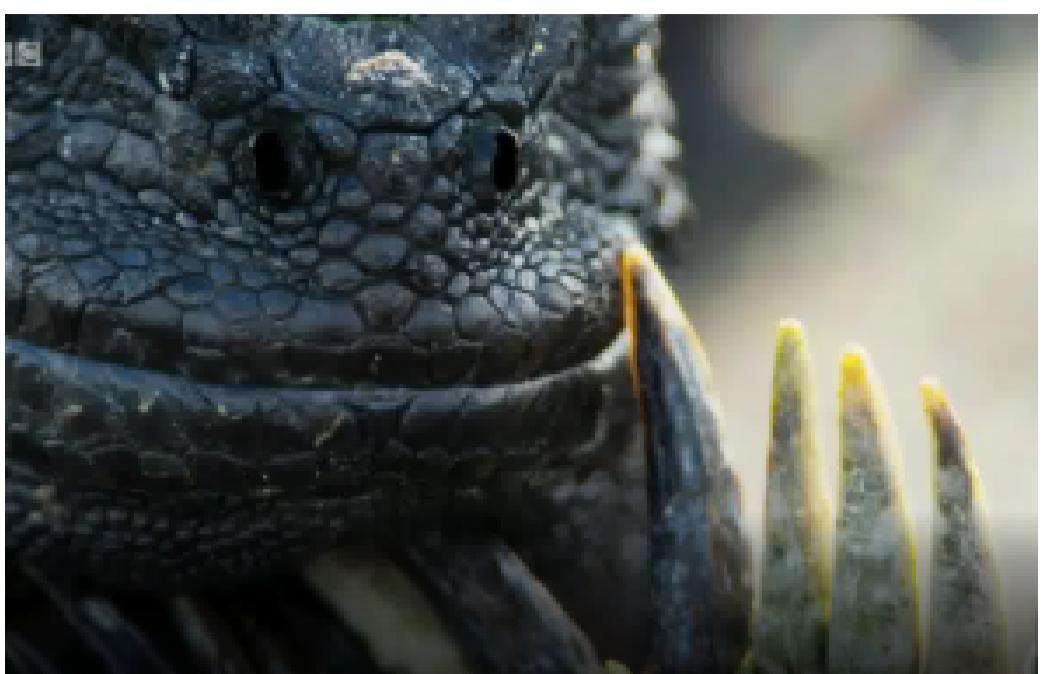
it rises and delivers nutrients into its shallows.





And it also brings life to this otherwise barren island.

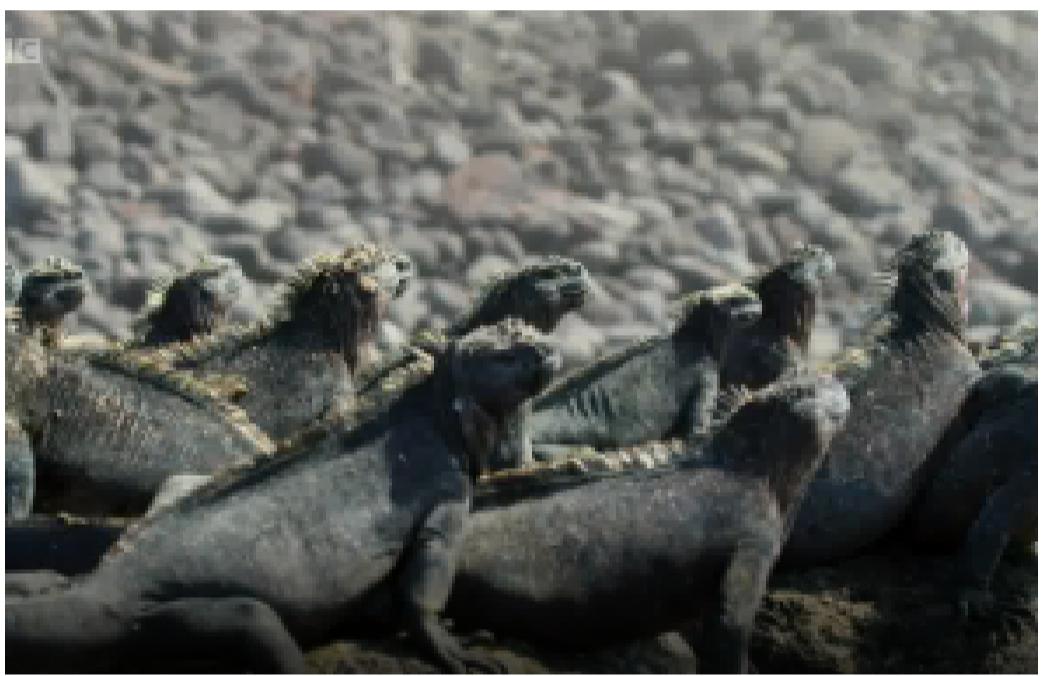
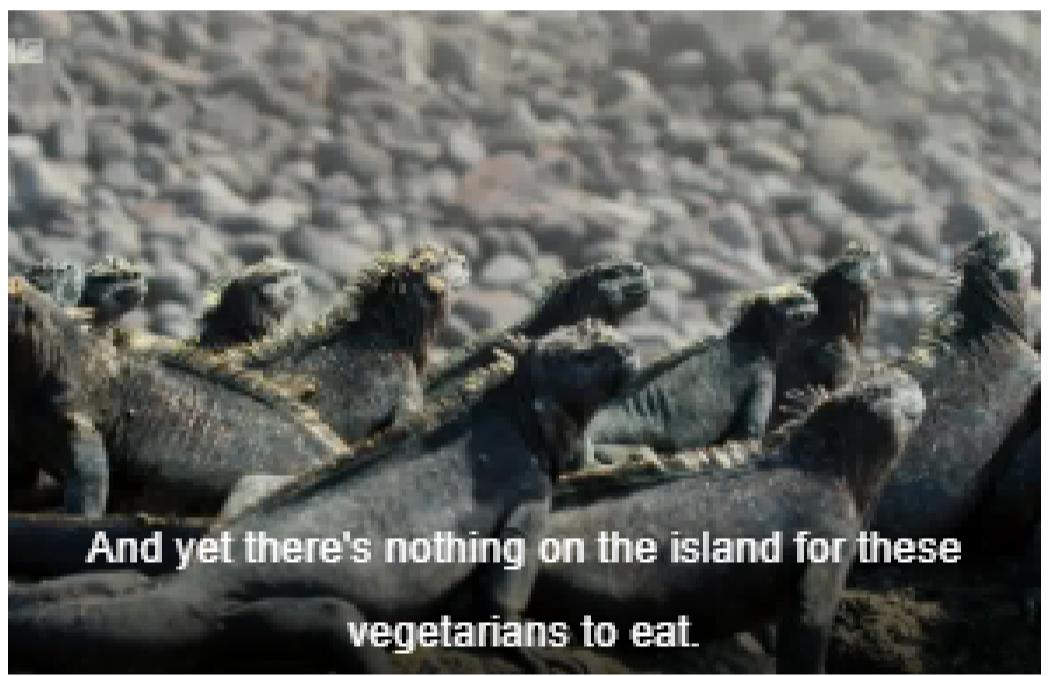




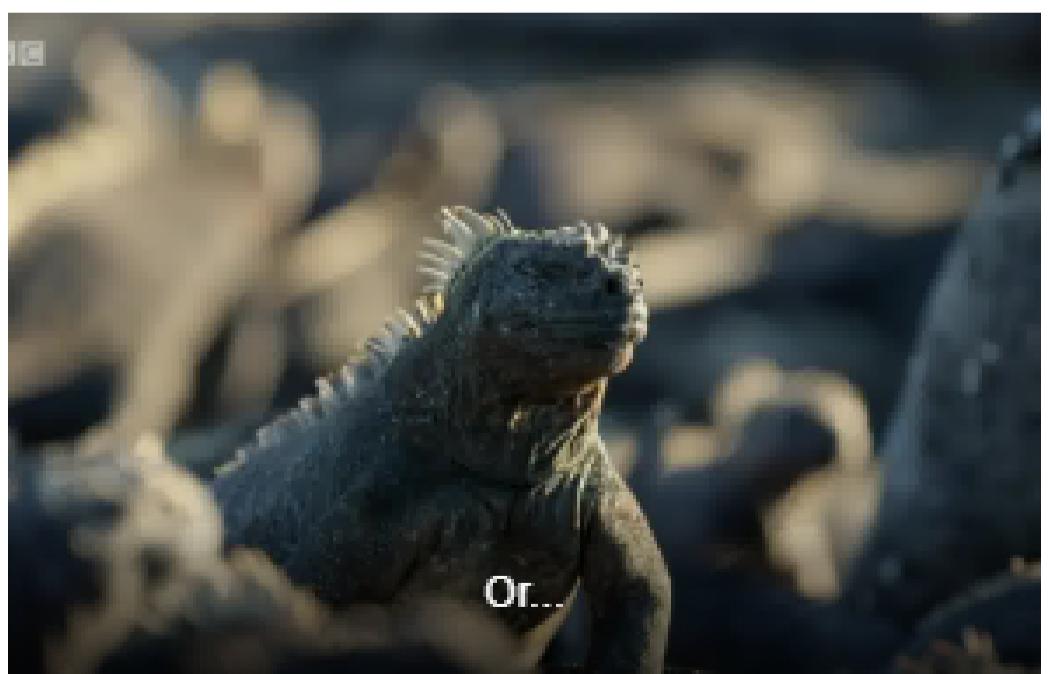
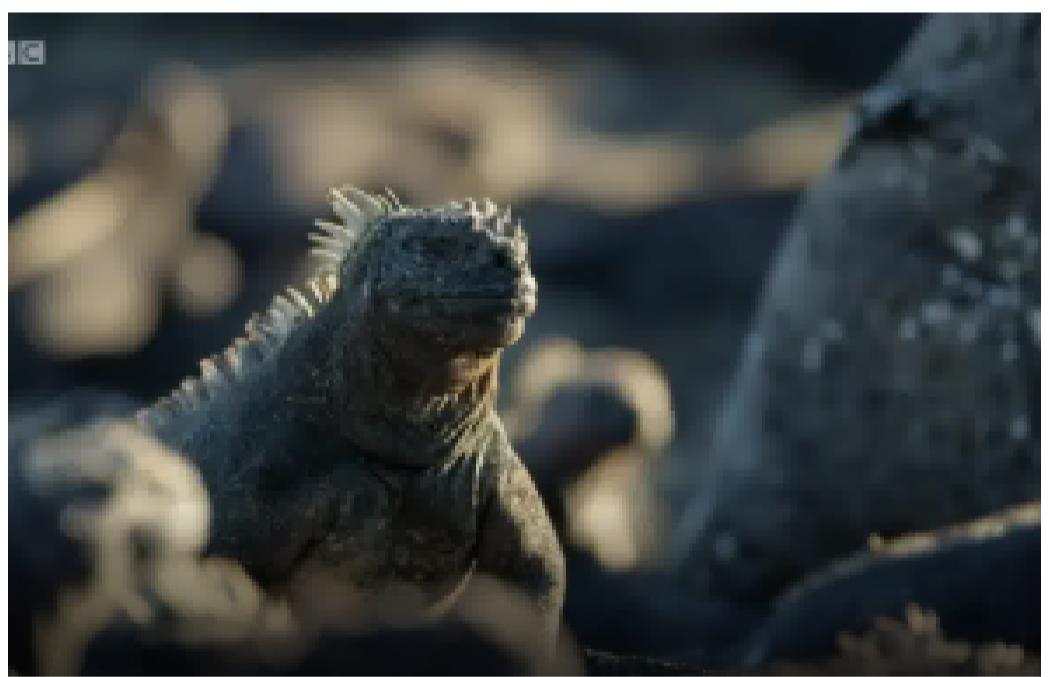
Iguanas.

There are thousands of them.



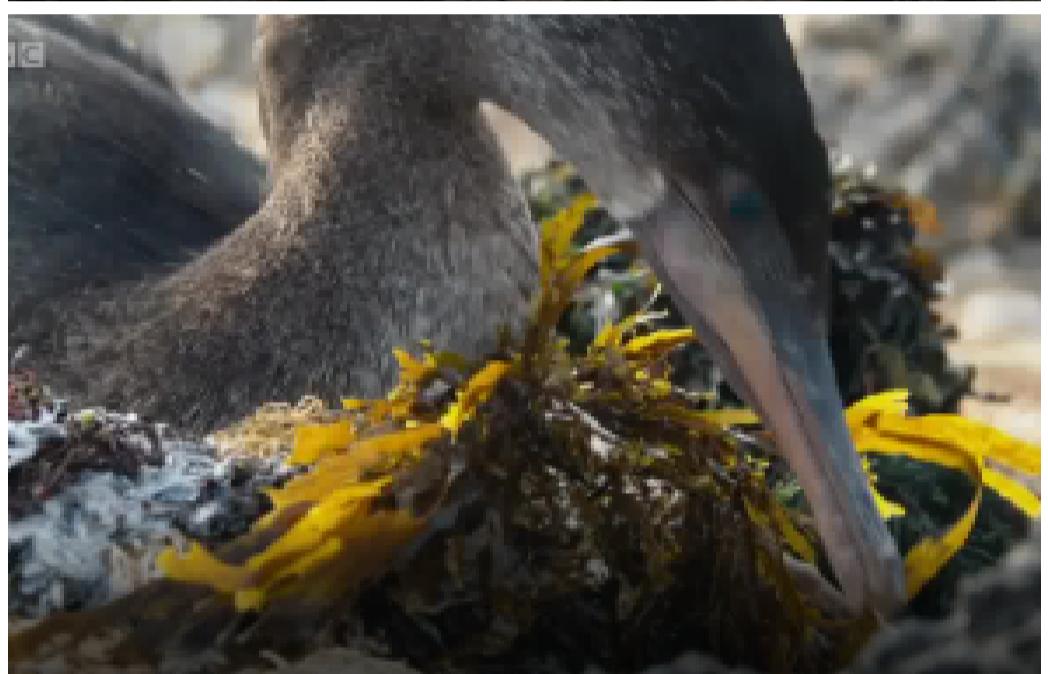


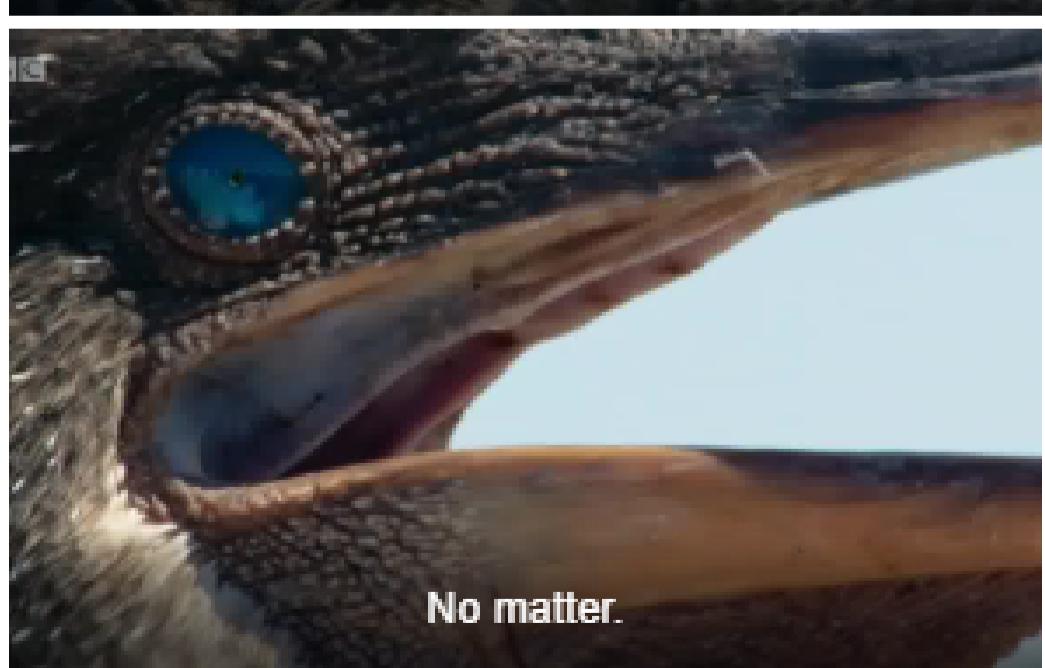
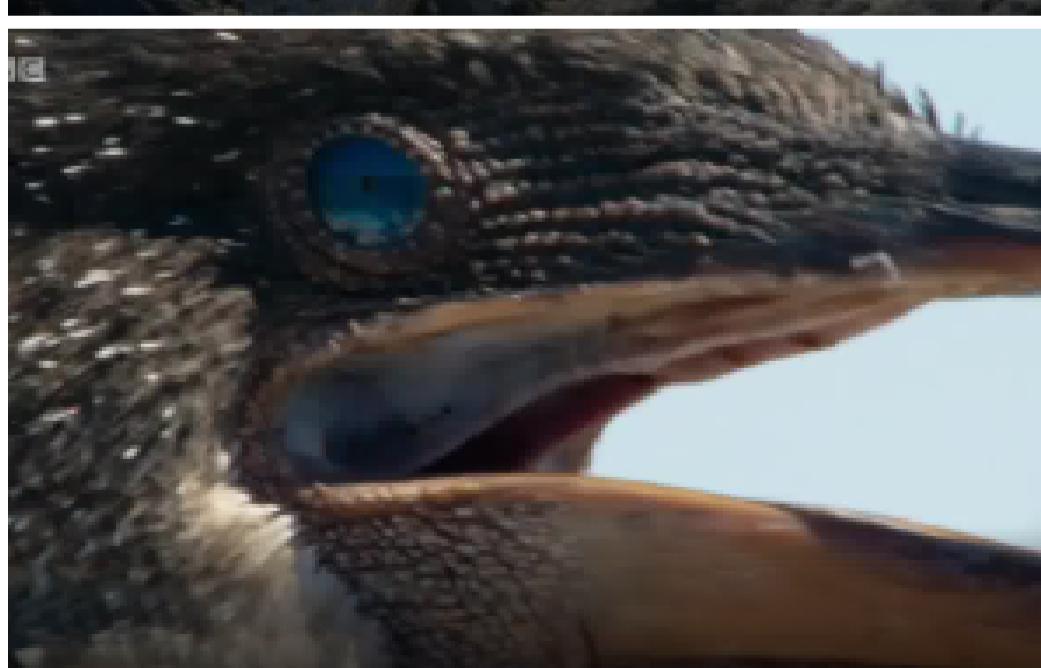
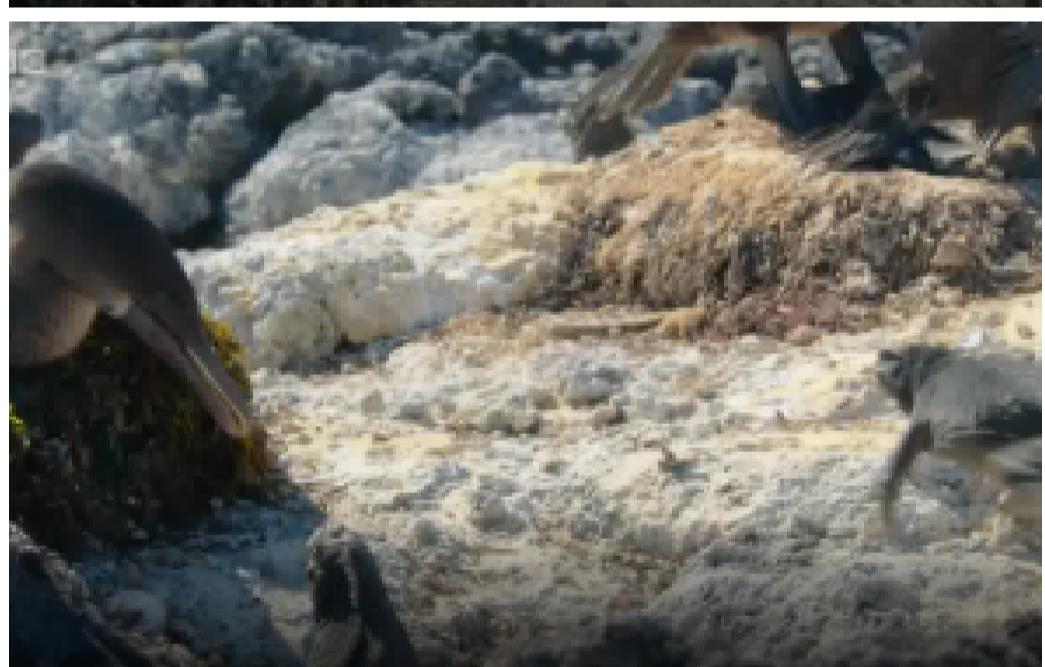
And yet there's nothing on the island for these  
vegetarians to eat.



Or...

...almost nothing.



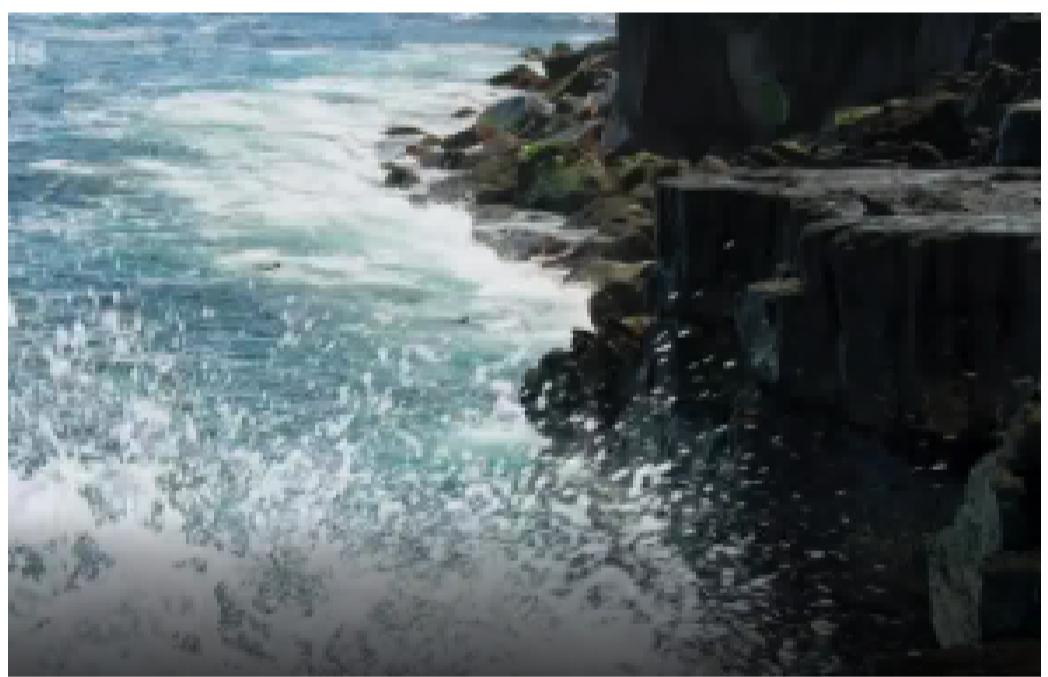
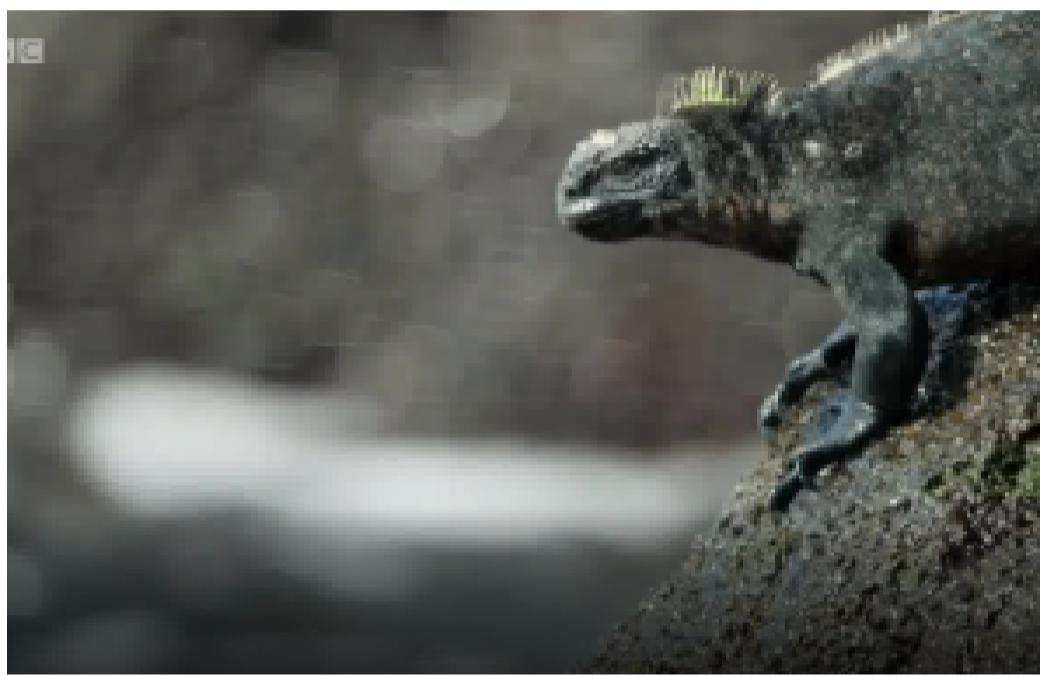




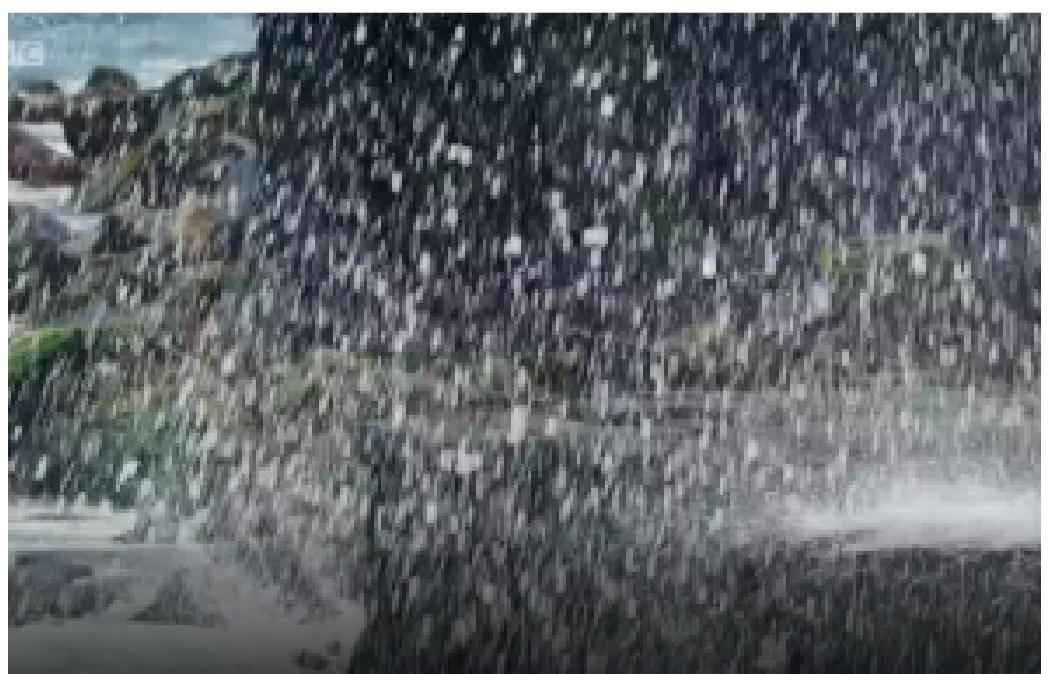
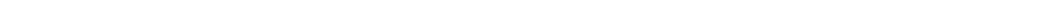
He knows where there's more elsewhere.



He's a marine iguana...

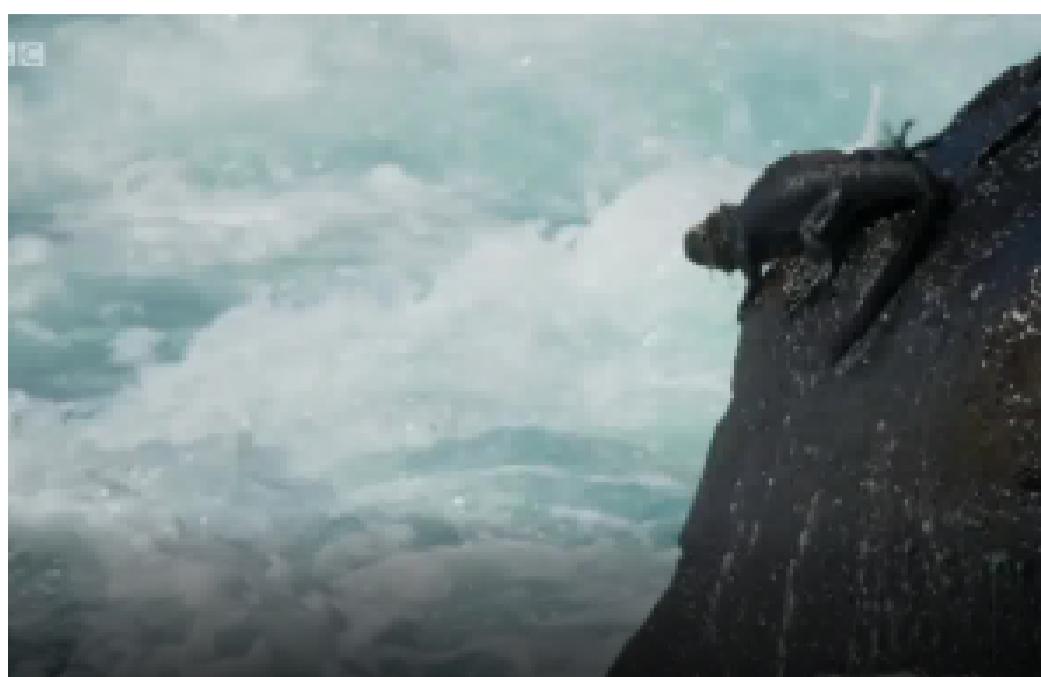


...the only lizard in the world

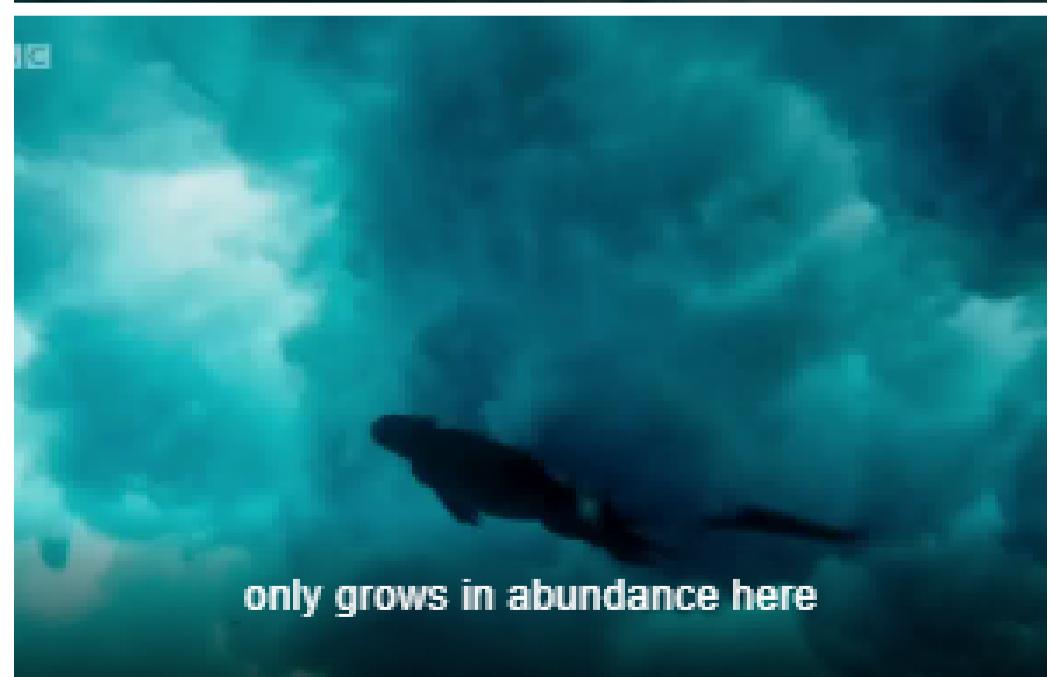


that gets its food from the sea.





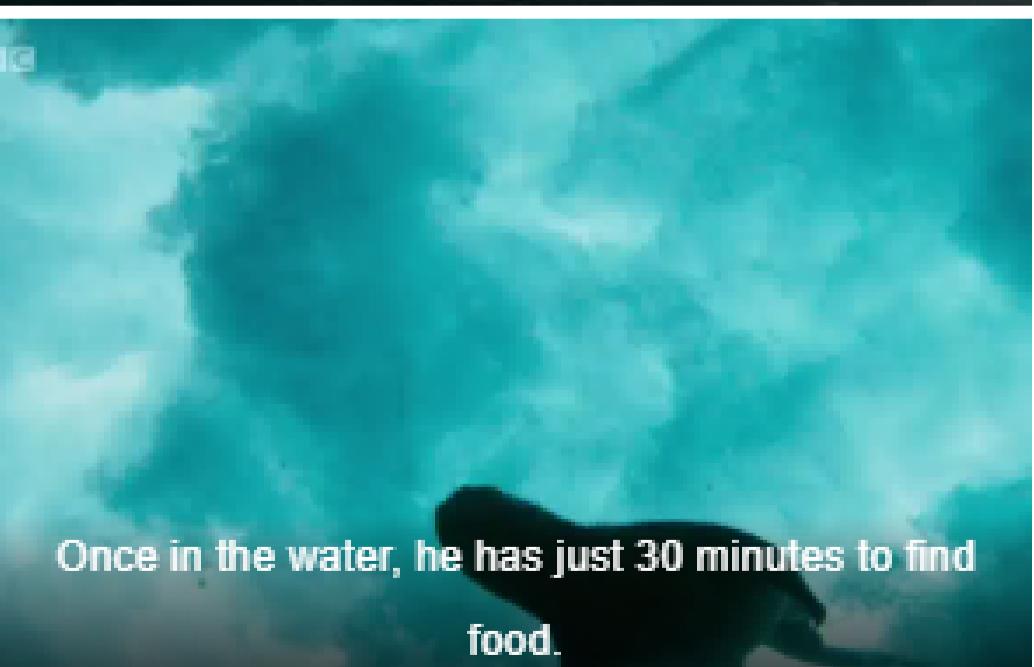
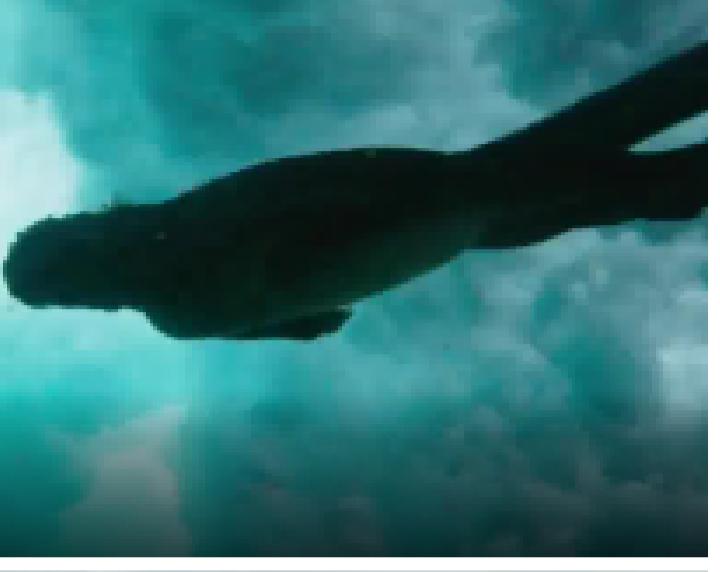
The seaweed on which he totally relies



only grows in abundance here

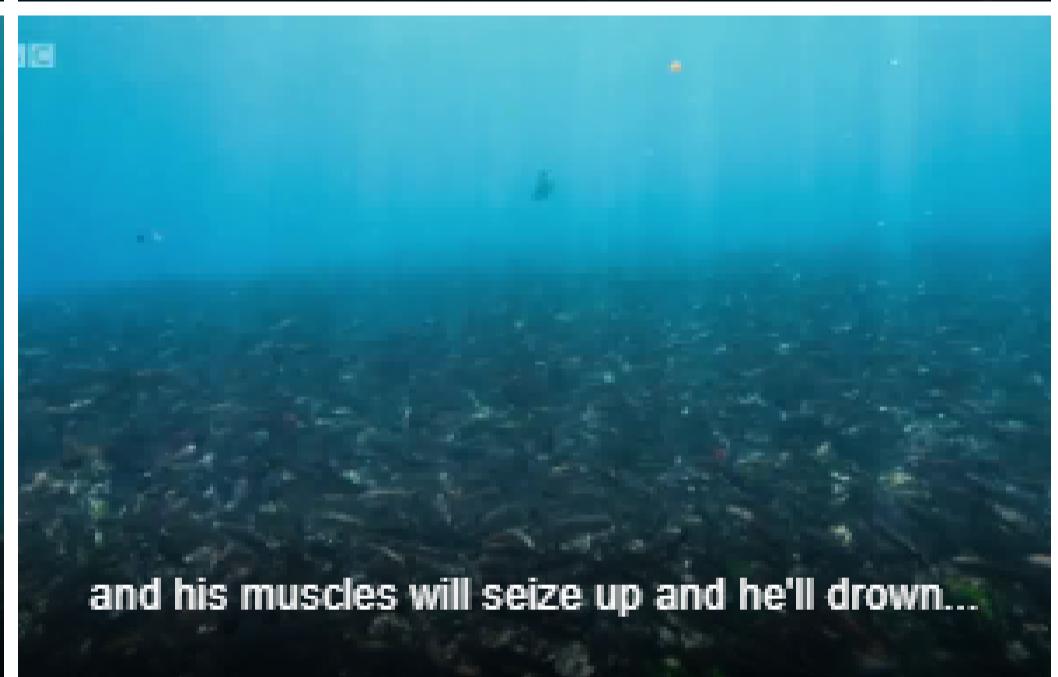


because of the nutrients brought by the  
Cromwell Current.



Once in the water, he has just 30 minutes to find  
food.



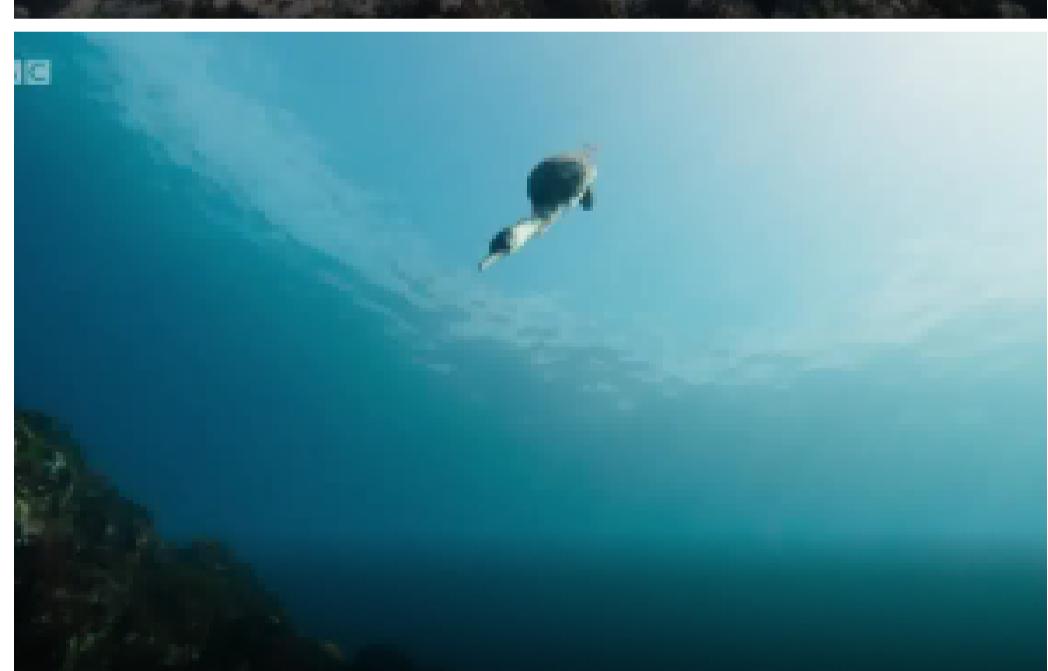
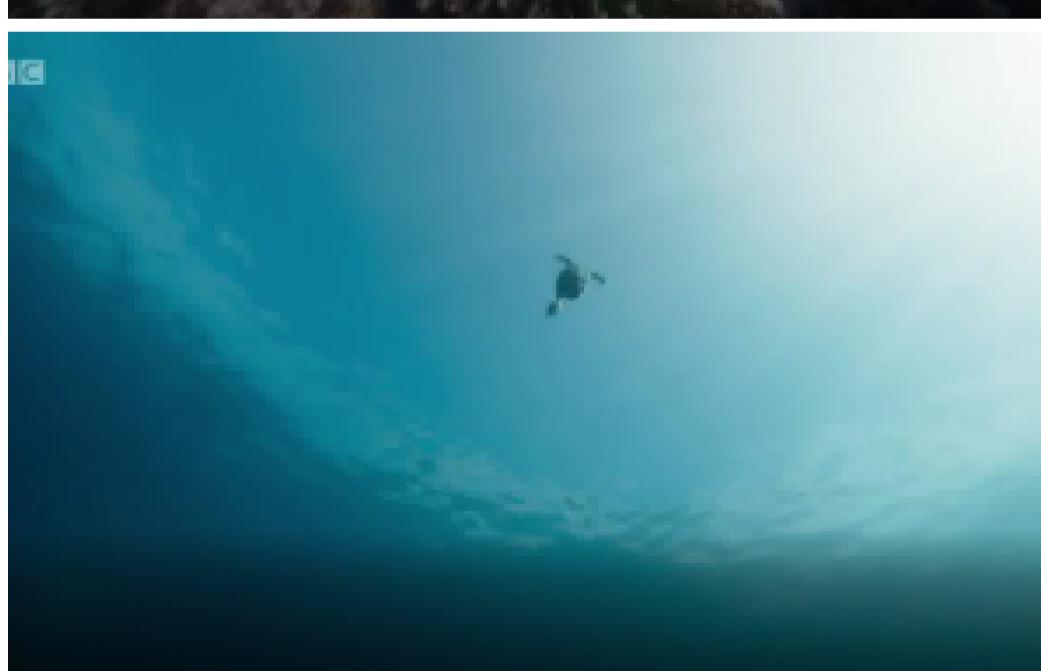
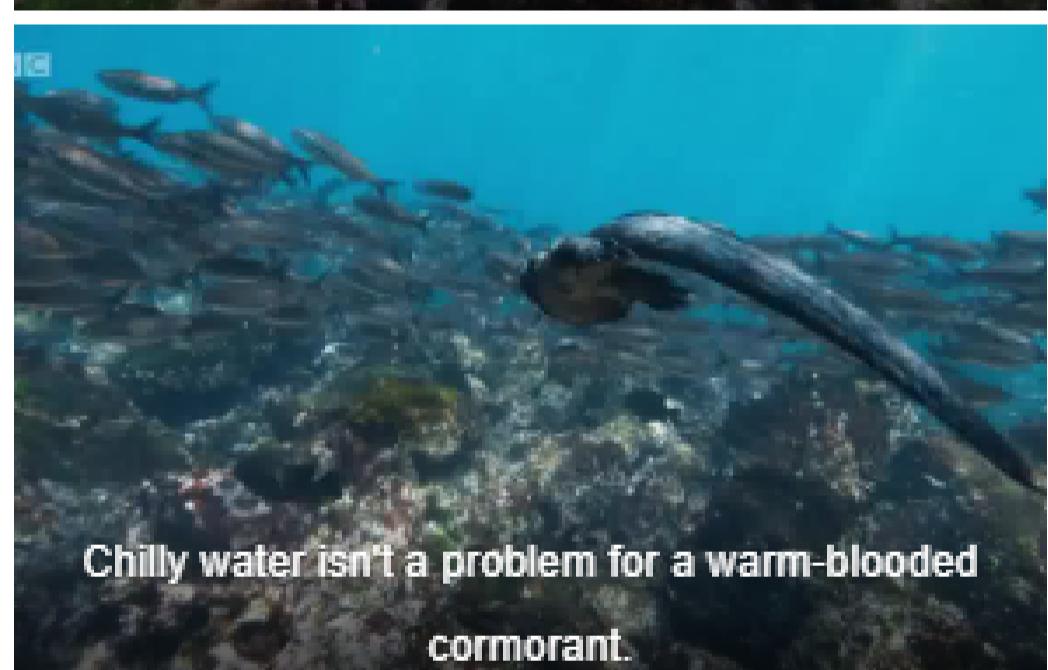
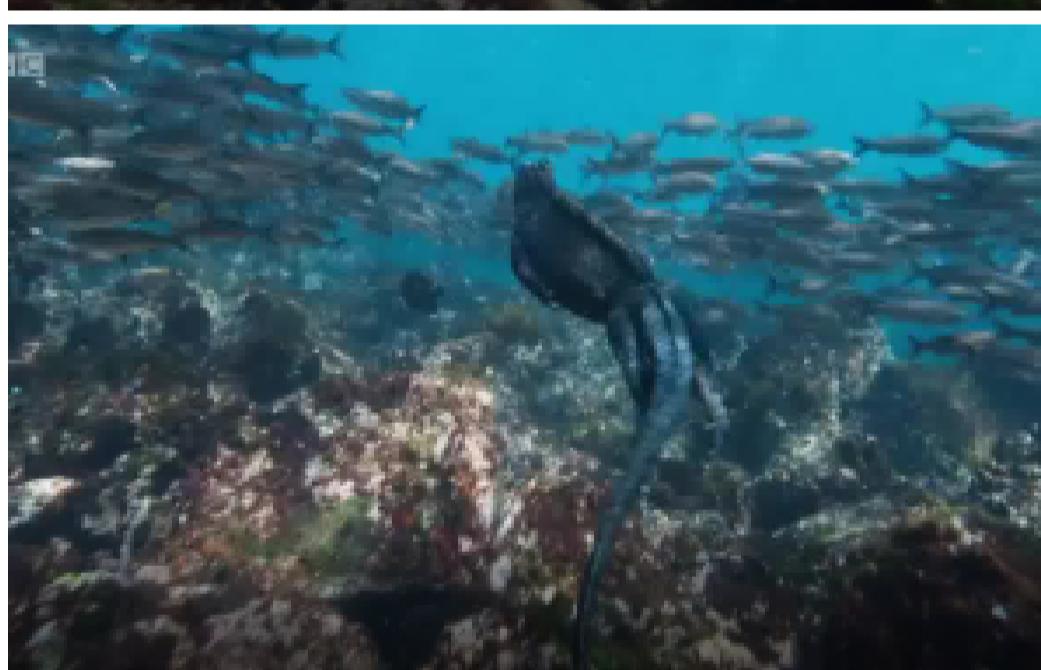


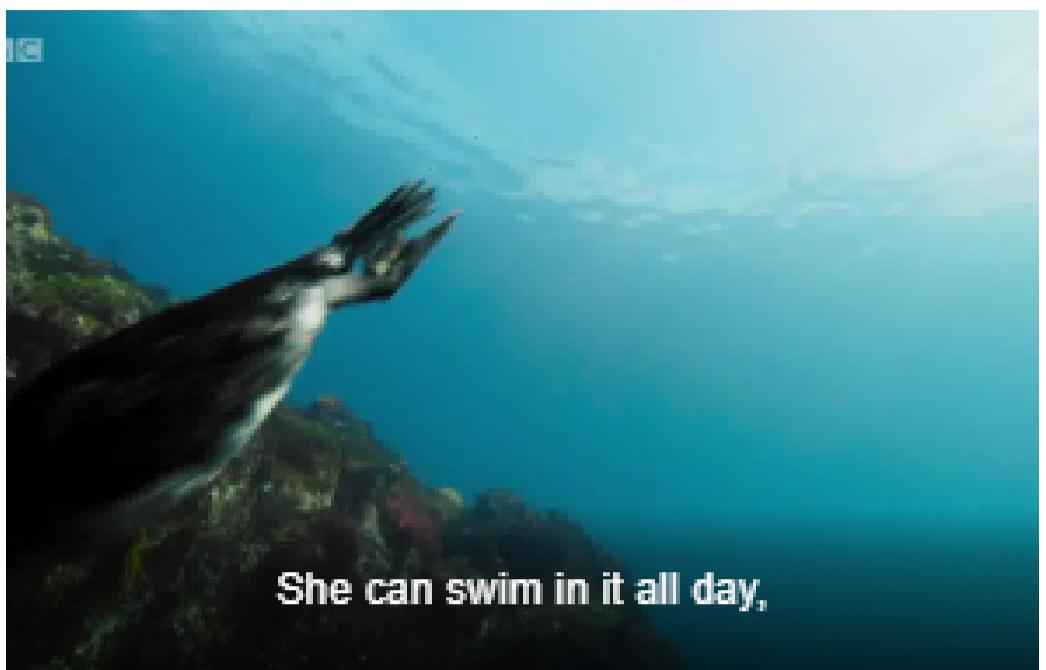
Any longer than that,

and his muscles will seize up and he'll drown...



...for, like most reptiles, he can't handle the cold.

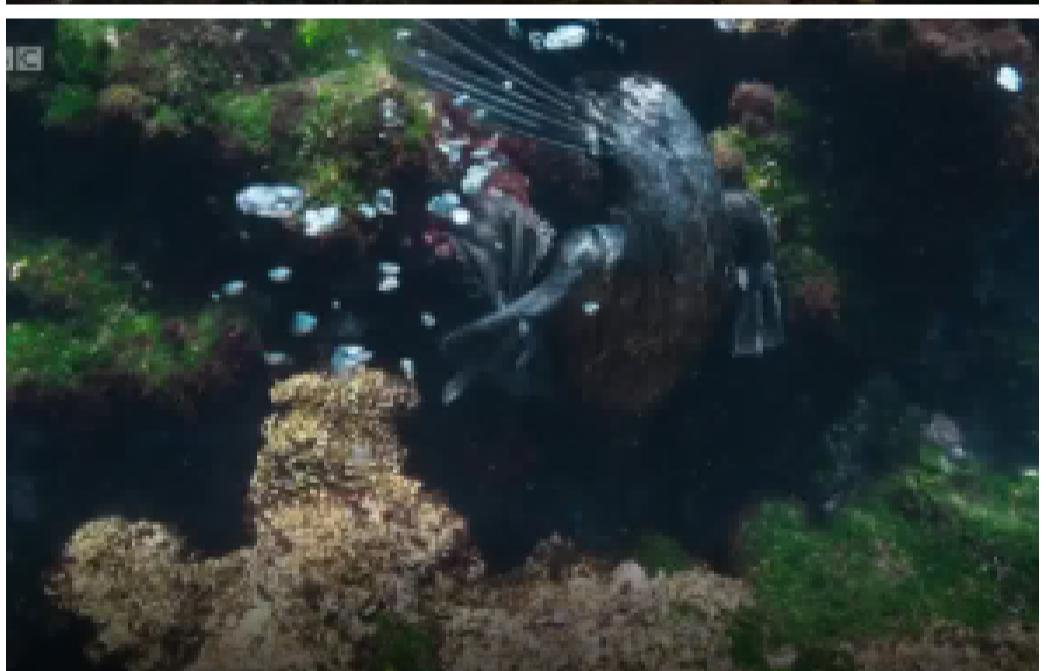
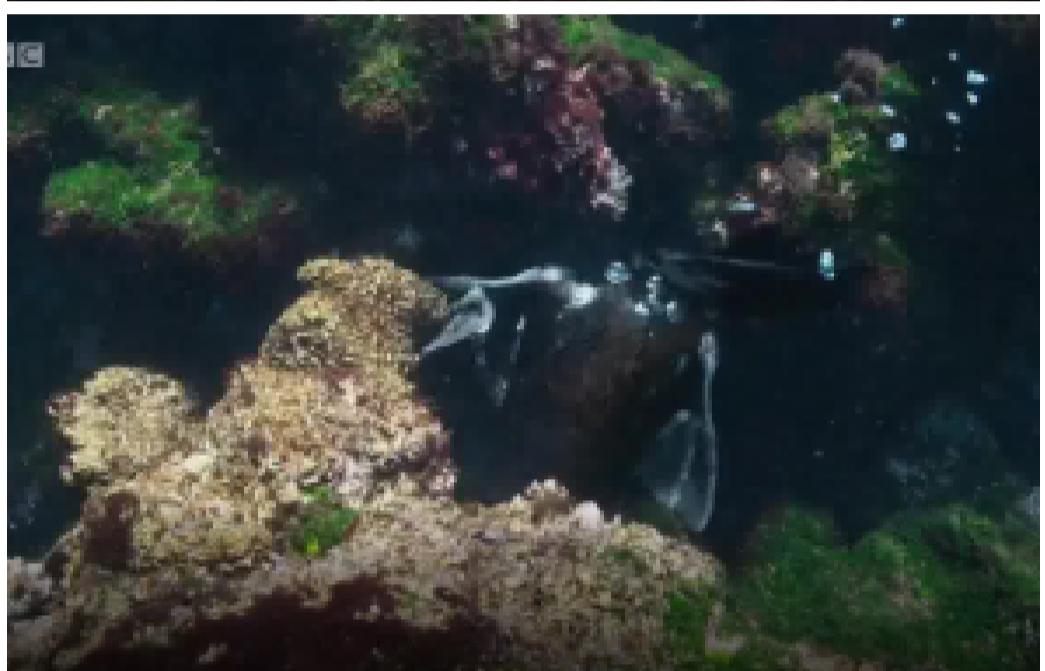




She can swim in it all day,



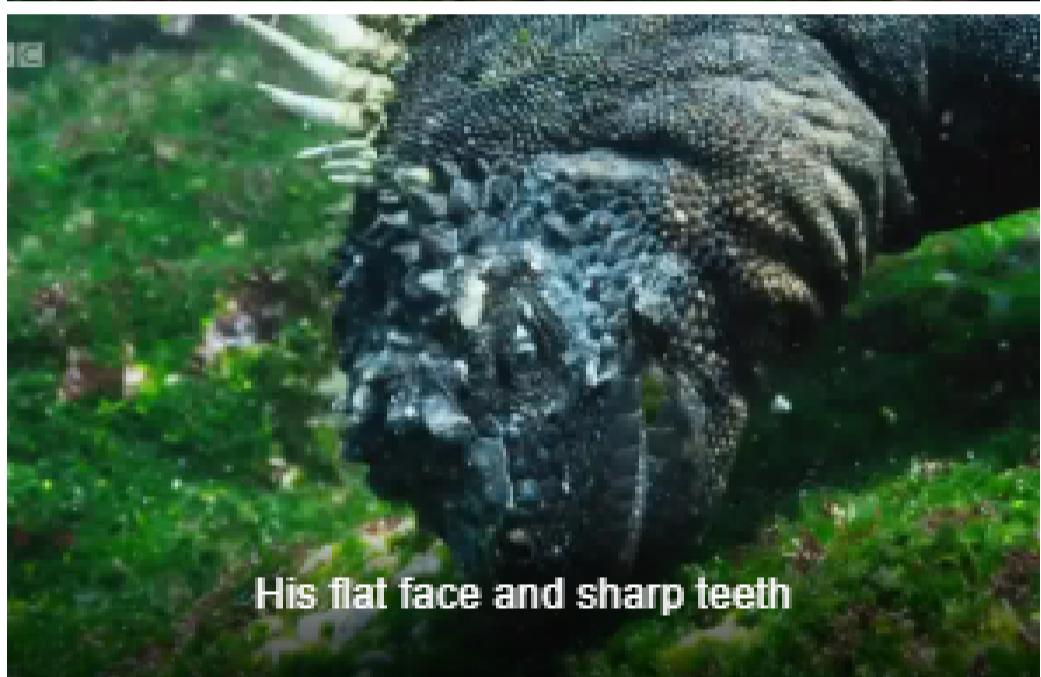
but can only hold her breath for a few minutes.



He, on the other hand,



completes his whole half-hour trip





The cormorant, having caught its fish...



...goes back to the surface.

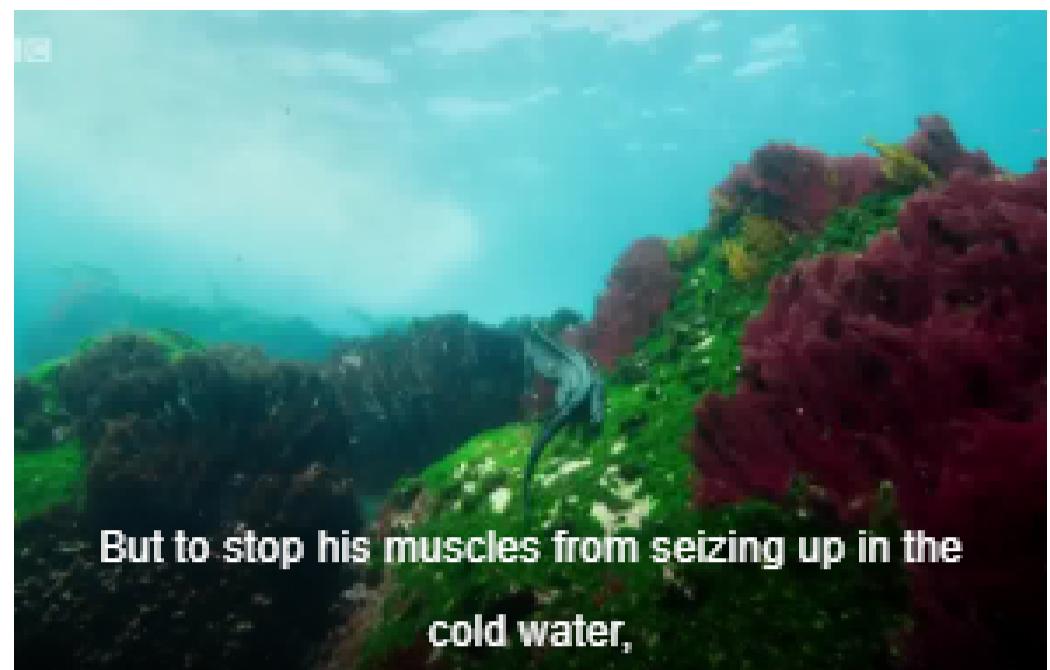


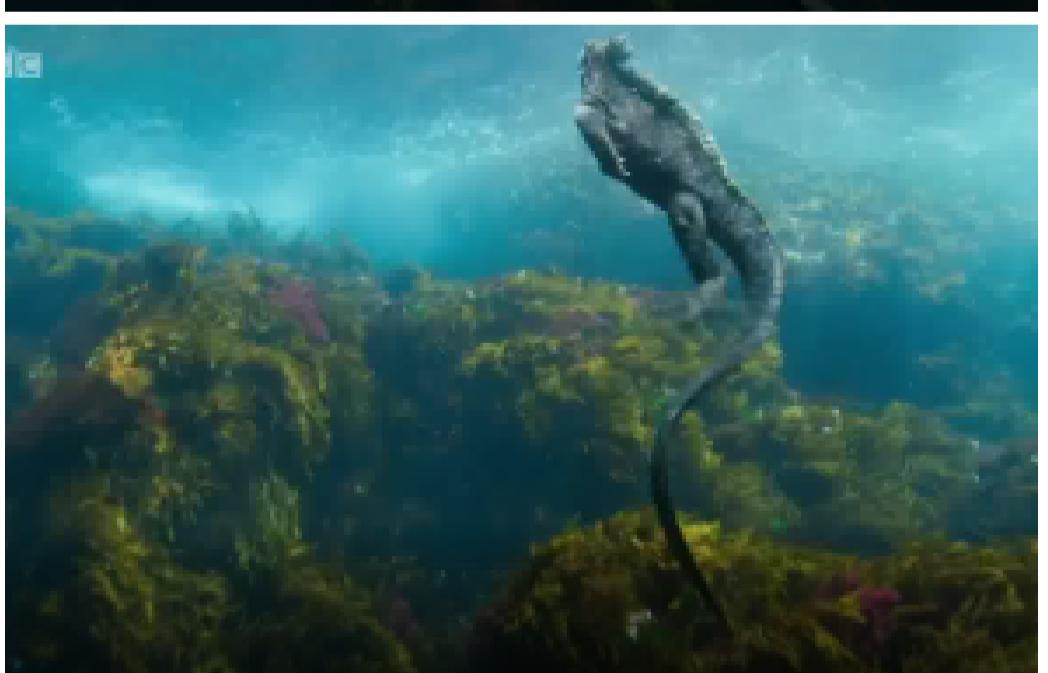
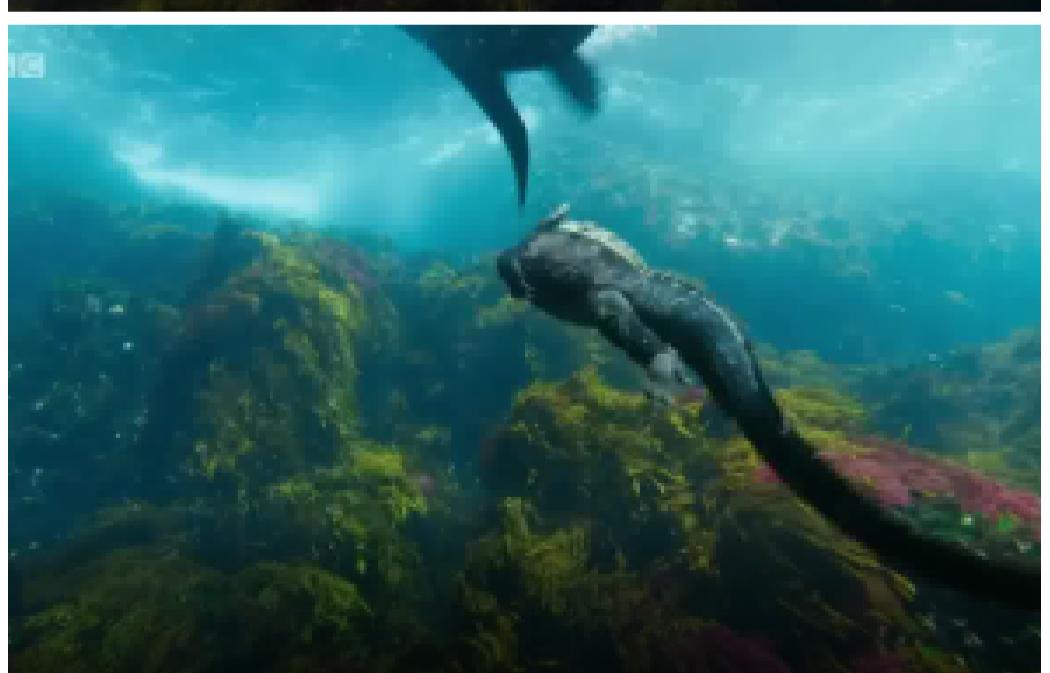
One last mouthful,

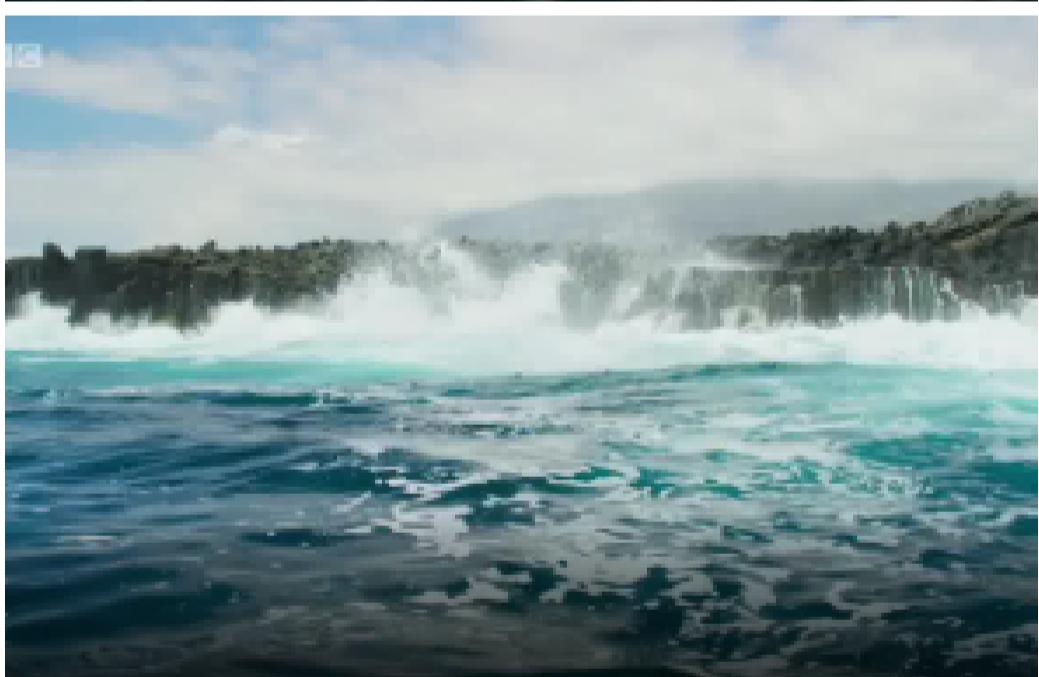
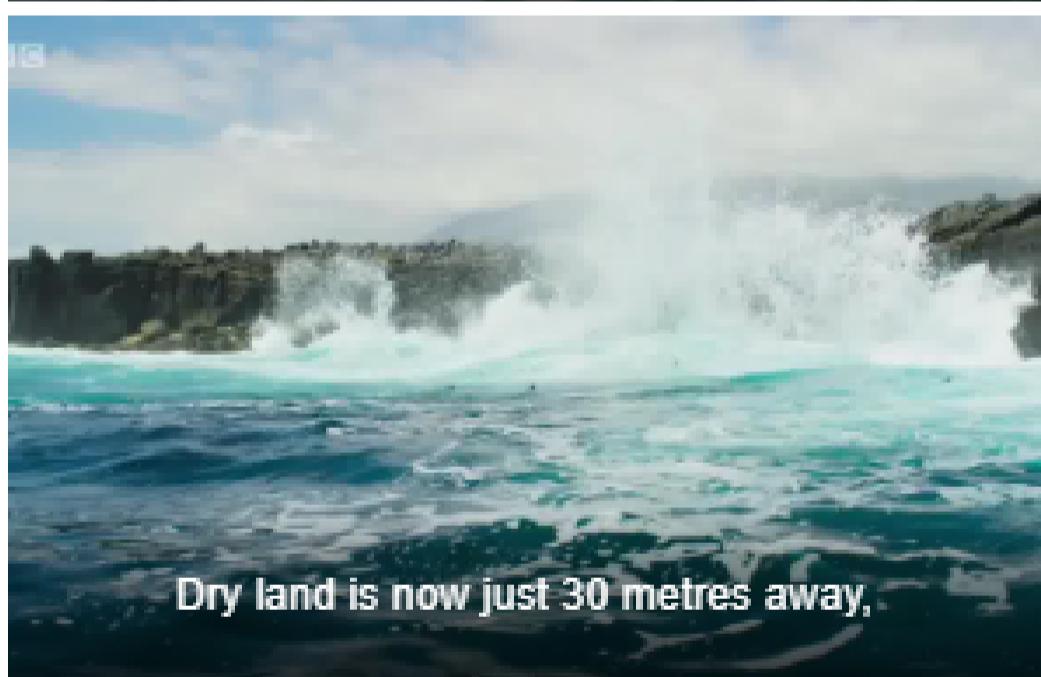
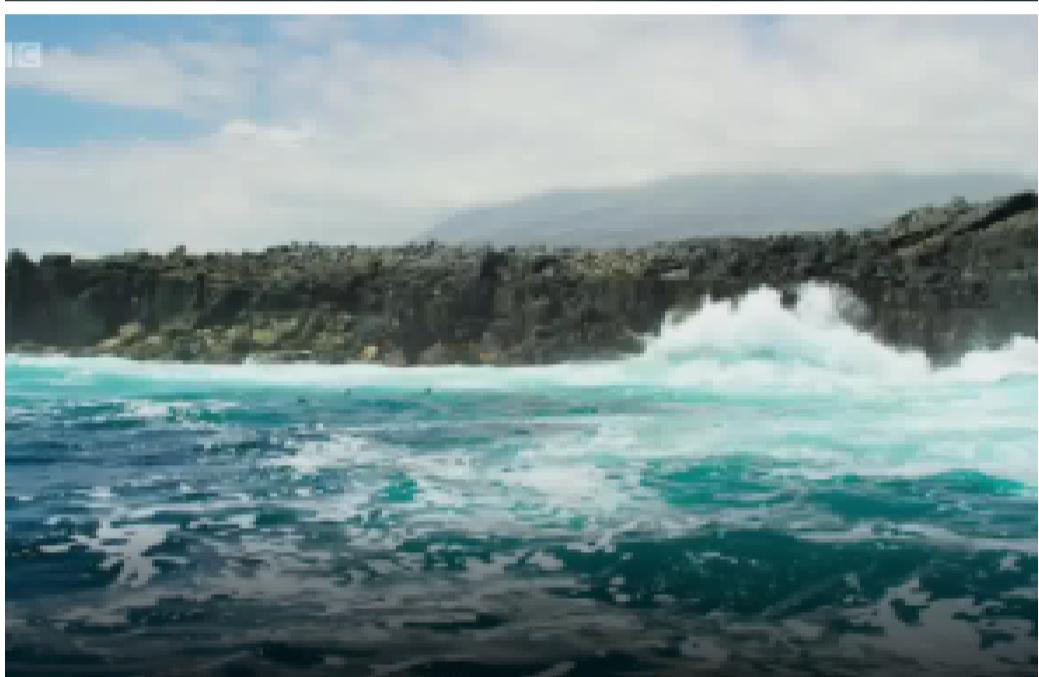
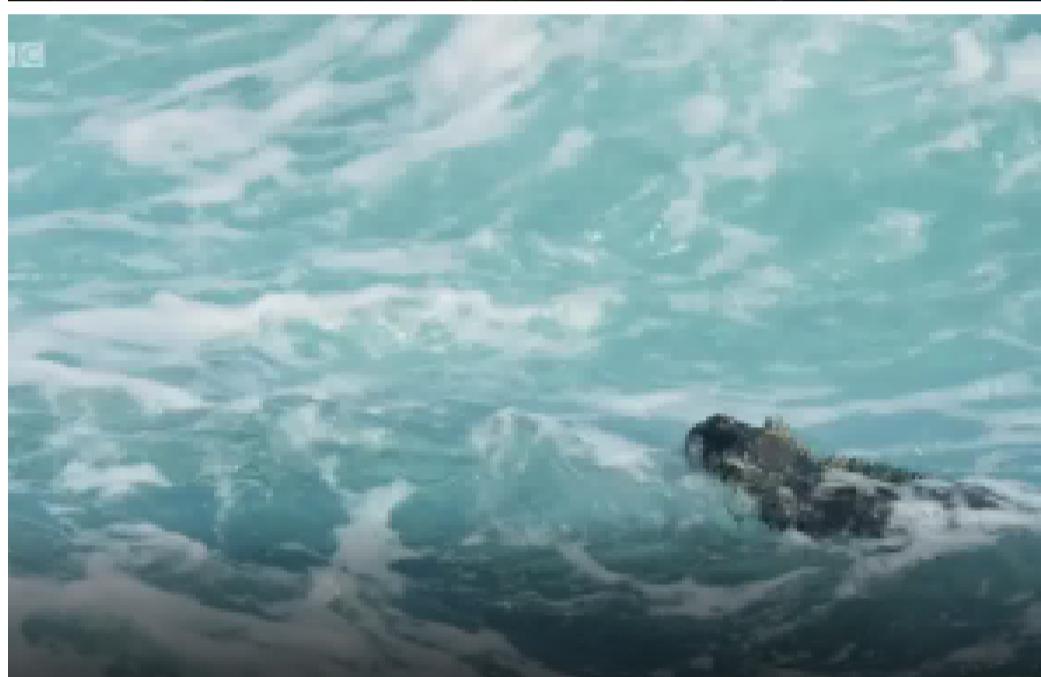
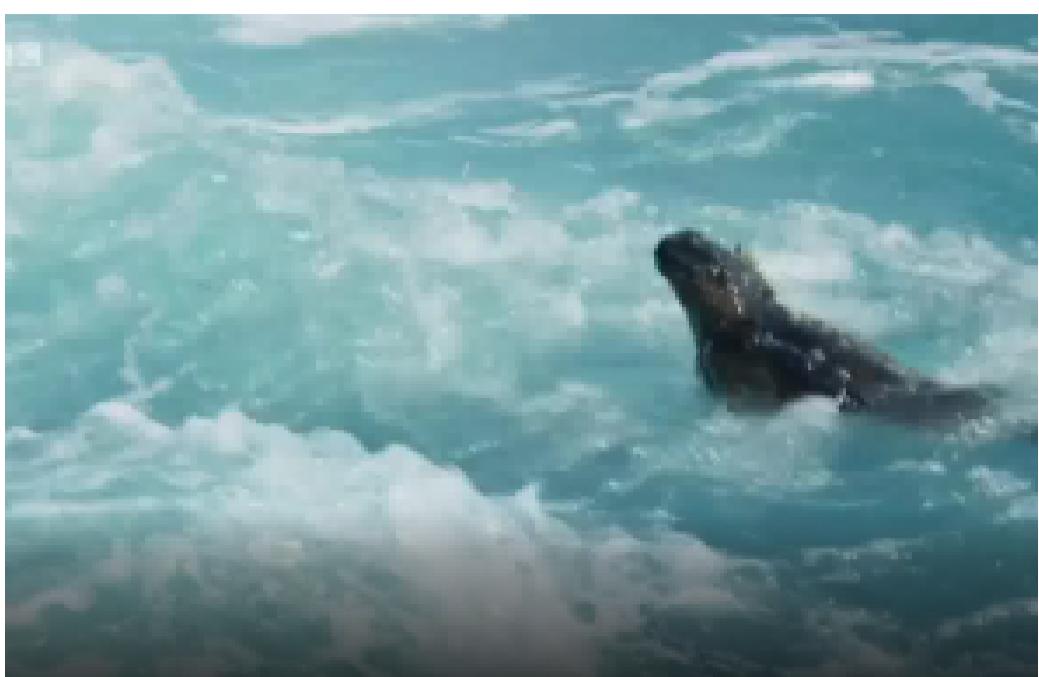
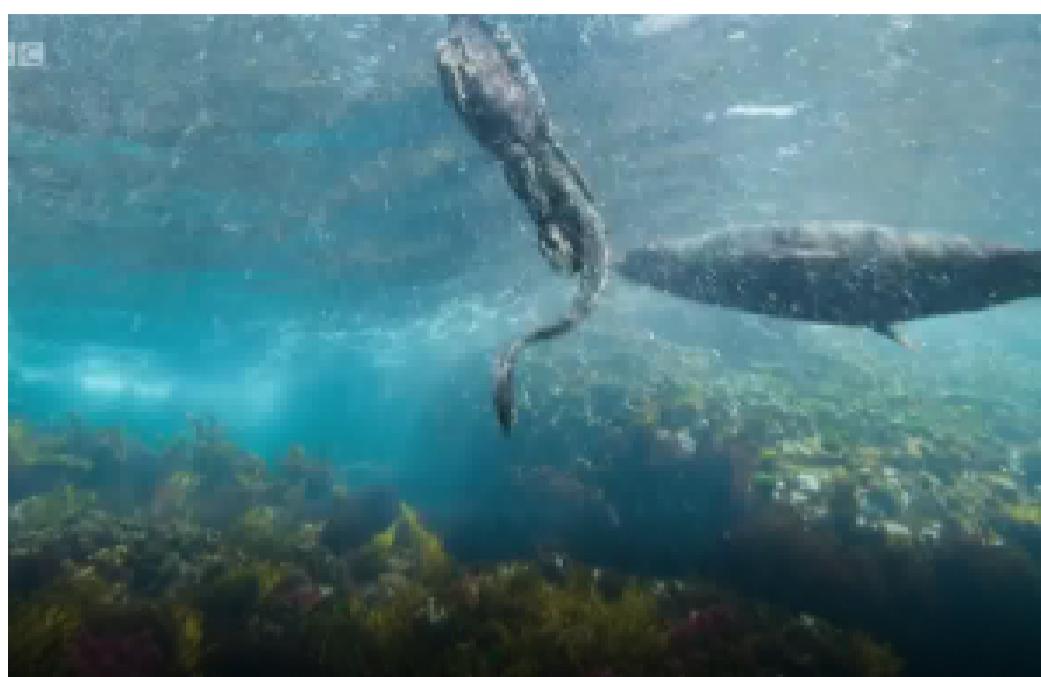


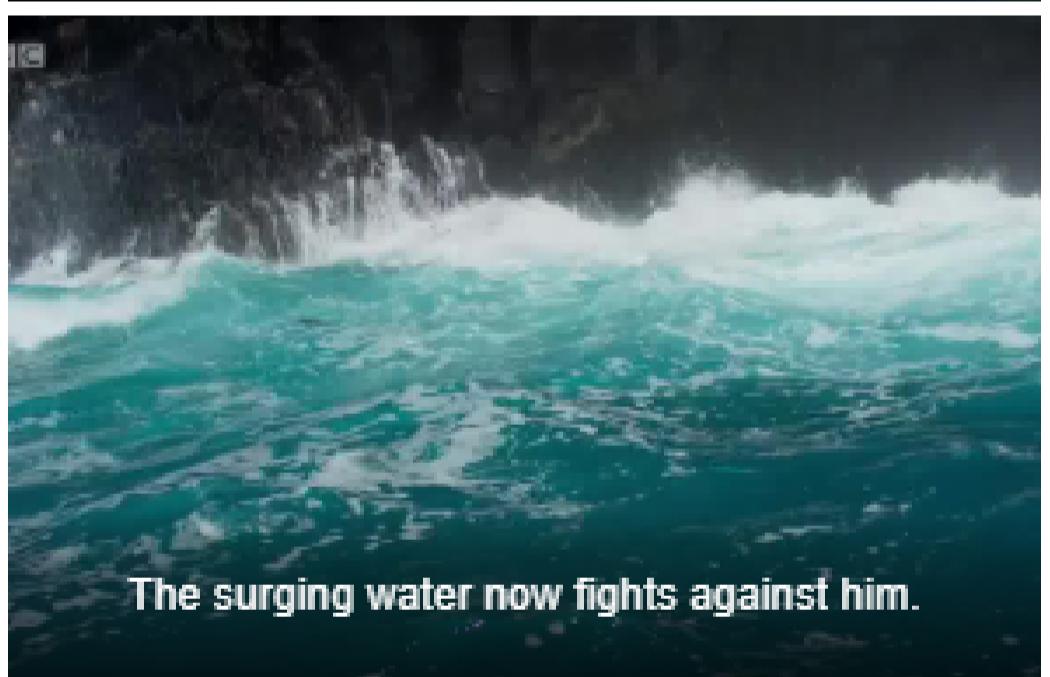
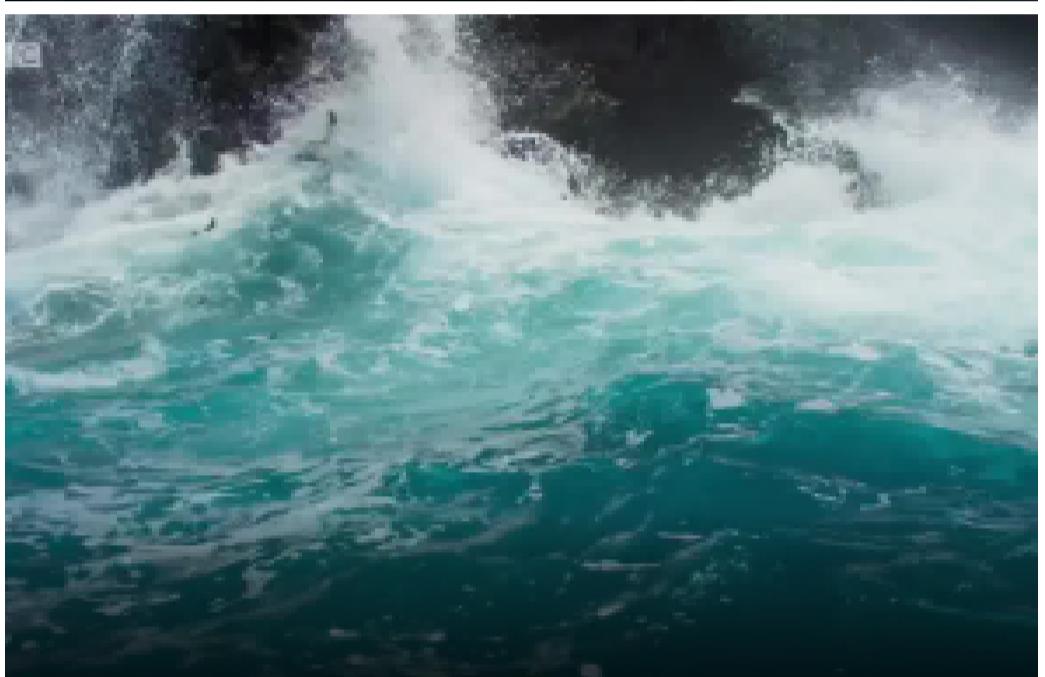
and it's also time for the iguana to head for home.











The surging water now fights against him.

