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“The Floating Coconet”

What inspires me about this design is that it's meant to collect and direct plastic pollution in the ocean. Since the name of the design sounds like coconut, I thought it was intriguing that maybe inspiration from coconuts could clean the ocean. But I was very wrong because this design has barely anything to do with coconuts! Instead, the biomimicry story starts with manta rays and the basking shark. According to the article, Manta rays are filter-feeding species, for the fins on the front of their body enable them to funnel water containing food particles into their mouths. Manta rays are unique from other filter-feeding organisms because they have modified gill-rakers that filter food from the water that causes the water to swirl in eddies, allowing food particles to bounce off the lobes back into the mouth. Ultimately, manta rays have a system that is resistant to clogging particles and can capture prey that is smaller than the gaps in the gill-rakers. Similarly, basking shark filter-feeds by having bristle-like hairs that causes turbulent water and lets food particles fall in between them. The design of the Floating Cocount includes shells made up of recycled plastic, tied together with rope (making it easy to rotate in order to replace the filled-up nets). These shells have rows of fins similar to the fins of manta rays and the basking shark.

I think it is inspiring that nature provides us with answers and humans are able to examine organisms and processes to create designs like the Floating Coconet. I have a more appreciation for nature because there are biomimicry systems that I take for granted every day (such as velcro). I think nature is inspiring, even though humans have contributed to its degradation, it's complexity and uniqueness may be able to help itself bounce back. Besides the everyday systems of biomimicry such as velcro or solar panels, the newer systems that are in the developmental stage can open the door for more efficiency and sustainability in life. These systems are very promising when it comes to a sustainable future, and I will be sure to advocate for biomimicry in my community.