

What can you find growing on the discs?

Filter Feeders

These are the most common animals you will find on your discs. Sessile (stationary) filter feeders move water in their bodies through special structures like cilia, which filter the suspended food particles from the water. Errant (moving) filter feeders either actively swim or create currents with their appendages to move water into their “mouths”.



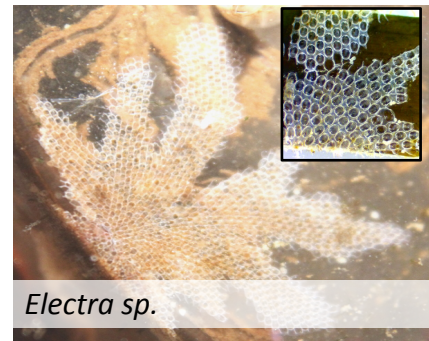
Balanus sp.

Phylum: Arthropoda
Common name: Acorn Barnacles
Diet: Plankton and detritus
Recruitment: late Spring to late Autumn
Others: persistent fouling organisms; grow on all kinds of hard substrate



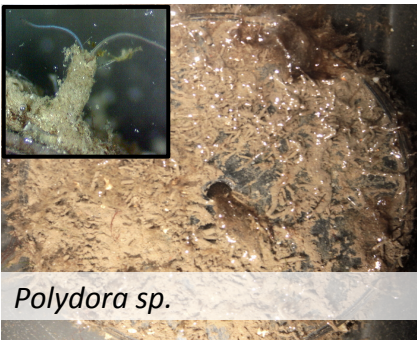
Mytilus edulis

Phylum: Mollusca
Common name: Blue mussel
Diet: Plankton
Recruitment: early to late summer
Others: have high filtering capacity thus sometimes used to improve water quality



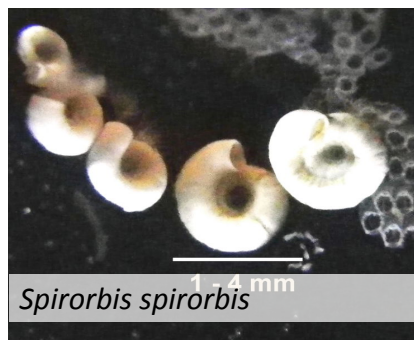
Electra sp.

Phylum: Bryozoa
Common name: Moss animals, sea mats
Diet: mostly phytoplankton
Recruitment: Late summer to early autumn
Others: grow on many types of hard substrates including macroalgae fronds



Polydora sp.

Phylum: Annelida
Common name: Bristleworm
Diet: Detritus
Recruitment: whole year
Others: also feed on plankton; tunnels into limestone, mussel shells, wood, etc.



Spirorbis spirorbis

Phylum: Annelida
Common name: Sinistral spiral tubeworm
Diet: Plankton and detritus
Recruitment: temperature dependent
Others: mainly marine; prefers fronds of macroalgae for settlement



Ciona intestinalis

Phylum: Chordata
Common name: Sea squirt
Diet: Plankton and detritus
Recruitment: Early to late summer
Others: can occur in large numbers usually on the underside of the discs



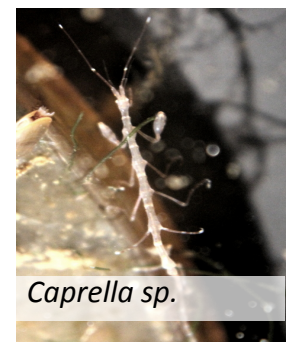
Botryllus schlosseri

Phylum: Chordata
Common name: Star ascidian
Diet: Plankton and detritus
Recruitment: Summer
Others: individuals form star-shaped colonies



Clavelina lepadiformis

Phylum: Chordata
Common name: Light bulb sea squirt
Diet: Plankton and detritus
Recruitment: Summer
Others: grows fast in spring but may regress in winter



Caprella sp.

Phylum: Arthropoda
Common name: Skeleton shrimp
Diet: Plankton and detritus
Recruitment: Summer
Others: can also be a predator or grazer; opportunistic species