

Kaleidoscope of Colour

The diverse lifeforms which can be seen in the rock pools include seaweeds, sponges, algae and soft corals. All provide a dazzling array of colours and shapes.



Waratah (Red) Anemone

Actinia tenebrosa

A brilliant red anemone found in the mid-lower intertidal zone. This animal grows to around 40mm and attaches to crevices and on the under-surface of rocks. Tentacles close around prey such as small fish. The bright red tentacles retract to a blob shape when exposed to air.



Blue Soft Coral

Anthelia sp.

Small vibrant blue-grey polyps form large colonies on the rock platforms. When exposed to air at low tide the long, wavy tentacles retract. This species may be indigenous to southern Queensland.



Green Zoanthid

Parazoanthus sp.

These small bright green creatures are related to corals and colonies are generally hidden in rocky crevices. They filter food from water with their anemone-like tentacles.



Sea Squirt or Cunjevoi

Pyura stolonifera

The animals live in colonies attached to rocks or each other. They filter food from the water and squirt water out when exposed to air. The outer surface is thick and leathery.



One of the Sunshine Coast's greatest and least know attractions – and it's free!

A rich variety of marine life can be found along the rocky shores between Caloundra and Double Island Point. Overlapping ocean currents from north and south allow tropical and temperate species to live here in abundance. All foreshore species are interlinked so the removal of any species, or even a decline in its population has a domino effect, bringing the whole intricate structure of the foreshore ecosystem crashing down. If everyone takes their own little bit of it home the variety of marine life we see today along the rocky shores will disappear. You can help to preserve this diverse treasure.



Take a camera or notepad to record what you find, don't take these treasures home.



Small fragile animals live under rocks and inside shells. These tiny creatures can be damaged or killed by disturbance. If you do pick up a rock or shell, replace it very carefully exactly as you found it.



Watch out for Cone Shells, they can shoot small venomous darts which hurt you.



Beware of the Blue-ringed octopus, it is very dangerous. It looks quite dull when at rest, but if disturbed bright blue rings appear round its tentacles as a warning.



Leave empty shells for the hermit crabs to use as homes. When they grow too large for their shell home they must find a larger empty shell to move into.



Collect any litter you find, take it home with you or put in the bins provided.



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



Sunshine Coast Council

For further information please contact councils Customer Service Centre on (07) 5475 7272.

Marvel at the Magic of Life among the Rocks



Tiny helpless creatures live
In pools beside the sea
They have the right to live their lives
The same as you and me.

So when you meet these wondrous things
Just think of this short poem
Don't plunder, smash and kill these friends,
Please leave them in their home.

This project is partially funded through Sunshine Coast Regional Council and the Australian Government's Caring for our Country and supported by Coolum District Coast Care Group Inc and Point Arkwright Environment & Progress Association Inc.

Blue Periwinkle

Nodilittorina unifasciata

Often found clustering together at the highest tide level. These molluscs eat algae or lichens off the rocks. They are whitish in colour with a pale blue-grey band. This species can survive well above mean high tide level.



Furrowed Clusterwink

Planaxis sulcatus

Commonly seen in large clusters under the rock shelves or edges of rock pools. As the common name suggests the black or variegated shell surface has smooth furrows. Grows to 30mm.



Red-mouthed Stromb

Strombus luhuanus

Resembles a cone shell but this species has a slightly in-turned salmon pink to red lip and a deep notch at the bottom. It lives mainly in colonies in shallow water seagrass beds. Very rare in the Maroochy River due to loss of habitat.



Cone Shells

Conus Textile

The cone shells pictured are commonly found small species. Conus textile, with brown undulating lines between small white triangles, is also present on the coast. It shoots poison darts (toxic to humans) to kill its prey.



Zebra Top Shell

Austrocochlea porcata

These small 30mm molluscs are distinctively patterned with black and white transverse bands of varying width. They are one of the most common species found feeding on rock shelves when the tide is receding.



Blue-ringed Octopus

Hapalochlaena fasciata

This small 130mm octopus is very dangerous. Its natural grey-brown colour helps it blend into the rocks and sandy soils of the rock pools. When disturbed its bands turn iridescent blue.



Nerite

Nerita spp

Nerites leave a patterned trail as they feed on the micro algae on rocks. It feeds and moves mainly at night. These species can grow to around 30mm and have a range of different shell colours and patterns.



Rose Barnacle

Tesseropora rosea

A whitish mollusc often tinged with pink. There are four shell plates and the species grows to about 20mm wide and 12mm high. The empty shells have been eaten by carnivorous species such as Mulberry whelks.



Black Sea Cucumber

Holothuria atra

This species can grow to 300mm long or larger. The colour is black but is often seen covered with sand. It moves by squeezing up then stretching out its body. It emits a toxic red dye when touched.



Gold-ring Cowrie

Cypraea annulus

Occasionally found in the intertidal zone in rock pools and crevices. This 30mm mollusc has a distinctive yellow or orange ring on the top and a creamy base and sides. It can be distinguished from the similar Money Cowrie by the angular shape.



Limpets

Cellana tramoserica

Limpets feed by scraping algae from rocks. These molluscs have radiating bands of colour with orange, yellow, brown and black dominating. They are eaten by wrasses, oyster-catchers and predatory gastropods (snails).



Blue Swimmer Crab

Thalamita danae

Common on rocky shores under shelves and rocks. It grows to 75mm across. The flattened last pair of legs identifies this crab as a swimmer crab. It has a smooth shell with mottled blue spots over the body and legs.



Mulberry Whelks

Morula marginalba

Mulberry Whelks like to eat barnacles. They drill holes in the top of the barnacle then suck out the animal. They are often found above high tide with Zebra periwinkles and Limpets.



Gaimard's Chiton

Acanthopleura gaimardi

Chiton's live in rock crevices in the intertidal zone and feed on algae. Gaimard's Chiton can be identified by the short spines which form black and white bands around the margin. Grows to approximately 45mm.



Black-ringed Sea Hare

Aplysia dactylomela

The large flaps covering the body have black circles on the outside. This species can grow to 450mm and exudes a purple fluid when irritated. It feeds on red and green algae in rockpools and on rock platforms.

