



Animals on Oyster Reefs

Long Island

Barnacles

- Often “cemented” to ropes, cages, oyster shells
- Color: white or beige
- Hard calcium-carbonate shell in a cone-like shape



Blue Mussels

Mytilus edulis

- Shell length: up to 4in
- Attach to hard substrate – rocks, cages, docks
- Color: blue-black
 - Glossy, shint



Sea Squirts (Tunicates)

- Round, jelly-like organism
 - Most sea squirts = 2 even siphons on top
 - Sea Grapes = 2 uneven siphons
- Attach to hard substrate such as rope, cages, oysters
 - Can cause flow/circulation issues



Shore Shrimp

Palaemonetes spp.

- Length: 1.5-2in
- Color: clear with dark streaks on side
- Congregate around docks, pilings, cages, reefs



Slipper Shells

- Small gastropod (snail) with only 1 valved shell
- Attach to hard substrates such as rocks, docks, oysters, cages
 - Considered a nuisance



Mud Snails

Ilyanassa obsoleta

- Length: up to 3cm
- Cone shaped shell with an oval opening
- Color: black, dark brown
- Can be found on reefs and cages
 - Eat mud, detritus



Amphipod

Gammarus spp.

- Small crustacean laterally flattened
- Large eyes and multiple pairs of legs



Sand Worm

Nereis spp.

- Polychaete worm with many leg like bristles and appendages
- Head has a set of jaws
 - They can bite – not venomous



Sponges

- Red Beard Sponge (*Microciona prolifera*)
 - Red-brown color that encrusts on substrate
- Boring Sponge (*Cliona spp.*)
 - Yellow in color that bore into mollusk shells (especially oysters)
 - Weakens oyster shells making them more susceptible to predators



Skilletfish

Gobiesox strumosus

- Length: up to 2in (5cm)
- Flat bottom with a suction on the bottom of head
 - Resemble a frying pan
- Color: tan-yellow
- Lay eggs on discarded oyster shells and other shellfish
- Very common in oyster reef areas



Orange-Striped Green Anemone

Diadumene lineata

- Invasive anemone species
 - Native to Japan
- Black gelatinous bulb
 - Individuals or colonies
- Tentacles may or may not be present
 - If present: yellow color

