

# Life in a Rock Pool

Crashing waves, scorching sunshine and deluges of rain are just a few of the challenges that the animals and plants in the rock pool must deal with. Finding food and avoiding predators are also key to their survival.

## Producers

Seaweeds use sunlight and nutrients in the water to grow. These producers provide food, oxygen and shelter for a variety of marine animals.

- Can you find three different colours of seaweed?
- Describe the different shapes of seaweed in the picture.
- Why are some rocks pink?

## Filter feeders

As many animals in the rock pool don't move, feeding on tiny creatures in the water, called plankton, is a good option. They just need to filter the water as it flows past them.

- Can you find the filtering sieves of the half crab?
- Mussels open their shells to feed. How many shells does a mussel have?
- Find the yellow sponge growing on the rock – what does it eat?
- Sea tulips are animals! How does their long stalk help them capture plankton?

## Grazers

Snails, chitons and limpets graze on seaweed. They use their tongues to scrape tiny plants off the rocks.

- How many different snails can you find?
- Look for a snail, chiton and limpet – describe how their shells differ.
- Can you find the feeding trails made by these grazers?

## Predators

Some hunters move quickly to chase or ambush their prey, while others just crawl over their food.

- Find the animal that the whelk has crawled over.
- What is the spiny sea star eating?
- Why is the nudibranch the same colour as the sponge next to it?
- Anemones do not move. What animals do you think they can catch?
- What colour is the octopus? It can change colour - why?
- What do birds eat in the rock pool?
- What would YOU like to eat?

## Scavengers

These rubbish collectors look for food at the bottom of the rock pool.

- Find the sea cucumber feeding on debris on the bottom of the rock pool. Is it an animal or a plant?
- Can you spot the hermit crab? Why is it checking out a snail shell?

