



Club Tunicate

Styela clava

History

- * First observed in Long Island Sound in 1973; by 1988, its range expanded northward to Maine and southward to Connecticut

Characteristics

- * Yellowish-gray to reddish-brown
- * Club-shaped with two siphons
- * Tough, leathery, bumpy exterior; often covered with other organisms
- * Up to 8 in (20 cm) tall with stalk approximately 1/3 of its total length
- * Fast-growing, prolific breeder

Habitat

- * Grows on hard surfaces such as pilings
- * Shallow water below low-tide line

Known Distribution

- * Prince Edward Island, and Maine to New Jersey
- * Native to Sea of Okhotsk south to Shanghai

Impacts

- * Aggressive competitor for living space and food
- * Can replace native species of invertebrates
- * Occurs by the tens of thousands in areas previously occupied by the blue mussel, *Mytilus edulis*, in parts of southern New England



Club tunicate (*Styela clava*)

Credit: N. Balcom, CT Sea Grant



Club tunicate (*Styela clava*)

Credit: MIT Sea Grant College Program

