



Star Tunicate

Botryllus schlosseri

Characteristics

- * Individual animals (zooids) live in colonies up to 3-4 in (7.5-10 cm) wide
- * Zooids arranged in conspicuous starlike patterns
- * Yellow, olive, greenish, tan, brown, purple, or black; individuals outlined in yellow or white
- * Colonies begin as soft, flat patches and mature into loose bloblike rolls and lobes

Habitat

- * Grows on rocks, shells, seaweeds, pilings, eelgrass, and other solid surfaces
- * Along open shores and in brackish estuaries (to 18 ppt or less)
- * Near low-tide line and below, to depths of 60 ft (18 m)

Known Distribution

- * Newfoundland to Florida
- * Native to Europe

Impacts

- * Competition with native species (invertebrates and algae) for living space
- * Often grows on mussels and oysters, interfering with their feeding and other behaviors food and resources

