

## 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



Star tunicate (*Botryllus schlosseri*)

Credit: A. Pappal



Star tunicate (*Botryllus schlosseri*)

Credit: MIT Sea Grant College Program



Star tunicate (*Botryllus schlosseri*)

Credit: N. Balcom, CT Sea Grant

