

Intertidal Rocky Reefs of the Ngari Capes Marine Park

The intertidal rocky reefs throughout the park provide homes for a multitude of invertebrates (animals without a backbone), such as sea stars, anemones, sea snails and limpets.

Limestone reefs can extend over 100 metres from the shoreline and the outer edge typically forms a distinctive submerged, undercut ledge. The varieties of algae on the inner reaches of these platforms can differ from those on the outer regions, and areas with high wave energy and exposure can host different invertebrate organisms from those found on more sheltered reefs. Likewise, the granite rocky shore line can consist of steeply sloping, large granite boulders or level fields of small cobble-like boulders, all of which are inhabited by invertebrates.



District staff of the Department of Parks and Wildlife and marine scientists from the Parks and Wildlife Marine Science Program have started a survey of intertidal reef invertebrate communities. Staff will be out sampling organisms in the various habitats of the intertidal zones in the marine park to quantify the species that inhabit the coastline from Geographe Bay south to Flinders Bay.

Field work began in November and will continue through until February 2015. The survey results will give the Department a baseline of intertidal habitats and organisms within the park, enable comparisons from earlier studies, and provide a means to evaluate any changes in the abundance and diversity of intertidal reef organisms in future.

If you see Department of Parks and Wildlife staff out on the reef during these surveys, please feel free to come by and talk to them. They will be happy to introduce you to the intertidal organisms and provide some interesting facts about the inhabitants of your Ngari Capes Marine Park.

