

Tunicate (colonial) - *Botrylloides violaceus*

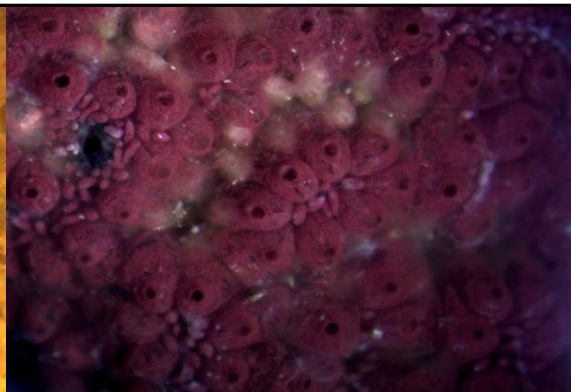
DESCRIPTION	This colonial tunicate is thin and lobe-like with zooids forming long double rows or chains. Short chains sometimes look similar to the flower-like pattern in <i>Botryllus schlosseri</i> . The tunic is relatively tough and leathery to the touch.
RANGE	Alaska to California. It was first noted on the west coast in San Francisco, CA in the early 1970's. Native to Japan and China, it has become abundant in Sitka and Ketchikan, AK over the last decade.
SIZE	Colonies can be large, up to 0.3 m diameter
STATUS	Invasive; see the full record at http://invasions.si.edu/nemesis/
COLOR	Solid color, variable - often orange but can be red, yellow, purple, or tan, occasionally brown or lavender.
HABITAT	It generally grows subtidally in protected areas on a variety of surfaces such as docks, boat hulls, buoys, ropes, pilings, on top of and underneath rocks, on mussels and solitary sea squirts, seaweeds (see photo) and eelgrass.
TIDAL HEIGHT	Shallow subtidal, < 50m, but can be found in the intertidal in protected areas
SALINITY	18-40 ppt
TEMPERATURE	-0.6 -25°C but generally found above 8°C

SIMILAR SPECIES

Botrylloides diegensis is two toned with a light colored ring around the siphons and darker test. *Botrylloides spp.* do not form the star-like pattern found in *Botryllus schlosseri*, rather the zooids form long chains or ladders. Also distinctive, *Botrylloides violaceus* has numerous very large vascular ampullae that are visible in the lower left hand corner in the first photo to the left. Brooded larvae of *Botrylloides violaceus* are much larger than those of *Botryllus schlosseri*.



©M. Frey



©M. Frey



©Gary Freitag note meandering rows



on algae ©Heather Meuret Woody