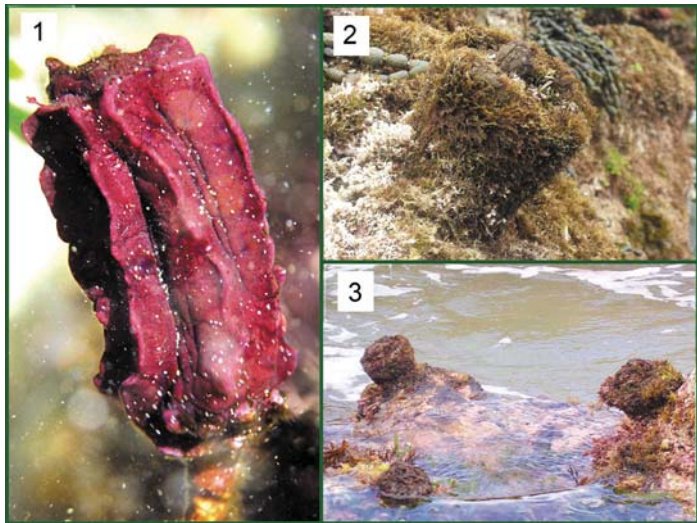


Sea Squirts / Tunicates

(Phylum Chordata/Class: Ascidiacea)



Tunicates begin life as free swimming tadpole-like larvae with a distinct notochord, similar to the early vertebrae in higher animals and hence they are placed in the same major group of living things as us. After attaching to rocks larvae lose their tail, form two openings, and then obtain food by siphoning water in through one valve and out the other.

They range in size from tiny zooids that live together in a jelly like matrix to large solitary individuals such as the cunjevoi.

	Names	Description
1	<i>Pyura gibbosa</i> Sea tulip Height to 320 mm	Sea Tulips have two large siphons on the side of their red body and can be seen around the edge of deeper pools or attached to the reef.
2	<i>Pyura stolonifera</i> Cunjevoi	Looking much like a rock with some growth on the lower edge of the reef these larger ascidians can often be seen after waves crash over them squirting jets of water into the air.
3	Height to 300 mm	