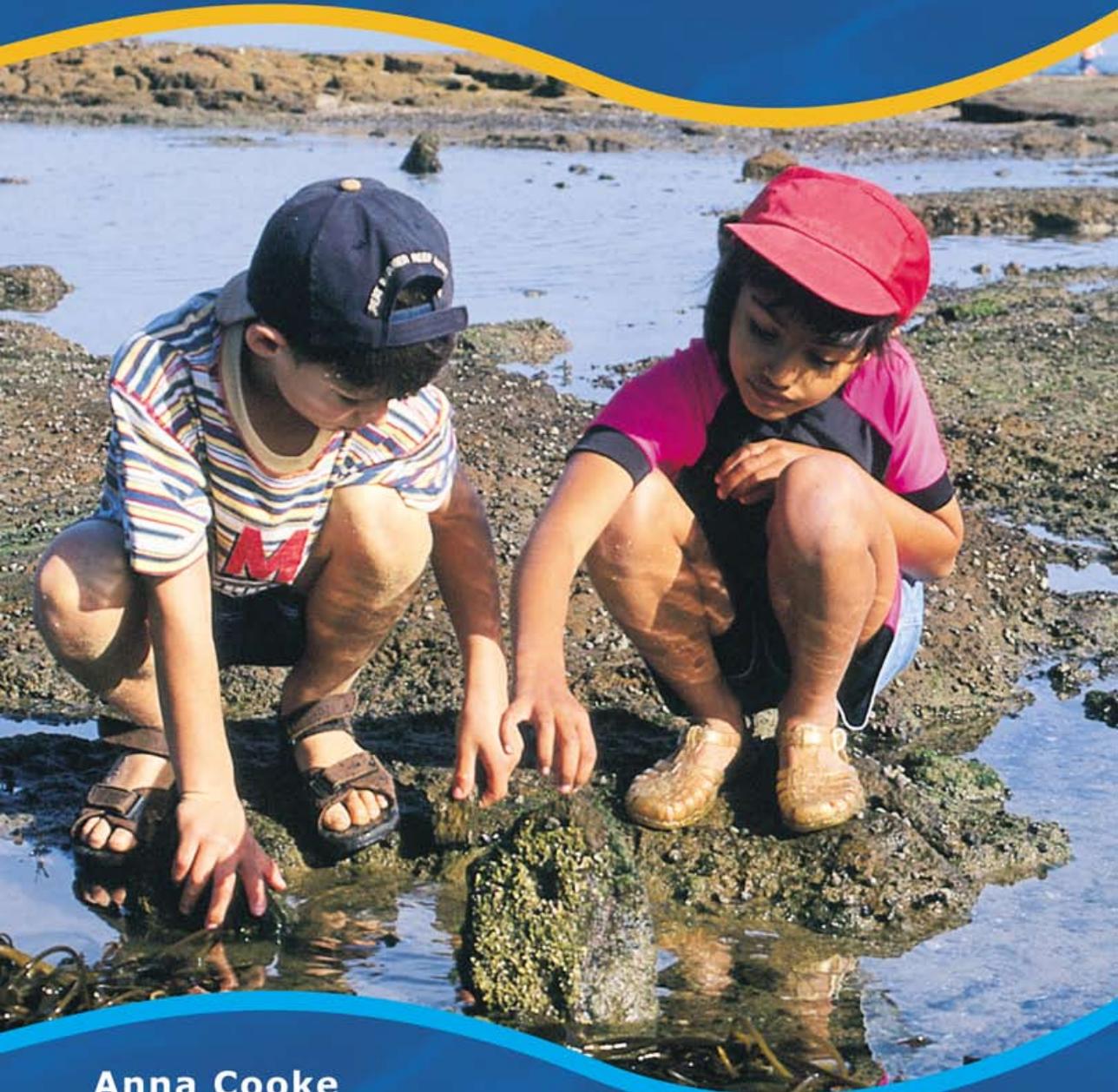




Marine Reader Series

Rock Pool Life



Anna Cooke

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Wet Paper Publishers and Consultants
14 Milbong Tce
Ashmore Q 4214 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: (07) 5597 2806 Facsimile:
(07) 5539 4187
www.wetpaper.com.au



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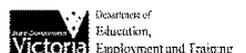
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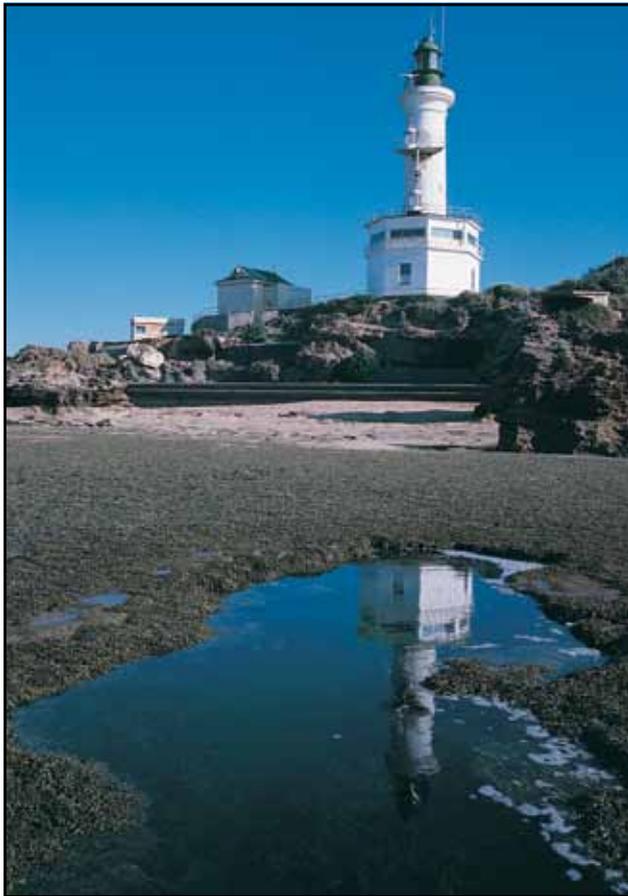
Gould League: Genoa St, Moorabbin, Vic, 3189. Telephone: (03) 9532 0909 Fax: (03) 9532 2860. www.gould.edu.au

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Rock Pool Life



Anna Cooke

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What are rock pools?

A rock pool is a pond in the rocks.

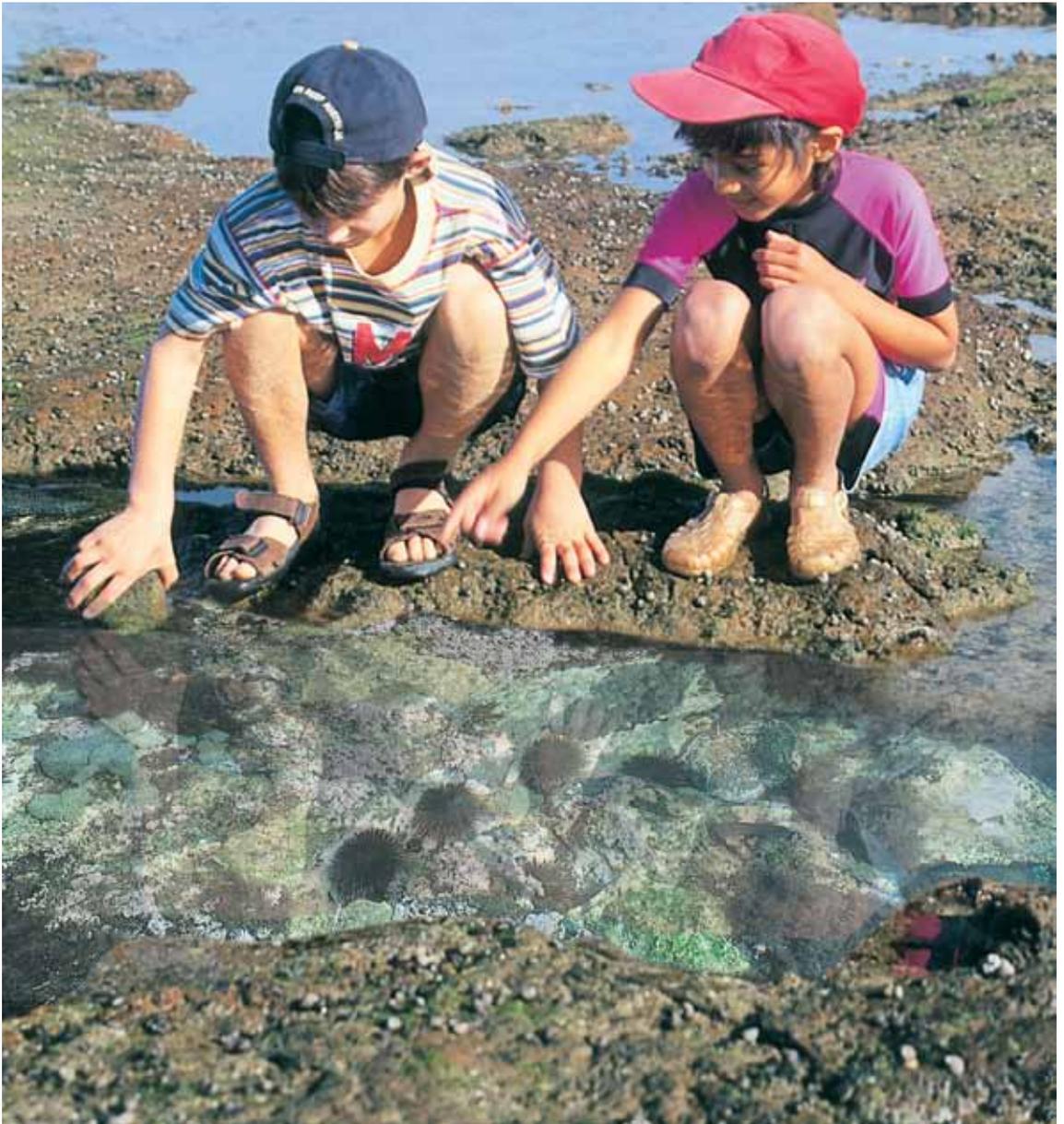
Rock pools are places where small sea creatures and seaweeds live.

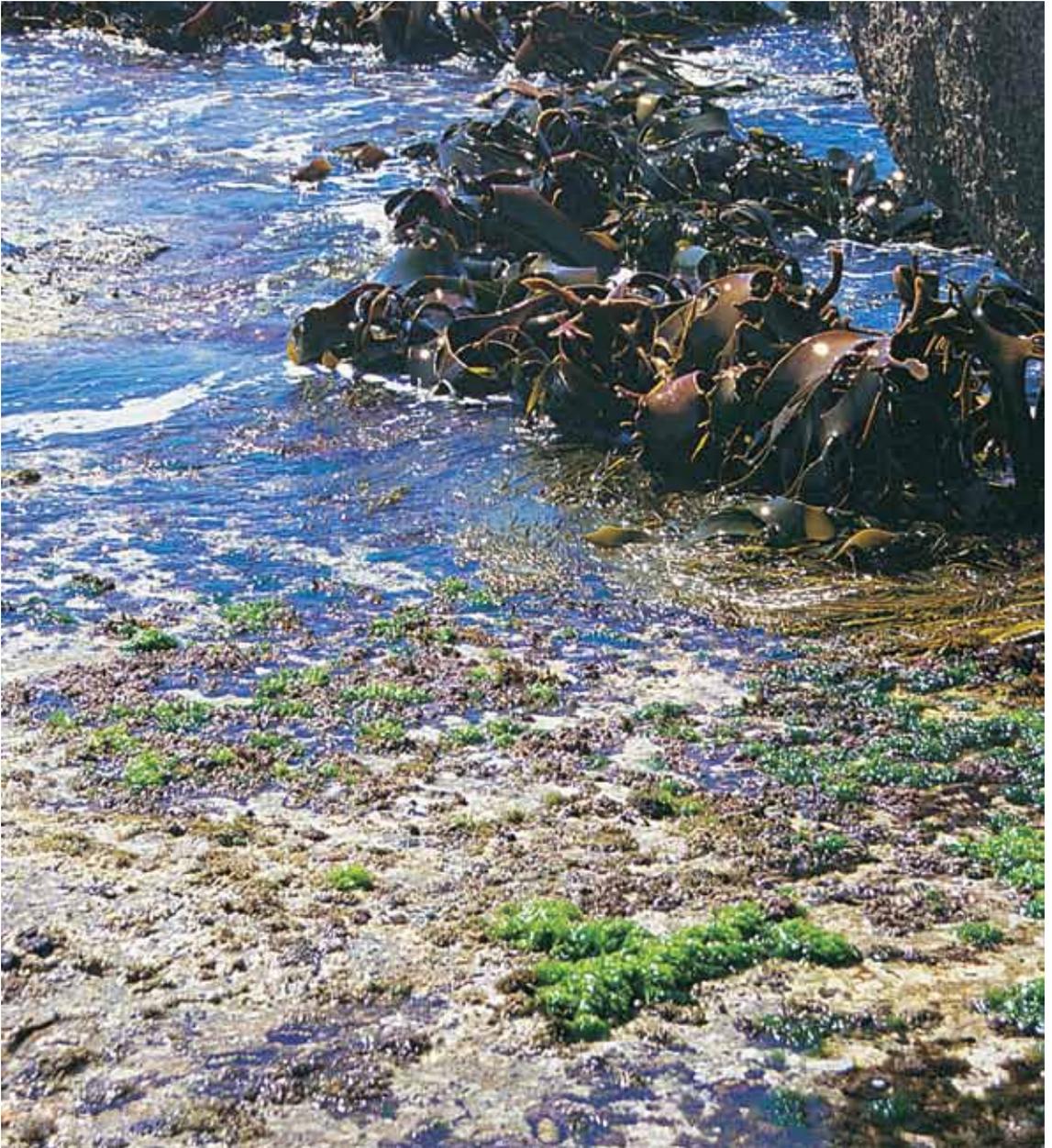
Many of the plants and animals hold onto the rocks. They must hold on tight when large waves crash onto them.

Life for animals and plants can be difficult because the water can heat up.



What can you see in this rock pool?





Seaweeds

Many different kinds of seaweed can be found in rock pools. Seaweeds can look like feathers, lettuce, leather straps and even like beads. They can be green, brown, olive, purple or pink. When they die, brown seaweeds go black and green seaweeds often turn white.

How do these seaweeds stay on the rocks?



Tides

We can look in rock pools when the tide is out. This is called low tide. Water covers the rock pools when the tide is in. This is called high tide. There are usually two low tides and two high tides each day. Tide times change every day because they depend on the position of the moon.

Water covers the rocks at high tide



As the tide goes out, water gets trapped making rock pools



Sea anemones

Sea anemones can be found stuck to rocks or in the sand. Sticky tentacles surround a sea anemone's mouth. That is what a sea anemone uses to catch food.

These tentacles also have stinging cells that can paralyse small creatures. The stinging cells protect the sea anemones from animals that want to eat them.



What happens to sea anemones when water in the rock pool dries up?



Limpets

Limpets live on the tops and sides of rocks. A limpet's shell covers its whole body when it needs protection. The empty shell looks like a saucer when it's turned over.

A limpet's tongue is called a radula. It is covered with teeth, like a rasp. The limpet scrapes seaweed from the rocks with its tongue.



Sea snails

Sea snails have hard shells to protect their soft bodies. The shell of this elephant snail is smaller than most other types of snails. It hides under rocks. Every snail moves around the rock pool on one big, sticky foot.





Sea stars

Sea stars can be bright colours. They have five arms or more. They hide under rocks and in crevices at low tide.

Sea stars have thousands of tiny tube feet, each with a sucker. They can hold on tightly when powerful waves hit them.

A sea star feeds by pushing its stomach out of its mouth. The stomach surrounds the food and digests it.



*How does
a sea star
feed?*

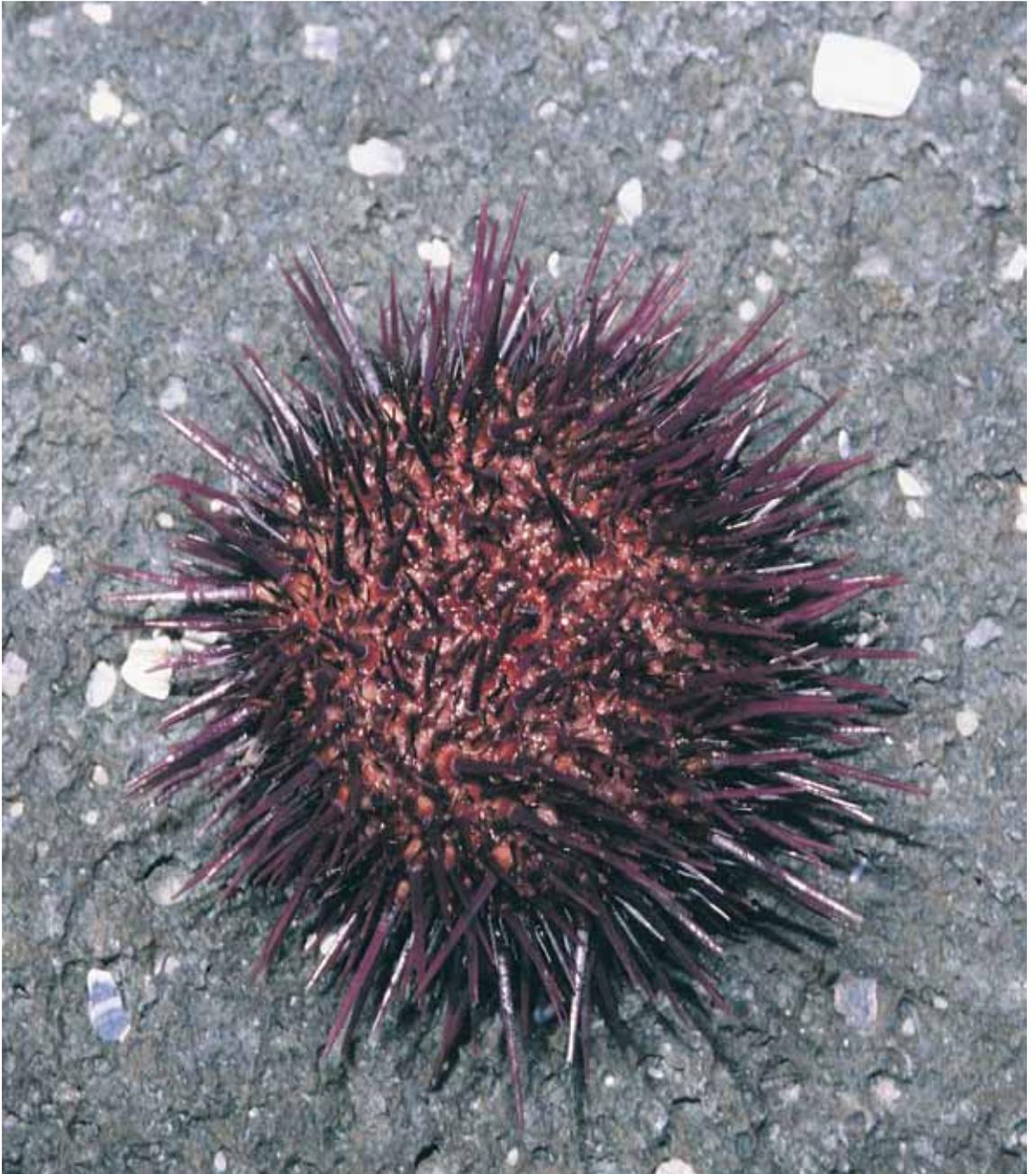
Sea urchins

Sea urchins are covered in spines.

They have tube feet like a sea star. They can use their long tube feet and their large spines to move.

Sea urchins move slowly around rock pools.

Their spines protect them from hungry fish.



Crabs

Crabs move sideways over the rocks. A crab has a hard skeleton and 10 legs. The front legs have powerful nippers for fighting and protection. At low tide, crabs hide under rocks and in crevices.

This crab comes out to look for dead animals to feed on. It must be careful not to be eaten by octopuses or birds.



Why does this crab have white nippers?





Shrimps

Shrimps are hard to see in the rock pools because you can see through their clear bodies. When they flick their tails, they dart backwards very quickly. They use their many legs to walk and paddle slowly. Their very long antennae help them to feel their way around their homes. Fish and sea birds love eating shrimps.

Why might this shrimp have such small nippers?



Cuttlefish

Cuttlefish are related to octopuses. Some cuttlefish can be trapped in rock pools as the tide goes out. They are hard to see because they hide among the seaweed. The cuttlefish bones found on the beach were once inside the bodies of the larger cuttlefish that live in the ocean. Like octopuses and squids, cuttlefish can change colour very quickly.



Next time you find a cuttlefish bone on the beach, see if it has any marks left by teeth or beaks of hunters.





Octopuses

Octopuses also live in rock pools. They use eight long arms to move around. They can squeeze into very small crevices and holes.

When disturbed, they squirt water out of their bodies. This makes them rocket backwards.

They can also squirt ink to hide themselves in the water. They eat crabs, which they break up with their strong beaks.

Small fish

Small fish live in rock pools. They move quickly to hide under rocks and seaweed. This blenny spends most of its time on the sand or among broken shells. Its eyes are on top of its head so it can see danger coming from above.



Sea squirts

These strange animals look like dead pieces of wood and feel like leather.

They pump water through their bodies to filter out tiny food particles. When touched, they squirt water.

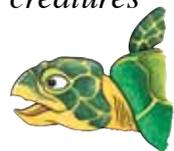




Looking after rock pools

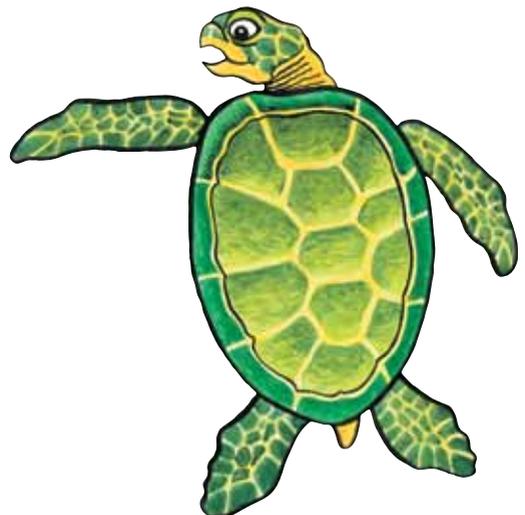
Rock pools are special places to find sea creatures. We take care not to disturb their homes. After we look under rocks we turn them back again. We always keep our hands where we can see them. We never take any animals away from the rock pool.

What would happen to the sea creatures if we did not turn back the rocks?



Glossary

antennae	long thin feeler on the head used for exploring and sometimes smelling
conservation	looking after the environment
protection	making sure something is not harmed
rock pool	a pond of sea water among rocks that is exposed at low tide
tentacle	fleshy, flexible arms
tide	the regular changing level of the sea
tube feet	fleshy, flexible legs with suckers on the end
seaweed	simple plants found in the sea
shell	simple protective covering that protects an animal's body
skeleton	solid frame that muscles are attached to and can be on the inside or outside of the body
spines	pointed body parts for protection
stinging cells	cells in the skin that fire poisonous (venomous) darts



A National Marine Education Program



Level 1

- Book 1 : Everyone Likes the Sea
- Book 2 : Sea Creatures
- Book 3 : At the Beach

Level 2

- Book 4 : Fun by the Sea
- Book 5 : Working at Sea
- Book 6 : Be Safe at the Beach

Level 3

- Book 7 : Tourists and the Sea
- Book 8 : All Kinds of Boats
- Book 9 : Rock Pool Life
- Book 10 : Creatures of the Deep
- Book 11 : Shipwrecks
- Book 12 : Our Day on a Research Boat

Level 4

- Book 13 : Let's Go Sailing
- Book 14 : Food from the Sea
- Book 15 : Classification and Survival
- Book 16 : Sea Creatures at Risk
- Book 17 : Better Boating Behaviour
- Book 18 : Don't Mess with the Sea



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