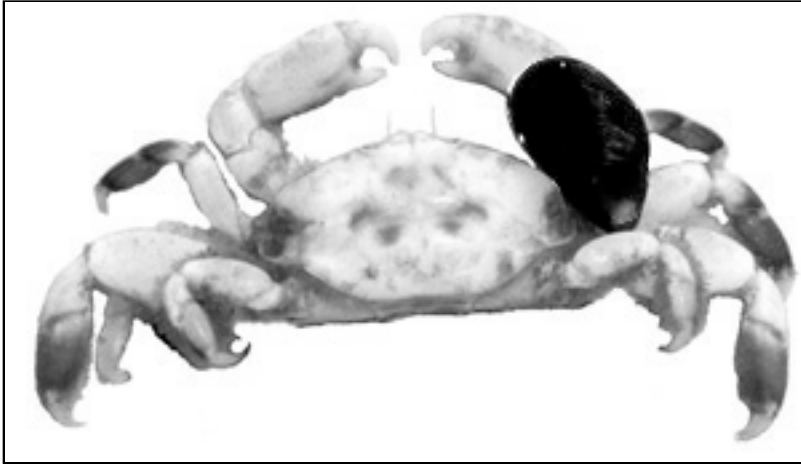


A mussel attached to a crab living within a clam!

by William Merilees, Nanaimo, B.C.



In recent years the introduced purple mahogany-clam *Nuttallia obscurata* has become the most common intertidal clam on many Strait of Georgia beaches. Sampling of populations in Departure Bay [Nanaimo] has revealed a substantial incidence of the pea crab *Pinnixa faba* living commensally within this clam.

From a sample of clams taken for study May 19th, 2000, one was found to contain a large female pea crab [photo] with a mussel (probably the foolish mussel, *Mytilus trossulus*) attached to the carapace. For this mussel (a clam) to have found an attachment on a crab living inside yet another clam, appears almost unbelievable. In an October sample, this observation was repeated, not once but twice!