

Slip Point Field Trip

by Linda Schroeder

Our last field trip of the season took us to the Olympic Peninsula on July 12th and 13th. We met at Slip Point on Clallam Bay along the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The weather was far more cooperative than our last trip to the Strait. This time, we had mostly sunny skies and ideal temperatures. Our participants included David & Carey Allison, Rick & Heather Harbo, George Holm, Linda Schroeder, and Drew Skinner.

On Monday we shared the Point with a number of other groups. Several graduate students from universities in the Puget Sound area were there collecting for their research projects. We also met a group from the Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium in Tacoma. They were acquiring specimens for their live tanks and touch pool. It was quite busy that morning on the beach.

Our own group made some interesting discoveries. George located a deep pool of water he had been told about, which has kept growing in it.

Lottia instabilis (Gould, 1846) can be found living on some of the stipes. These are not

generally found intertidally but the nature of the tide pool makes it possible for them to survive there. Adjacent to this pool is a large rock formation with deep crevices, which are home to a very colorful and interesting array of marine life. It was difficult to tear oneself away from the sight.

Rick Harbo made another very interesting discovery. He spotted some bivalve siphons in a shallow pool of water which were spawning! We didn't recognize the siphons so when the clams seemed to take a break from their spawning efforts, we lifted a couple from the shallow pocket of sand and found them to be *Gari californica* (Conrad, 1849). After photographing them, we set them back on the sand where they immediately began to dig themselves back in. Within a couple of minutes they were completely buried again and had resumed their spawning activity. Later, as the incoming tide started filling the pools to a deeper level, we made a point of revisiting that area and found over a dozen more siphons extended and all were in the process of spawning. The water was cloudy with their milky discharge. We were fortunate to have witnessed this event since the following day, not a single *Gari* siphon could be located.

The second day on the Point was even better weather than the first. Full sun lit up

the tide pools and made for excellent underwater photography. We spotted some small species we hadn't noticed the day before. Linda found a tiny *Fissurellidea bimaculata* (Dall, 1871) crawling on some surf grass. Nearby, a small nudibranch, *Janolus fuscus* (O'Donoghue, 1924) was swimming in some seaweed. Drew found two *Rostanga pulchra* MacFarland, 1905, another nudibranch we rarely see. When the incoming tide had chased us to the higher levels of the Point, George and Linda decided to hunt through



Lottia instabilis (Gould, 1846)



Gari californica (Conrad, 1849) and a specimen, its siphon extended, in the process of spawning.



Fissurellidea bimaculata (Dall, 1871)



left - *Janolus fuscus* (O'Donoghue, 1924) right - *Rostanga pulchra* MacFarland, 1905



Epitonium tinctum (Carpenter, 1864)

the anemones, *Anthopleura elegantissima* (Brandt, 1835), for *Epitoniums*. Our efforts paid off when several *Epitonium tinctum* (Carpenter, 1864) and *Opalia borealis* Keep, 1881 were found feeding on the anemones. Two specimens of an *Odostomia* species were also among the anemones. This yet-to-be-identified species has a much shorter spire than the *Odostomia columbiana* Dall & Bartsch, 1907 we usually find.

It was a very fine field trip with excellent weather. We added some new species to our list for Slip Point and were able to obtain photographs of some additional marine life to add to our website. We could not have asked for more.

Photos by L. Schroeder

The Dredgings Volume 50 No. 5, 2010