

GUIDE TO MARINE INVADERS IN THE GULF OF MAINE

Corella eumyota tunicate

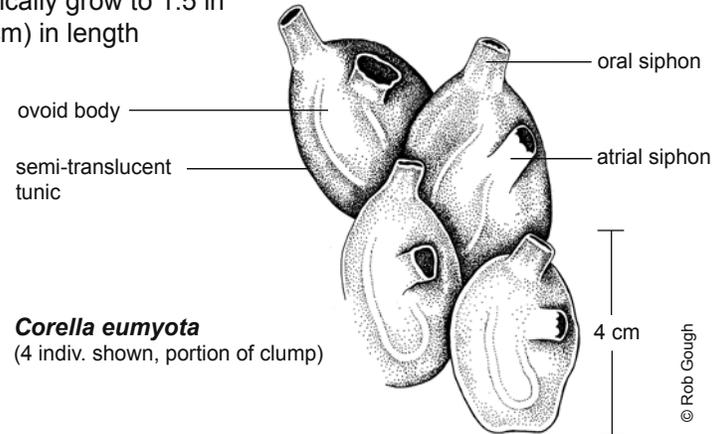
Potential
Invader



Gretchen Lambert

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

- Grayish, semi-translucent tunic (exterior skin) revealing internal gut and gonads, but occasionally covered with debris
- Rounded, oval or egg-shaped body
- Two prominent siphons: an oral siphon at top, and an atrial siphon located 1/3 of the way down the side of the body
- Often found adhering very tightly to one another in clumps
- Typically grow to 1.5 in (4 cm) in length



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HABITAT PREFERENCE

- Found in shallow, subtidal waters attached to docks, pilings, ropes, and other submerged structures
- Prefers calm, protected waters

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INVASION STATUS & ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS

Corella eumyota is abundant and widespread throughout much of the southern hemisphere's oceans, including waters of South America, South Africa, Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand. In 2002, this tunicate was discovered at two marinas in the English Channel waters of France, representing a range expansion into the northern hemisphere.

Like other invasive tunicates, *C. eumyota* is a fouling organism. In addition to growing in large clumps on floating docks, piers, ropes, ship hulls, and other submerged structures, this species can grow over other organisms and eventually lead to the death of the 'host' organisms. This pattern makes *C. eumyota* a threat to shellfish colonies, as well as other sessile invertebrates.

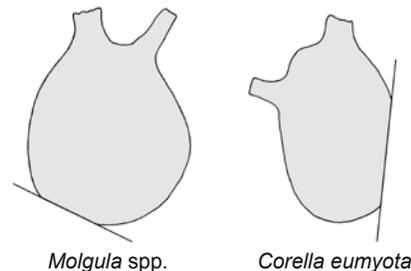
SIMILAR SPECIES

Molgula spp. (sea grapes)

Like *Corella eumyota*, these tunicates are semi-translucent, often occur in dense clusters, are approximately the same size, and are frequently encrusted with debris. However, *Molgula* spp. typically have more spherical body shapes than the ovoid or egg-shaped *C. eumyota*.

Molgula manhattensis, one of the most common species of 'sea grape', has a greenish gray body covering. All *Molgula* spp. have both siphons (oral and atrial) positioned at the top of the body versus separated by approx. one third of the body length as in *C. eumyota* (see figure at right).

Body shape, siphon positioning, and typical attachment location of *Molgula* spp. and *Corella eumyota*



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This identification card is one of a series produced by Salem Sound Coastwatch (www.salemsound.org) highlighting introduced species that pose a threat to the marine environments of Massachusetts and the Gulf of Maine. The original development of these cards was funded by the MA EOEAA Office of Coastal Zone Management with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For additional species information or to report sightings, please visit www.mass.gov/czm/invasives/monitor/reporting.htm.