



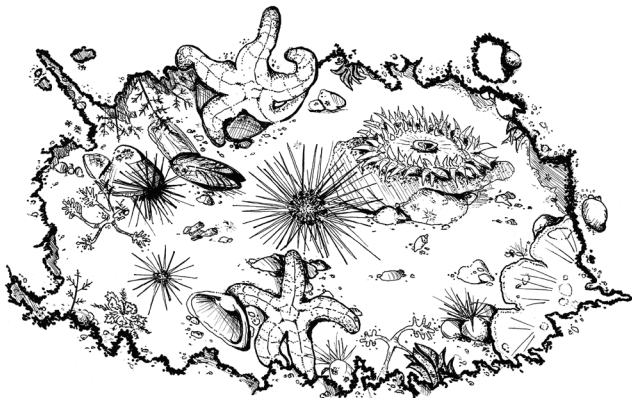
Exploring Tide Pools

California's Natural Aquariums

Tide pools, or rocky intertidal zones, are areas of the coastline that are covered and uncovered each day by the high and low tides. Tide pools are formed when water is trapped in depressions on rocky shorelines during low tides. An incredible variety of colorful marine plants and animals can be found on rocks or in tide pools—seaweeds, sea anemones, mussels, hermit crabs, limpets, and sea stars. The level of low tide will determine what you can see.

Challenges Facing Our Intertidal Zones

Visitors in coastal parks see tide pools and naturally want to explore them. However, walking through tide pools is very dangerous to the tiny, delicate marine organisms living there because they can be easily crushed underfoot. Exploring pools usually means turning over rocks that may be protecting animals from light and air that could kill them. Pulling intertidal animals off the rocks or poking them with sticks can



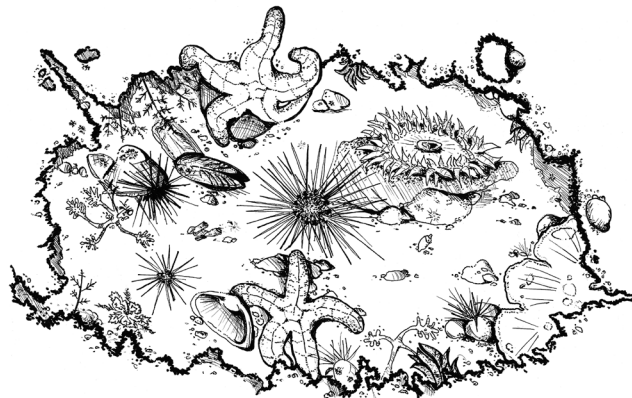
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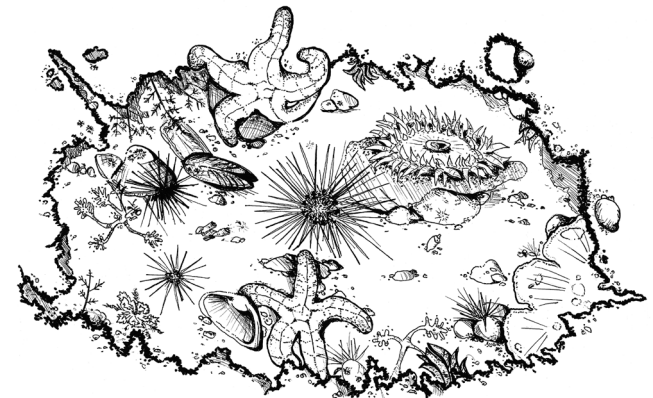
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damage or destroy them. Few organisms survive being removed from their tide pool home. Today many of California's tide pool populations are decreasing due to these activities. Pollution is also having a major effect on tide pools and beaches. Trash left behind by visitors finds its way into tide pools, poisoning the water and hitting small pool inhabitants with every surging wave.

What You Can Do To Help

- Know the park rules and the Department of Fish and Game regulations for this area.
- Do not disturb or turn over rocks.
- Look, but don't touch. You'll see more natural behaviors by observing tide pool creatures where they are, being themselves.
- Avoid harming tide pool animals—don't pick them up, pull them off the rocks, or poke them with sticks.
- Walk gently and cautiously. Rocks can be sharp or slippery. Take care not to step on marine life.
- For safety's sake, always face the ocean when exploring tide pools and beware of unexpected waves that can sweep you off the rocks.
- Don't trash our beaches. Always pack out whatever you bring in.

Please follow tide pool rules, and spread the word about good tide pool behavior to your friends and family. For more information on the tides, tide pools, or how you can do more to help, ask the lifeguard or ranger on duty. Kids can join Junior Rangers or Junior Lifeguards to learn more today!

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