

Intertidal Animals in the Classroom

Local tide pool animals that have done well in our classroom aquaria

- Aholehole
- Manini
- Decorator-type crabs
- Medium-sized cowries
- Feather duster worms
- Short-spined sea urchins
- Barnacles
- Mamo
- Blennies and gobies
- Small anemones
- Solitary tunicates
- Shrimps
- Hermit crabs

Animals that haven't done well or pose a hazard to other animals

- Larger fish
- Most crabs (they will attack other animals and each other)
- Sea cucumbers
- Sea slugs (some of these are toxic to other animals)
- Sponges (many are toxic to other animals, but could be kept in own aquarium)
- Helmet urchins
- Large snails
- Predatory snails (i.e., whelks, cone snails)
- Fire worms (toxic to other animals)
- Opihi (need high water flow)
- *any Potentially Hazardous Marine Organisms

Keep habitat and food preferences in mind when bringing organisms back to the classroom. For instance, fish need structures to hide in. Also keep in mind conflicts between species. Crabs do well in tanks but as stated above, will attack each other and other animals.

Supplies of the Successful Classroom Aquaria

1. Tank. Glass or clear plastic tanks are best so that kids can see the animals well. A large, wide mouth jar will also do, although rectangular shapes provide better viewing and more room for animals to move around.

2. Salt water. You can buy your salt water at an aquarium store in the form of a mix like Instant Ocean, or bring it in from the ocean in a clean bucket or gallon jug. If you are

taking it from the ocean, try to take it from a place where the water is clear and free of sediment, and not near a freshwater source such as a creek or storm drain. Periodically replace the water by draining monthly (remember, these are intertidal animals and can handle being out of water briefly). The water will evaporate over time, leaving salt on the edges of the tank. Remove the salt and replace water as needed to prevent hypersalinity.

3. An aerator. Inexpensive bubblers from Longs will do just fine. Get some clear plastic tubing and a pack of air stones. You can buy these items for under \$10.

4. Fish food. Most of the organisms described do well on a diet of fresh algae, brine shrimp, and/or marine flake fish food. Organisms that have special dietary requirements may not be good classroom specimens.