

# Leathery Sea Squirt

## Species Description

**Scientific name:** *Styela clava*

**AKA:** Club (or Clubbed) Tunicate, Asian Sea Squirt, Chwistrell fôr arw (Welsh)

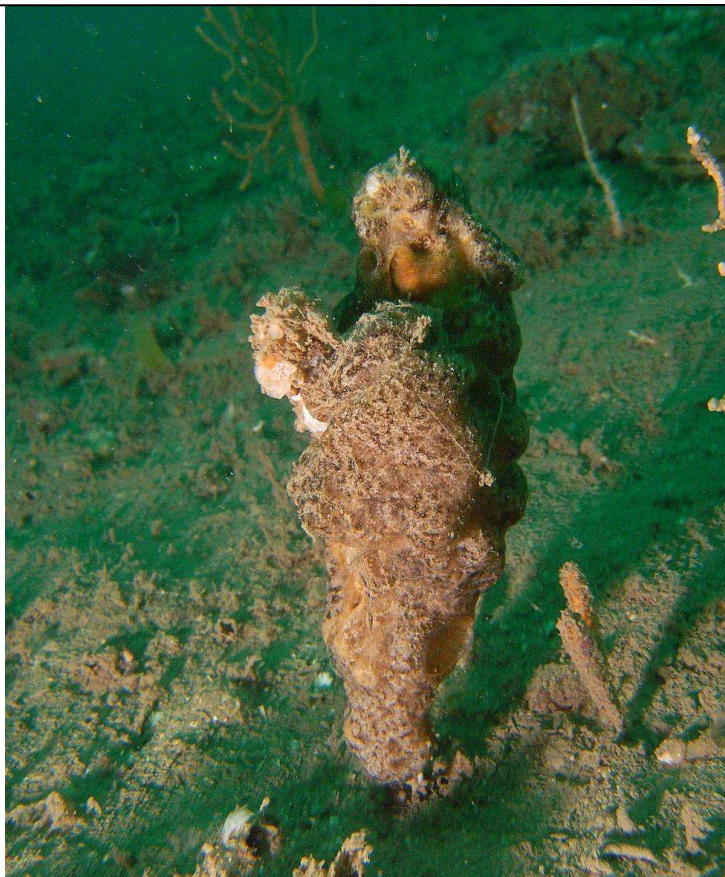
**Native to:** North west Pacific

**Habitat:** Hard surfaces in shallow, sheltered water

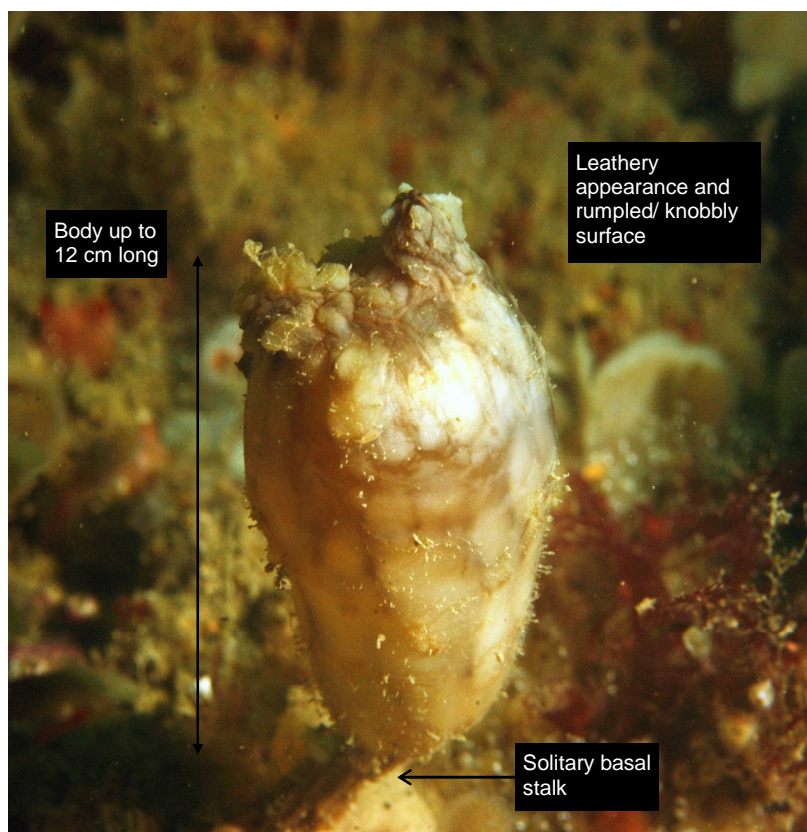
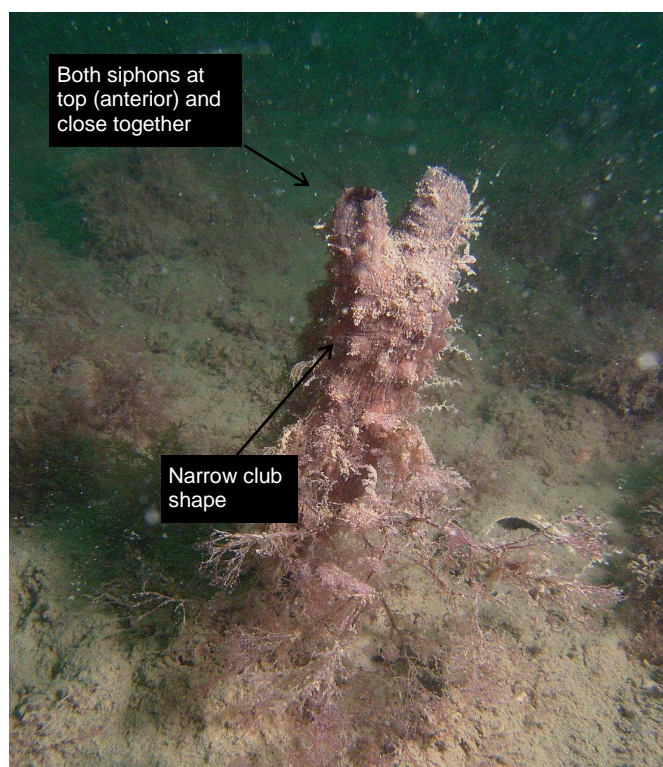
Sea squirts are animals shaped like a stout bag with two openings (siphons). Differentiated from other sea squirts in the UK by being solitary, with each individual having its own basal stalk.

The species was probably introduced in 1952 on the hulls of warships returning after the Korean war. It can be found on the south and west coasts of England as far north as Cumbria and in abundance in certain parts of the Solent in southern England and parts of Loch Ryan and other scattered Scottish localities. Large populations dominate and displace other species through competition for food and space. It is also a fouling pest on ship hulls and aquacultural infrastructure.

For details of legislation go to [www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation).



## Key ID Features





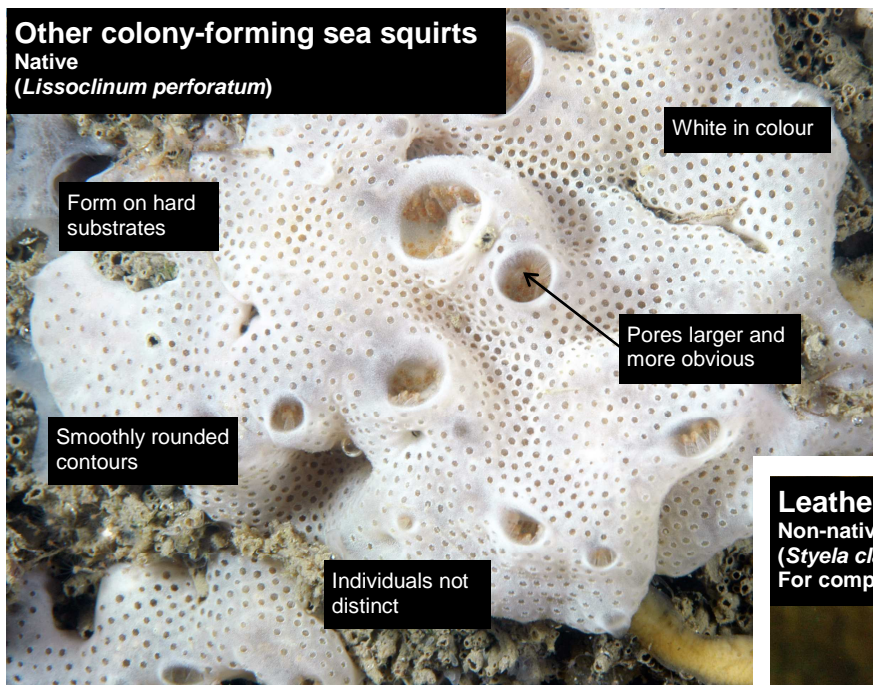
# Identification throughout the year

Readily identifiable throughout the year.

## Similar Species

### Other colony-forming sea squirts

Native  
(*Lissoclinum perforatum*)



## Distribution

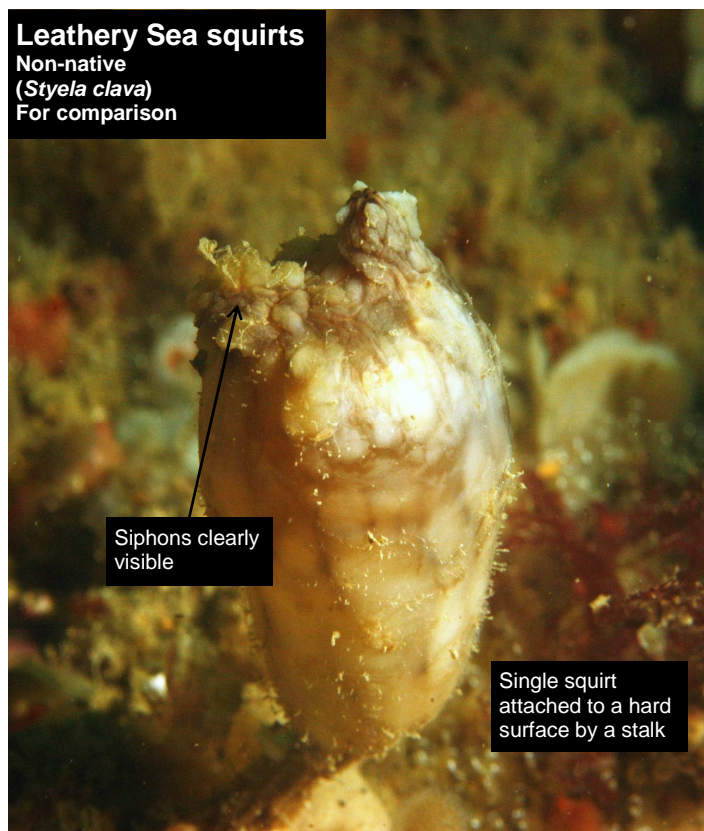
Leathery sea squirts have been recorded around the coast of England, Wales and western Scotland.

Source: NBN Gateway. Check website for current distribution.



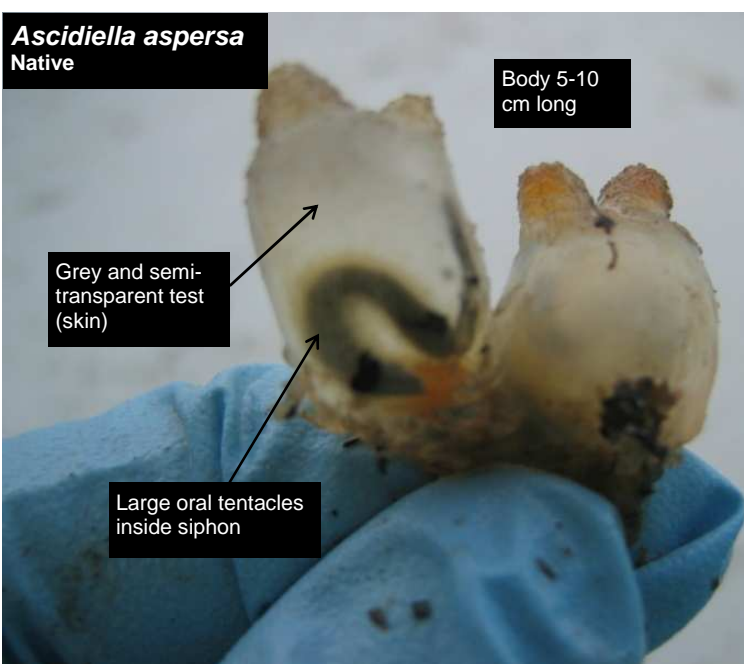
### Leathery Sea squirts

Non-native  
(*Styela clava*)  
For comparison



### *Ascidia aspersa*

Native



### References and further reading:

MarLIN (undated). "*Identification Guide for Selected Marine Non-native Species*".

[www.marlin.ac.uk](http://www.marlin.ac.uk)

Morton, O. & Picton, B.E. 2009. Encyclopaedia of Marine life of Britain and Ireland  
[www.habitas.org.uk/](http://www.habitas.org.uk/)