

*Bugula neritina* forms flexible bushy colonies, branching biserial, to about 10 cm high and is purplish-brown in colour. Zooids white and globular, with the outer corner pointed (Bishop Museum 2002, in Gordon and Mawatari, 1992). Zooids are large and measure an average of 0.97 x 0.28 mm. *B. neritina* differs from other species in this genus in that it possesses no avicularia and no spines. The lophophore measures an average of 0.764 mm in diameter and bears 23 tentacles (SMSFP 2001). Embryos brooded in ovicells are dark brown in colour and measure approximately 0.25 mm in diameter (SMSFP 2001 in *WBugula neritina* a common fouling organism worldwide, is reported from all seas except sub Arctic and sub Antarctic regions (Bishop Museum 2002). The cosmopolitan distribution of the species appears to be due to shipping introductions (Mackie *et al.* 2006). Furthermore, genetically divergent but morphologically unrecognised (= 'cryptic') species of *B. neritina* have been identified in the United States.

Native range: *Bugula neritina* was widespread before surveys commenced in most areas (Keough and Ross, 1999). One mitochondrial haplotype (based on sequences of the mitochondrial gene COI) is globally widespread, occurring on coastlines in Australia, Curacao, USA and Hawaii, and the UK, indicating a widespread introduction (Mackie, Keough and Christidis, 2006). The native locale of this lineage is unknown from molecular studies. Three cryptic species referred to as *B. neritina* are known to occur in the USA; these are referred to as Type S and Type D (occurring in California) (Davidson and Haygood, 1999); and a third divergent 'cryptic species' lineage has been identified in the northern part of the taxonomic range in the eastern USA (McGovern and Hellberg, 2003).

inston 1982). *B. neritina* colonies are typically found in harbours and embayments, intertidal to 5m, attached to any available hard substrate (Bishop Museum, 2002). Larvae colonise a variety of artificial substrata including hulls (Mackie *et al.*, 2006). Studies have shown *B. neritina* larvae prefer to attach to rougher surfaces and prefer to attach to organic material. For example, in nature they frequently affix themselves to algae and to established bryozoan colonies (Lynch, 1947). *B. neritina* is found in euhaline and polyhaline regions (water salinity around 30-18‰) (Winston, 1977).

In North America *B. neritina* occurs on rocky reefs and seagrass leaves (Hayes *et al.*, 2005).