

Membranipora membranacea

Lacy Crust Bryozoan

Invasive to Maine

Coastal
Rocky Intertidal, Docks, and Beaches

Zoid (Individual)

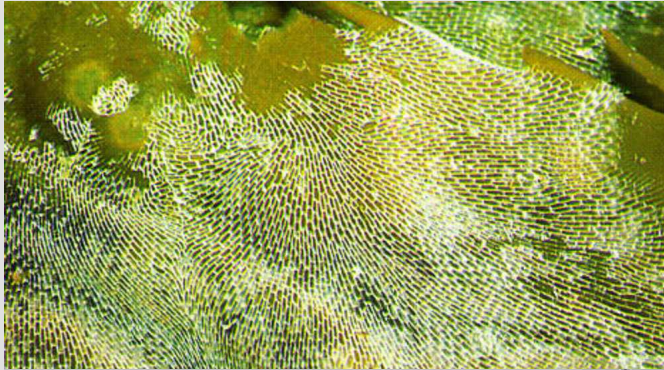


Photo courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey



Look for rectangular white boxes inside patches of Zooids growing on kelp. Each white box contains a zoid (individual). Zooids are dependent on each other and have different roles within the colony (patch).

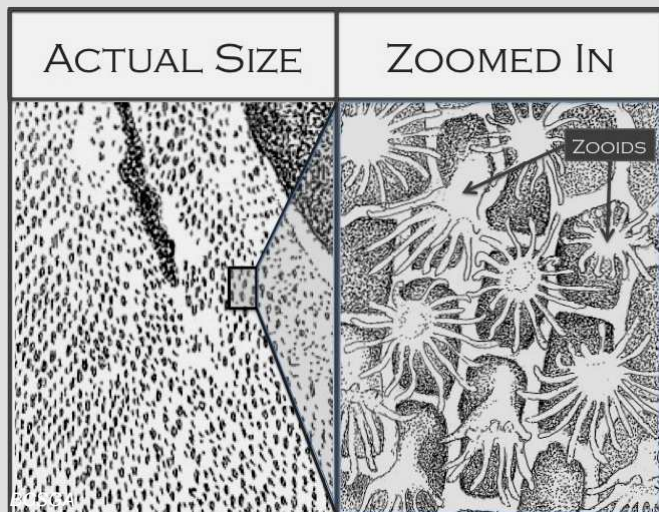
Full View



Photo by M Pratt



Look for flat, gray patches on kelp. Patches can be 1 cm across or cover the whole frond. The patches are only 1 mm thick and feel like sandpaper.



Growth Pattern



Photo by M Pratt



Look for a flat patch that is circular with a radiating pattern of boxes inside. The outermost edge, the growing edge, is smooth. It is easier to see this pattern in smaller colonies.

Additional



Photo by GMRI



The Lacy Crust Bryozoan looks the same in the winter as it does in the summer, but it does not grow as fast.

Similar Species

There are several animals that grow in flat colonies on seaweed. The Lacy Crust Bryozoan is the only one that feels rough, like sandpaper.

Fun Fact

The zooids (individual animals) of the Lacy Crust Bryozoan take on different roles in the colony. Some zooids gather food, some clean and others strengthen the colony. Colonies can communicate with each other using electrical signals.