### European Sea Squirt

*Ascidiella aspersa*

- Thin, grayish or pink, semi-translucent tunic with a rough, bumpy surface
- Typically oval or egg-shaped, can grow up to 5 inches long
- Oral siphon (inflow) at the top of the body, atrial siphon (outflow) located on the side
- Found in shallow, protected, subtidal waters (both marine and estuarine), common on docks
- Native to Europe, first observed in New England in the early 1980s

### Club Tunicate

*Styela clava*

- Brownish, mottled color with leathery and warty tunic
- Long, club-shaped body up to 8 inches long with a narrow stalk about \(\frac{1}{3}\) of total length
- Alternating dark and light stripes on siphons when open
- Found in sheltered, shallow waters, very common on docks and fishing gear
- Native to the Northwest Pacific, first observed in New England in the early 1970s

Solitary tunicates (commonly known as sea squirts because they can squirt water from their siphons) have a soft body that is contained within a tough membrane (tunic). They are filter feeders that attach to hard surfaces. Tunicates retract their siphons when disturbed, making them more difficult to identify (however, the siphons will re-open when the tunicates are left in the water).
### Similar Species

| **Ciona intestinalis**  
| **Sea Vase**  
| - Tunic is smooth and transparent, varies in color (clear, white, orange, light pink, or light yellow), and grows to 6 inches long  
| - Siphons are ringed in yellow  
| - Body is soft and often collapses when taken out of the water  
| - Can be extremely abundant, carpeting the undersides of docks and piers  
| - Common, considered cryptogenic (native origins are unknown) in New England  
| **Molgula spp.**  
| **Sea Grape**  
| - Translucent gray or greenish blue  
| - Small (up to 1.5 inches wide), grape-shaped, often in dense clusters  
| - Siphons are close together at the top of the body  
| - Several species occur in New England  
| **Styela canopus**  
| **Rough Tunicate**  
| - Tunic is reddish brown and rough or warty, often covered with fine debris  
| - Small (usually about 1 inch long) and lacks a long stalk  
| - Attaches to hard surfaces in sheltered areas  
| - Introduced species native to Asia  
| - Can be found throughout New England (but more common in warmer waters)  

*C. intestinalis* can vary in color from white to orange, siphons often have yellow rims.

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**Species are native unless otherwise noted.**