



Food Chain in Action

October 2, 2011

Today Darcy & I went for a dive at Black Shoal in Indian Arm. The dive itself was not ultra- fantastic; visibility was less than stellar because of the abundance of plankton in the water. What was fascinating about the dive was the evidence of the food chain in action. Before we even got in the water we observed the multitudes of moon jellies undulating through the shallows. It is always mesmerizing to watch as they suck in and then expel the water to manoeuver themselves through the water column. The jellies were feeding on the plankton and they in turn were being eaten by anemones, crab, shrimp and prawns. We saw a shrimp carrying a broken barnacle to perhaps his special feeding spot. An octopus, deep inside a rocky crevice, had crab shells scattered all around the entrance to his den, evidence of his preference for crustaceans. A large sunstar was also feeding on a dungeness crab (whole). Hiding under a large blade of kelp was one of the largest lemon nudibranchs we've ever seen, munching on some orange encrusting sponge. Noticeably absent were fish. We saw no rockfish, greenling, or lingcod. Normally we see at least a few. Perhaps the family jigging four fishing rods into the water 50 yards away could have something to do with that, or many others before them. Again, evidence of the ocean's abundance feeding other living creatures. Our ocean is teeming with life. It is so important that do what we can to look after it.

Please enjoy some photos from our day.

Val O'Shea



Coonstripe shrimp gathering around to feast on a moon jelly



A Red Rock Crab dines on a moon jelly while resting on our anchor





a morning sun star chows down on a Dungeness Crab



A Noble Sea Lemon nudibranch munches on encrusting sponge

nudibranch

sponge