

capitolo 5 Origine ed evoluzione degli animali: gli invertebrati

verifica la comprensione

Leggi il brano e rispondi alle domande.



Sponges and sea squirts

Though extremely plant-like in appearance, sponges are actually one of the most primitive animals in the sea. They belong to a group called porifera. Most of us are familiar with the dried colorless varieties that populate the kitchens and bathrooms of the world. But in the ocean, live sponges can be found in an infinite variety of colors and shapes. Most of them are relatively small, but some varieties can grow to over 6 feet in diameter.

Sponges differ from all other marine invertebrates in that they have no true tissues or organs. Their structure is composed of simple aggregations of cells. The name porifera means pore bearer. The tissue of sponges encloses a vast network of chambers and canals that connect to the open pores on their surface. Sponges feed by drawing a current of water in through their pores, filtering out the nutrients, and then ejecting it out through an opening.

Many sponges on the reef resemble some of the corals in shape and color, but upon closer inspection the difference is apparent. They are one of the many life forms unique to the ocean environment. Sea squirts are very similar to sponges in appearance.

They belong to a group called chordata. They are usually found growing in clusters on rocks. Like sponges, they filter particles of food from the water by pumping it through tiny pores and then expelling it through a central opening.

(www.seasky.org)



The vase sponge is a common species characterized by a large bell shape with a deep central cavity. It ranges in color from purple to red and brown, and is found attached to rocks near the sandy bottoms.

- How are sponges different from other marine invertebrates?
- How do sponges feed themselves?