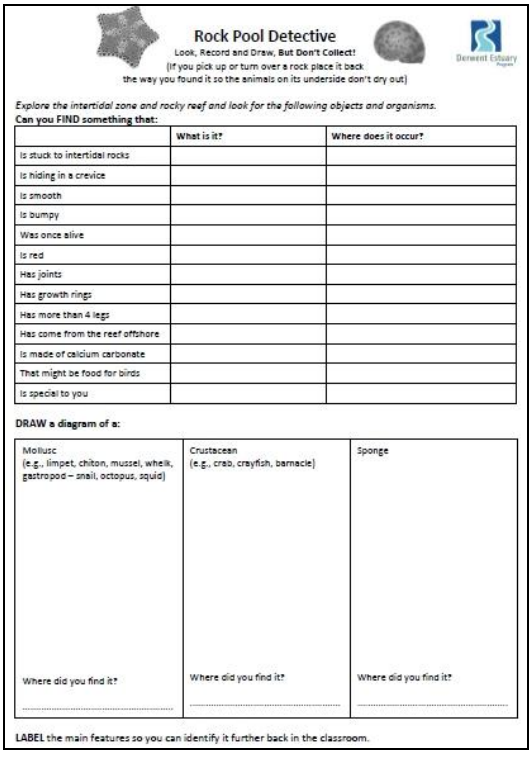
Activity - Rock Pool Detective
(Gr 2 – 8)

Overview: During a low tide explore the exposed reef and rock pools to appreciate the diversity of life in the intertidal zone. Look closely at a small area of intertidal zone to appreciate how animals and plants use boulders, crevices and pools as habitat. There are many physical challenges faced by intertidal animals in the daily cycle of high and low tide. Mobile reef animals often aggregate in shallow rock pools during low tide. Widen your search to the surrounding exposed rock to find marine animals who can survive exposure to air.

In rock pools you can often see evidence of the nearby submerged reef. Some mobile plants and animals may become trapped in rockpools as the tide goes out, providing an opportunity to have a close look at them. Fragments of sponges and macroalgae that live in deeper water may have broken off in rough waters and been washed ashore. Storm events may also wash small animals like seahorses and hermit crabs onto rocky shores. Predatory animals like cormorants, gulls, penguins and seals often leave evidence of their lunch on the rocks in the form of bones or pellets. Pellets are produced by birds, and represent the hard parts of marine animals they have gathered in their crop then spat out.

TASK: Print out one copy of the 'Rock Pool Detective Field Sheet' per student and provide pencils. Look for organisms on along the intertidal zone that have certain characteristics. Ask students to document were they are found and why they were living there? In doing so students will consider the form and function of organisms in the intertidal zone and the daily challenges they must overcome to survive.



Rock Pool Detective

Look, Record and Draw, **But Don't Collect!**
(If you pick up or turn over a rock place it back the way you found it so the animals on its underside don't dry out)

Explore the intertidal zone and rocky reef and look for the following objects and organisms.
Can you FIND something that:

	What is it?	Where does it occur?
Is stuck to intertidal rocks		
Is hiding in a crevice		
Is smooth		
Is bumpy		
Was once alive		
Is red		
Has joints		
Has growth rings		
Has more than 4 legs		
Has come from the reef offshore		
Is made of calcium carbonate		
That might be food for birds		
Is special to you		

DRAW a diagram of a:

Mollusc (e.g., limpet, chiton, mussel, whelk, gastropod – snail, octopus, squid)	Crustacean (e.g., crab, crayfish, barnacle)	Sponge
Where did you find it?	Where did you find it?	Where did you find it?

LABEL the main features so you can identify it further back in the classroom.