

GASTROPODS AND BIVALVES ASSOCIATED WITH REEF BUILDING CORALS, PALK BAY, SOUTHEASTERN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Reef building corals of the families Pocilloporidae, Acroporidae, Poritidae, and Faviidae were collected at low tide. A total of 73 species of molluscs were associated with corals in Palk Bay, *i.e.*, 46 species of gastropods belonging to 17 families, and 27 species of bivalves belonging to 13 families. Molluscs were rarely associated with young corals. The present study shows that the structure and size (weight) of corals influence the molluscan diversity. The number of molluscan individuals increased with increasing coral weight. With a single exception, no molluscs were associated with the massive coral *Favia pallida*. Very few boring bivalves were recorded from branching corals.