

**A Growth Series of our Gumboot Chiton, *Cryptochiton stelleri* (Middendorff, 1847)
by Linda Schroeder**

This summer while doing a beach survey in Whatcom County, WA, I found the two tiniest Gumboot chitons I'd ever seen. It inspired me to show a growth series and the color range they exhibit within Washington State. The Gumboot is the largest growing chiton species in the world.



This specimen was just shy of 5mm. Found at Neptune Beach July 2018 in Whatcom County. The tops of the plates are still visible.

[Inset actual size]



Also found at Neptune Beach, on the same day, was this 10mm specimen. The girdle has covered the last bit of the plates, but they are still faintly visible.

[Inset actual size]



This 30mm specimen was seen in June 2011 in Bremerton at the Lion's Park beach. The girdle completely hides the plates now.



The girdle color darkens as it ages. This specimen was roughly 70mm and was found on the west side of Oak Bay in May 2009.



A deep red colored specimen is more unusual to see in our area. This specimen was about 180mm and was spotted at Shannon Point in July 2010.



Finally we have our giant specimen, found at Marrowstone Point in May 2008, it was at least 320mm. This species is known to reach 350mm.