



Featured Creature



J. Chamorro

California mussel *Mytilus californianus*



Animal Type
Invertebrate



Habitat
Rocky intertidal



Diet
Filter water for small particles
& microscopic organisms



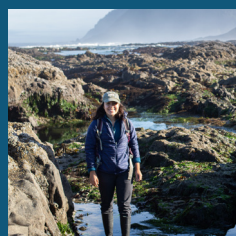
Range
Alaska to Baja California

Why are mussels important?


Mussels are known as a **foundation species**. Just like the foundation of a house or a make-up routine, mussels form the *base* of the rocky intertidal ecosystem. This means they are the first to settle on rocks and create living spaces for other animals like snails, crabs, and more! Without mussels, we'd see fewer critters crawling around in the intertidal.

Mussels create dense reefs on rocks in the intertidal. The **intertidal zone** is under water at high tide but exposed at low tide. It's one of the most challenging environments on Earth to live in. Mussels are super tough!

Researcher Spotlight



Jannine Chamorro
PhD Candidate
UC Santa Barbara

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What do I study?

I study how marine organisms, such as intertidal mussels and kelp forest urchins, are impacted by warming oceans.

Why do I love research?

I have always been interested in understanding the complex interactions between animals and their environment. Research has allowed me to study these interactions firsthand, whether it be in the lab or field, with the goal of better determining how global climate change will affect marine animals.