

CRINOIDEA CARE

PURPOSE: To describe methods of care for feather stars.

POLICY: To provide optimum care for all animals.

RESPONSIBILITY: Collector and user of the animals. If these are not the same person, the user takes over responsibility of the animals as soon as the animals have arrived on station.

PROCEDURE: At present there is one species of feather star found around BMSC.

Species: Feather star *Florometra serratissima*

Identification: Refer to Gotshall's "Guide to Marine Invertebrates: Alaska to Baja California" for in depth description of specimens.

Florometra serratissima: has ten long arms each with slender branches. Color is tan to reddish tan. Can reach 25 cm in height. Found on soft and hard bottoms in shallow subtidal areas and to depths of 990m. It is essentially an upside-down brittle star.

Sites: Subtidal sites are found on the shores of the Deer Group Islands, Dixon I., Scott's Bay, off the Blowhole, along Grappler Inlet and at the Harbor mouth across from Aguilar Pt.

Methods: can be collected by hand from shallow sites and placed in a container. From deeper sites must be collected by scuba diving. Be very careful when moving the feather stars, as their arms will break off very easily when roughly handled.

Holding: Held in continually flowing seawater. Provide variety of rocks, as feather stars like to anchor to a roughened rock surface. They will move around until they find a rock that they like. Lids are unnecessary.

Feeding: Feather stars are filter feeders. They require supplemental feedings of plankton every 3rd to 5th day, as there is not enough plankton in BMSC's intake seawater.

Tank Cleaning: Once a month the feather stars should be removed from the tank and placed into a holding bucket. Be very careful when moving the feather stars, as their arms will break off very easily when roughly handled. The tanks should be drained and the sides and bottom should be scrubbed and rinsed first with warm freshwater then with seawater and allowed to refill. Place the feather stars back in the tank once refilling has begun.

DAILY ACTIVITIES:

1. Ensure water is flowing into the tank at a reasonable rate.
2. Ensure the standpipe is in place and not blocked.
3. Check for and remove dead animals.
4. Check for and remove any uneaten prey organisms.