

A tunicate from a Thai coral reef: a potential source of new anticancer compounds

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Fig. 1 The tunicate, *Ecteinascidia thurstoni* (white colony)

gellates *Protoperdinium*, *Prorocentrum* and *Triceratium*. Preliminary results from field observations show that the main factor controlling the growth and population density of this tunicate is light, with populations of *E. thurstoni* only occurring where conditions of low light intensity prevail. The life span of *E. thurstoni* is approximately 60 days. Laboratory observations showed that within 12 h of release, 'tadpole like' larvae attach to surfaces by three anterior suckers. The 'tadpoles' then develop and metamorphose into juvenile filter feeders within 24 h.

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