

## *Coastwise Starts its 2012 Rockpool Ramble Programme*

Croyde looked its best for the first public rock-pool ramble of the season on 10th April. Sunny blue skies coupled with a brisk but cool wind brought about 50 visitors to our busy base camp on the mid shore, resplendent with its new Coastwise umbrella.

Our “shore safaris” are now termed Rock-Pool Rambles (to avoid scaring the more sensitive !). We cover as much of the rocky shore as the tide and ease of access will allow to find the variety of plants and animals that inhabit the cracks and crevices amongst the rocks, as well as those that can withstand the extremes of the pools.

Several groups with Coastwise guides set out to keen to see what they could find and to bring back suitable animals to the base camp tank for everyone to enjoy. As we progressed down the shore we encountered plenty of hardy animals able to withstand the rough water of Croyde’s exposed shore, limpets, mussels and barnacles. Where a little shelter was on offer there were plenty of other sea snails, as well as several species of anemone:



Beadlet, Snakelocks, Strawberry and Gem as well as one that is rather special. The Glaucous Pimplet (*Anthopleura thallia*) pictured here



is relatively uncommon and tricky to find despite being present at Croyde in abundance. Keen eyes soon learnt to spot the tiny mounds of shelly gravel lining some cracks in the rocks which on close inspection revealed the puckered “lips” of the anemone at the centre of each mound. Crabs were the children’s favourite and there was no shortage, including Shore Crabs of all sizes, several of them missing a limb or two, seeking shelter whilst awaiting its regrowth. All in all a day made very enjoyable by the enthusiasm of the participants, the dedication of the guides and the early Spring showing of animals on a rugged shore... all washed down with a lovely cup of tea at the nearby Sandleigh Café, delivered from a giant 15 cup capacity teapot - arguably the best find of the day.