

# Design and layout of the book

This book has been designed both as a guide to the identification of the common and widespread organisms of the shore and as a biological text giving information on their biology and ecology. It is intended for use by students, lecturers and teachers, and also by naturalists and others who might have little or no formal scientific training.

In the following pages, the different groups of organisms are arranged in phylogenetic sequence. Readers who are unable initially to assign an organism to its phylum or group are referred to the illustrated guide on p. 11. When the phylum or group to which an organism belongs is known, reference can be made directly to the appropriate chapter where the reader will find an introduction giving the main characters of the phylum or group together with a full classification in which those classes, subclasses, orders, etc. included in this text are highlighted in bold type. A brief statement on the morphology and biology of the group is also included. For most groups a simple dichotomous key is provided. In some cases this is to the level of families and leads to a full statement of family characteristics, followed where appropriate by a key to species. In other cases the phylum or group has been keyed directly to species. Morphological features are the basis on which identification is made but in many cases the type of substratum on which the organism is found, position on the shore and distribution are important characteristics. This information is included in the text where appropriate.

The entry for each species is presented as follows:

***Genus species*** Authority (*former name(s)*) Common name(s) Fig.

Generic and specific names are shown in bold italic script followed by the name of the person(s) who described the species, the authority, which may or may not be in brackets (see p. 7). This is followed by any former names by which the species has been known and referred to in earlier/other texts. Finally, common names in wide usage are included, followed by reference to the figure number in bold type. In some cases there is also reference to a plate number.

For each species there is a statement of diagnostic features, in italic script, a drawing and notes on its biology. Scientific terminology used in the description of species has been kept to a minimum and is explained in the introductory sections at the beginning of each chapter and the glossary at the end of the book. Important diagnostic features for a particular group or individual species are labelled on the appropriate drawings. A scale has not been included on the drawings but for guidance the size of each species is given in the diagnostic features. For ease of reference, drawings are interspersed in the text.

The inclusion of family and species keys followed by a full statement of diagnostic features for each species has led to some repetition but this enables those readers more familiar with the identification of shore organisms, and using the book