



# Shoreline Habitat

The Habitat Type provides a simplified picture of the "look" of the unit overall, based on the detailed biophysical attributes that have been mapped. The Habitat Type category is a summary of the observations of both the unit's biological and geomorphological features.

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Each Habitat Type has a definition that includes the typical substrate, wave exposure and biobands. For example, for the Semi-exposed, Immobile substrate Habitat Type, part of the definition of that class is a certain combination of the most likely biobands and indicator species present at a bedrock shoreline with no mobile sediment present.

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How is Habitat Type determined?  
Each Habitat Type has typical biological features (including both an indicator species list and typical associated biobands).  
To determine the Habitat Type, the biomapper looks at the along-shore Units as designated and described by the physical mapper,

1. records the observations of the biobands in the unit and looks for indicator species,
2. assigns a bio-(wave) exposure category,
3. retains the classified information, and

3.  reviews the physical mapped information, and
4.  assigns the Habitat Type that best describes the unit.

The Habitat Type is based on the whole unit and is similar to the physical mappers use of the 'Coastal Class' category, in that the detailed across-shore data are summarized into one attribute. The simplified category describes the features of the whole unit.

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- the biobands observed,
- the wave exposure as indicated by the bands, and

- the wave exposure as indicated by the bands, and
- the substrate types in the unit.

Legend Definitions  
CC - Coastal Classification number

Wave Exposure  
□ None □ Low □ Moderate □ High □ Very High

E - Exposed - Very high wave exposure, open ocean swellsm usually fetches >500km  
VE - Very Exposed - Extreme high wave exposure  
SE - Semi-Exposed - High wave exposure, open coastlines, areas between fully exposed and more sheltered, usually fetches 50 to

SE - Semi Exposed - High wave exposure, open shorelines, areas between fully exposed and more sheltered, usually fetches 50 to 100km  
P - Protected - Low wave exposure, sheltered inlets, usually fetches less than 10km  
SP - Semi Protected - Moderate wave exposure, partly sheltered, usually fetches 10-50km

SP - Semi Protected - Moderate wave exposure, partly sheltered, usually fetches 10-50km  
VP - Very Protected - Very low wave exposure, fetches < 1km, sheltered anchorages at heads of bays and inlets

| Habitat Classification Based on Visible Macro-Biota Assemblages for the Queen Charlotte shoreline |   |  |  |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Substrate Stability   | IMMOBILE SUBSTRATES   |  |  |   |   | MOBILE OR PARTIALLY MOBILE SUBSTRATES   |   |  |   | Current-Dominated   |
| Major Substrate   | Bedrock   | Bedrock  | Bedrock/Boulder  | Bedrock/Gravel  | Bedrock/Gravel  | Sand & Gravel   | Sand & Gravel   | Estuary or Sand/Mud                              | Sediment  | Bedrock or Sediment   |
| Coastal Classes   | 1-20  | 1-20   | 1-23, 32, 33   | 1-23, 33  | 1-23, 33  | 24, 25, 26, 32  | 24, 25, 26, 32  | 27, 28, 29, 30, 31                               | 21-30   | 34  |
| Exposure (Exp Bio)  | VE  | E  | SE   | SP  | VP, P   | SP  | VP, P   | VP, P, SP  | SE, E   | VP, P, SP   |
| Community Code (Hab Obs)  | 1   | 2  | 3  | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8  | 9   | 10  |
| upper   | <i>Verrucaria</i>   | <i>Verrucaria</i>  | <i>Verrucaria Enteromorpha</i>   | <i>Verrucaria Enteromorpha</i>  | <i>Verrucaria Enteromorpha</i>                        | <i>Verrucaria Enteromorpha</i>  | <i>Verrucaria Enteromorpha</i>                        | grasses & rushes                                 | no visible intertidal macrobiota due to sediment mobility | Assemblage observed is 'anomalous' for the wave energy of the site. |
|   | <i>Balanus glandula</i>   | <i>Balanus glandula</i>  | <i>Balanus glandula Fucus distichus</i>  | <i>Balanus glandula Fucus distichus</i>   | <i>Balanus glandula Fucus distichus</i>               | <i>Balanus glandula Fucus distichus</i>   | <i>Balanus glandula Fucus distichus</i>               | <i>Salicornia virginica</i>                      |   |   |
| middle  | <i>Pollipices polymerus</i><br><i>Mytilus californianus</i><br>[ <i>Semibalanus cariosus</i> ]  | <i>Pollipices polymerus</i><br><i>Mytilus californianus</i><br><i>Semibalanus cariosus</i> | <i>Mytilus californianus</i>   | <i>Mytilus trossulus</i><br><i>Semibalanus cariosus</i><br><i>Ulva/ Ulvaria spp.</i>  | <i>Mytilus trossulus</i>                              | <i>Mytilus trossulus</i><br><i>Semibalanus cariosus</i><br><i>Ulva/ Ulvaria spp.</i>            | <i>Mytilus trossulus</i><br><i>Ulva/ Ulvaria spp.</i> | <i>Mytilus trossulus</i><br><i>Ulva/ Ulvaria</i> |   |   |
| mid/low   | [ <i>Alaria 'nana'</i> morph]   | <i>Alaria 'nana'</i> morph   | <i>Halosaccion glandiforme</i><br><i>Hedophyllum sessile</i>                           | <i>Halosaccion glandiforme</i>  | <i>Halosaccion glandiforme</i>                        | <i>Halosaccion glandiforme</i>  | <i>Halosaccion glandiforme</i>                        | <i>Halosaccion glandiforme</i>                   |   |   |
| lower   | <i>Lessoniopsis littoralis</i><br>[ <i>Laminaria setchelli</i> ] lush foliose coralline reds: <i>Bossiella/ Calliarthron/ Corallina</i> | <i>Lessoniopsis littoralis</i><br><i>Laminaria setchelli</i>                               | <i>Laminaria setchelli</i><br><i>Laminaria groenlandica</i><br>diverse mixed red algae | <i>Laminaria groenlandica</i>   | <i>Laminaria saccharina</i>                           | <i>Laminaria groenlandica</i><br><i>Laminaria saccharina</i><br><i>Alaria 'marginata'</i> morph | <i>Laminaria saccharina</i>                           | <i>Laminaria saccharina</i>                      |   |   |
| subtidal  | <i>Lithothamnion</i>  | <i>Lithothamnion</i>   | <i>Lithothamnion</i>   | <i>Lithothamnion</i>  | <i>Lithothamnion</i>                                  | <i>Lithothamnion</i>  | <i>Nereocystis luetkeana</i>                          | <i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i>                  | <i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i>                           | <i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i>                                     |
|   | <i>Nereocystis luetkeana</i>  | <i>Nereocystis luetkeana</i>   | <i>Nereocystis luetkeana</i><br><i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i><br><i>Agarum spp.</i>  | <i>Nereocystis luetkeana</i><br><i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i><br><i>Agarum spp.</i> | <i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i><br><i>Agarum spp.</i> | <i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i><br><i>Agarum spp.</i>   |   |  |   |   |

\* Bolding indicates diagnostic species used to distinguish "communities". Square brackets [ ] enclose species at VE AB\_OBS 1 which may be present but are in reduced abundance and size. Note that the absence of species assemblages are as diagnostic as species' presence. Community Code type 1 (VE – very exposed) occurs only on the southwest coast of Moresby Island.

