



HABITAT

EELGRASS BEDS

Sheltering Stabilizers





Eelgrass grows in shallow waters where sunlight can reach deep enough to support the plant's growth; the roots help stabilize soft bottom sediments from being eroded by tidal currents; many eelgrass beds in the Sound have disappeared due to disease, predation, or poor water quality.



Eelgrass beds provide young fish and bay scallops with shelter from predators; juvenile bay scallops attach to the eelgrass blades during their first few weeks, which may help them avoid predation from crabs.



Translucent **grass shrimp** are common shallow-water inhabitants, finding shelter among aquatic vegetation such as eelgrass.



Mute swans dine heavily on eelgrass and the green seaweed, sea lettuce; their long necks enable them to reach down and pull the eelgrass out by its roots, destroying the beds.



Canada geese also feed on aquatic vegetation and seaweed; they often concentrate in large flocks, and their wastes can cause local water quality problems.