

Massive overgrowth of coral recruits by barnacles in winter low-temperature conditions, Hong Kong, China

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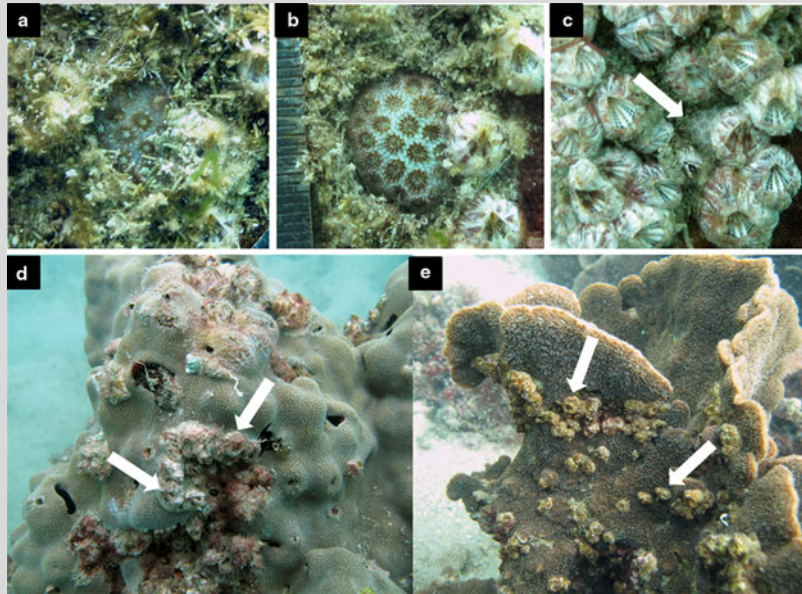


Fig. 1 a Coral recruit (Poritidae) on settlement plate covered with sediment (photo taken 22 Dec 2009); b Same coral recruit with sediment removed. Note the recruitment of barnacles around the coral recruit; c Same coral recruit (arrow) overgrown by barnacles on 8 Jan 2010; d and e Massive recruitment of barnacles (arrows) occupying open and/or damaged space on the surface of coral colonies. Photos taken at around 2 m below chart datum

winters ($<16^{\circ}\text{C}$) such as occurred this year (2010). A comparable outbreak of barnacle recruitment happened in 2000, under similar prolonged and relatively cold winter conditions. Such a periodic mass recruitment of barnacles likely wipes out successful coral recruitment in that particular year and reflects the additional difficulty with which coral recruits face in successfully establishing themselves in a marginal environment.

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Reef sites

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