

Eliminate Stinging *Aiptasia* sp., how to

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



[Live rock](#) and [corals](#) are great additions to your reef aquarium, bringing a rich variety of organisms into your reef.

Unfortunately, with live

rock and corals often come unwanted sea life, some dangerous, some parasitic, and some that will quickly overgrow and take over your aquarium.

Aiptasia species, also known as Glass, Rock, Tube, or Glassrose anemones, is one such "hitchhiker." *Aiptasia* are hardy opportunistic anemones that resemble miniature palm trees. Some varieties are transparent while others are mostly light brown or tan in color, ranging in size from a few centimeters to a few inches.

Why They Should be Eliminated

Aiptasia anemones can harm your reef in two ways: they can sting your more desirable [sessile livestock](#) and multiply rapidly to aggressively compete for food and space. In addition, they are notoriously difficult to eliminate. Other unwanted organisms may be removed rather easily but *Aiptasia*, along with other cnidarians, have many ways to thwart your efforts. Because they are so tiny, they can quickly withdraw into tiny holes. In addition, if you try to siphon, pull, or cut one out and don't remove most of it, what is left can regenerate, sometimes into multiple anemones leaving you with more than you started with.

It is essential to rid your aquarium of these creatures as soon as possible before their numbers reach nuisance proportions. Fortunately, there are reliable methods of *Aiptasia* management including:

- Natural methods such as the introduction of [Peppermint Shrimp](#) or [Butterflyfish](#).