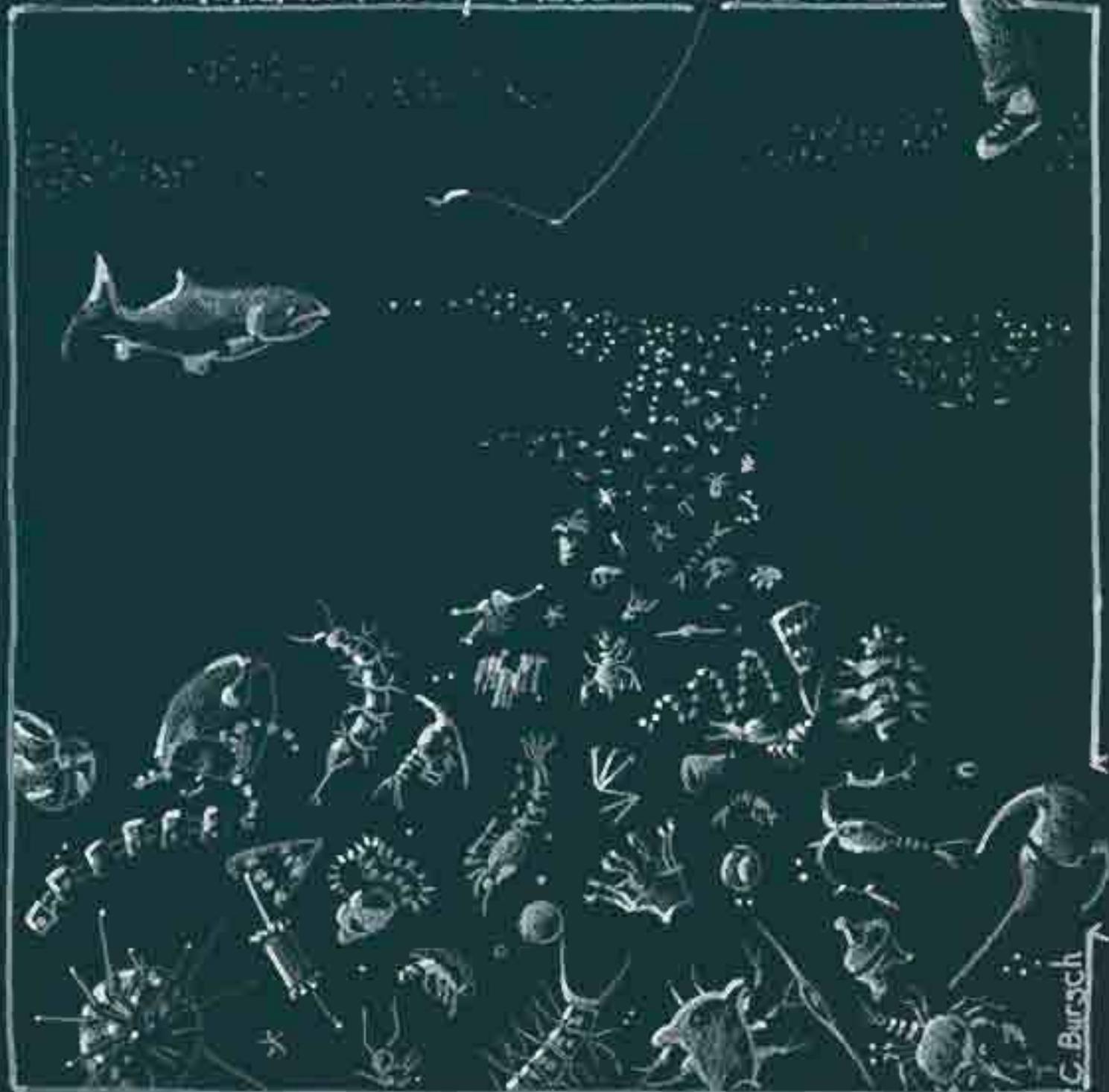


Marine Plankton

Kachemak Bay Research Reserve



G. Bursch

What does 'marine plankton' mean?

'Marine' means having to do with the ocean and 'plankton' are living things, mostly small, that float in water. So 'marine plankton' are living things that drift in the waters of the ocean. Most plankton are very tiny and very weak swimmers. They reach new feeding grounds by taking advantage of the tides and currents. There are plant plankton (phytoplankton) and animal plankton (zooplankton).

Many ocean animals we find at low tide on the beach start out life as larvae, or babies. They float around as plankton until they reach a certain age and then settle on the bottom of the ocean to grow up. Other zooplankton never get larger than the period at the end of this sentence and spend their whole life drifting around the ocean.

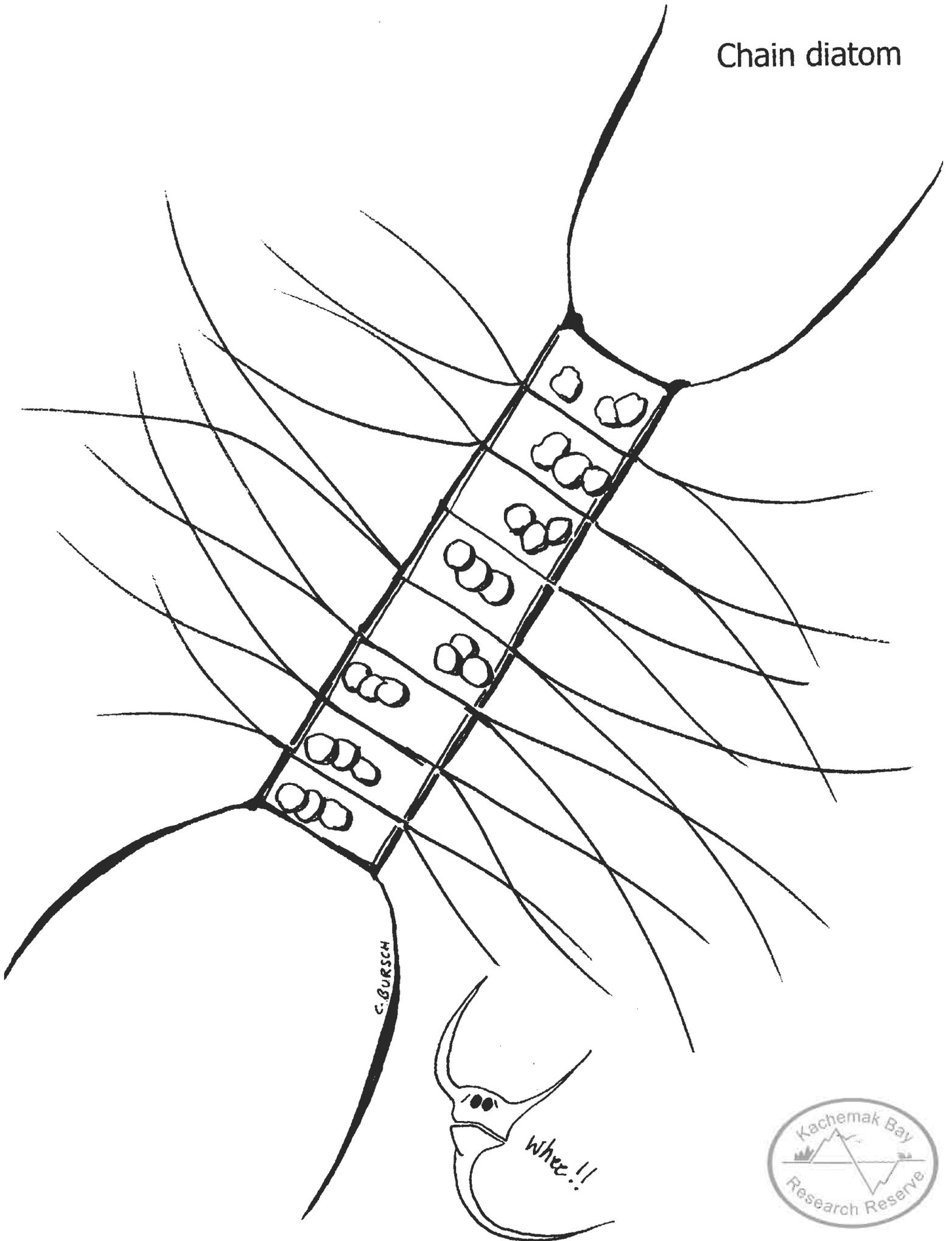
Plant plankton like to float near the top of the ocean so they get plenty of sunshine. They need all the things plants in your yard need: sun, air, water and food. They have plenty of water and nutrients in the ocean and can even get air from the sea water.

The coolest thing about plankton is that almost all other living things in the ocean need them. Plankton are VERY important. If they weren't around, none of the bigger animals in the ocean could live. Small ocean animals that eat plankton are food for bigger animals, and these are food for even bigger animals... all the way up to the largest whales. So any fish or ocean animal you eat depends on plankton to live – you can thank Dino and his buddies next time you eat salmon or halibut!

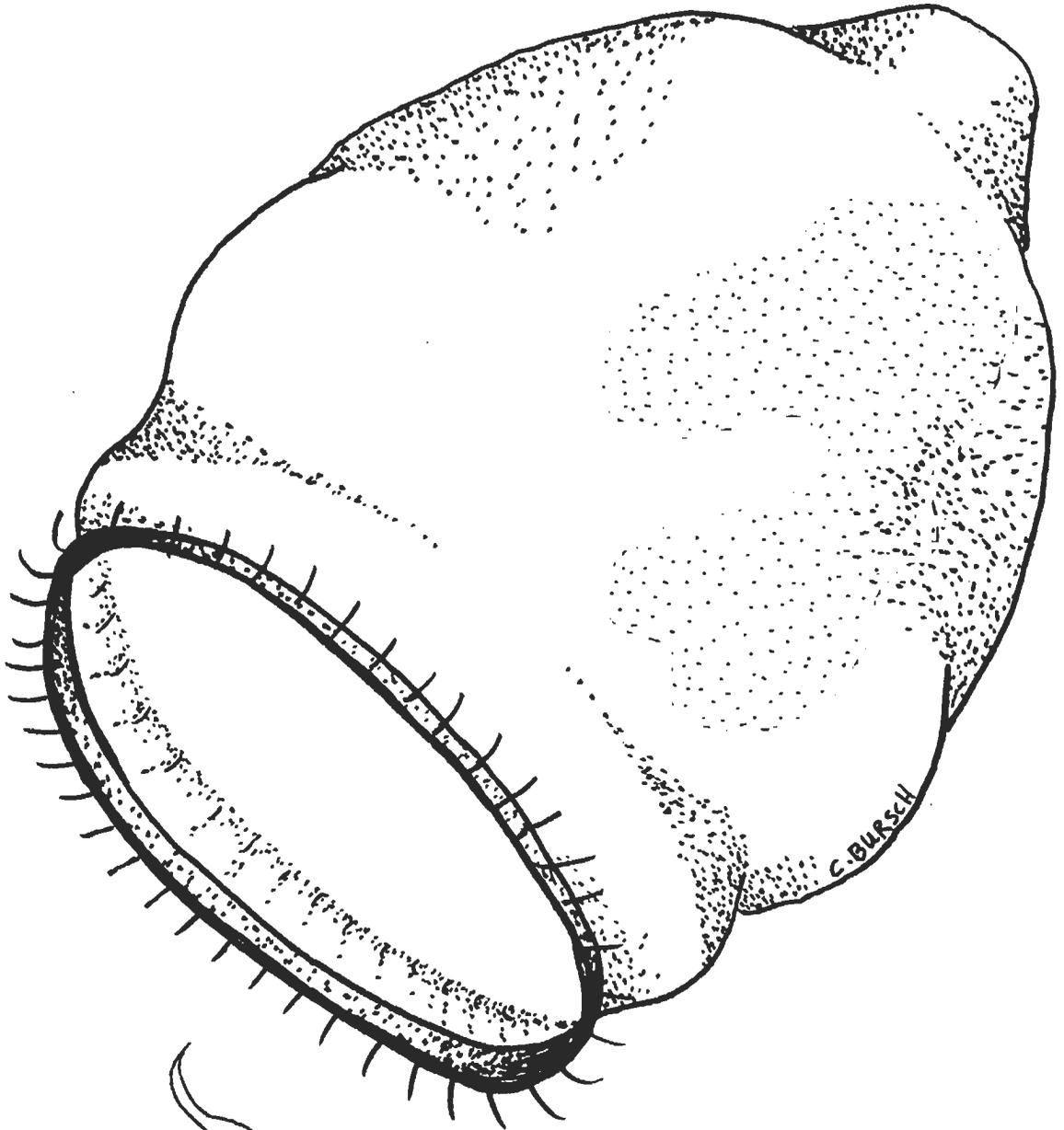
Hi, my name
is Dino.
Follow me and
I'll introduce you
to my plankton buddies!



Chain diatom



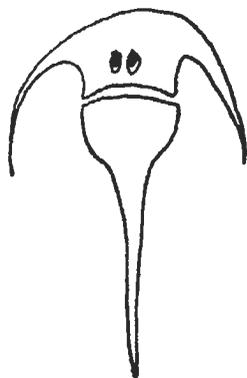
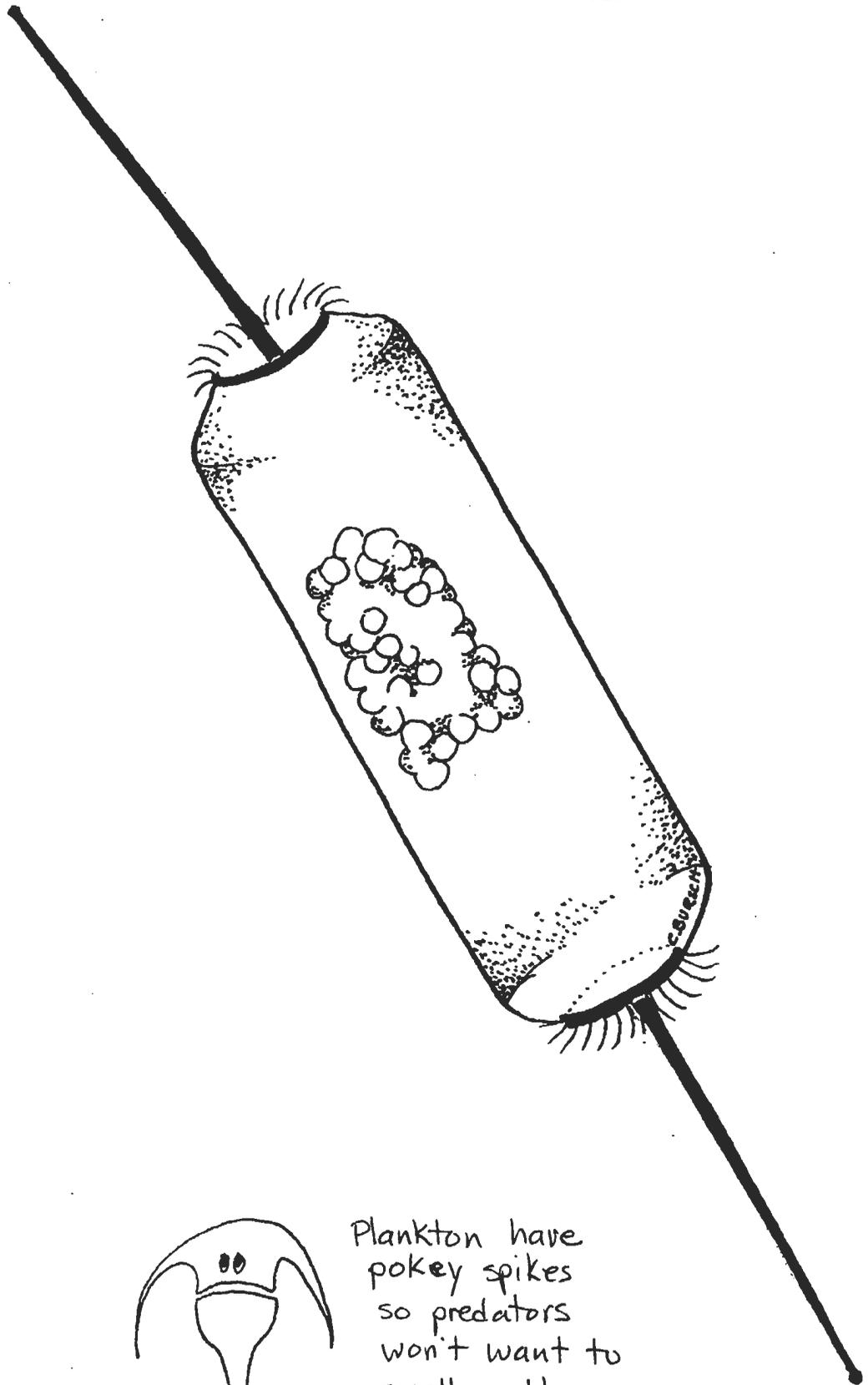
Ciliate



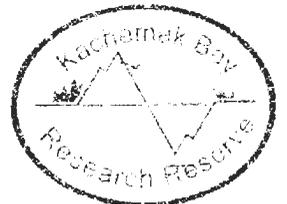
This ciliate
is clear, like glass.



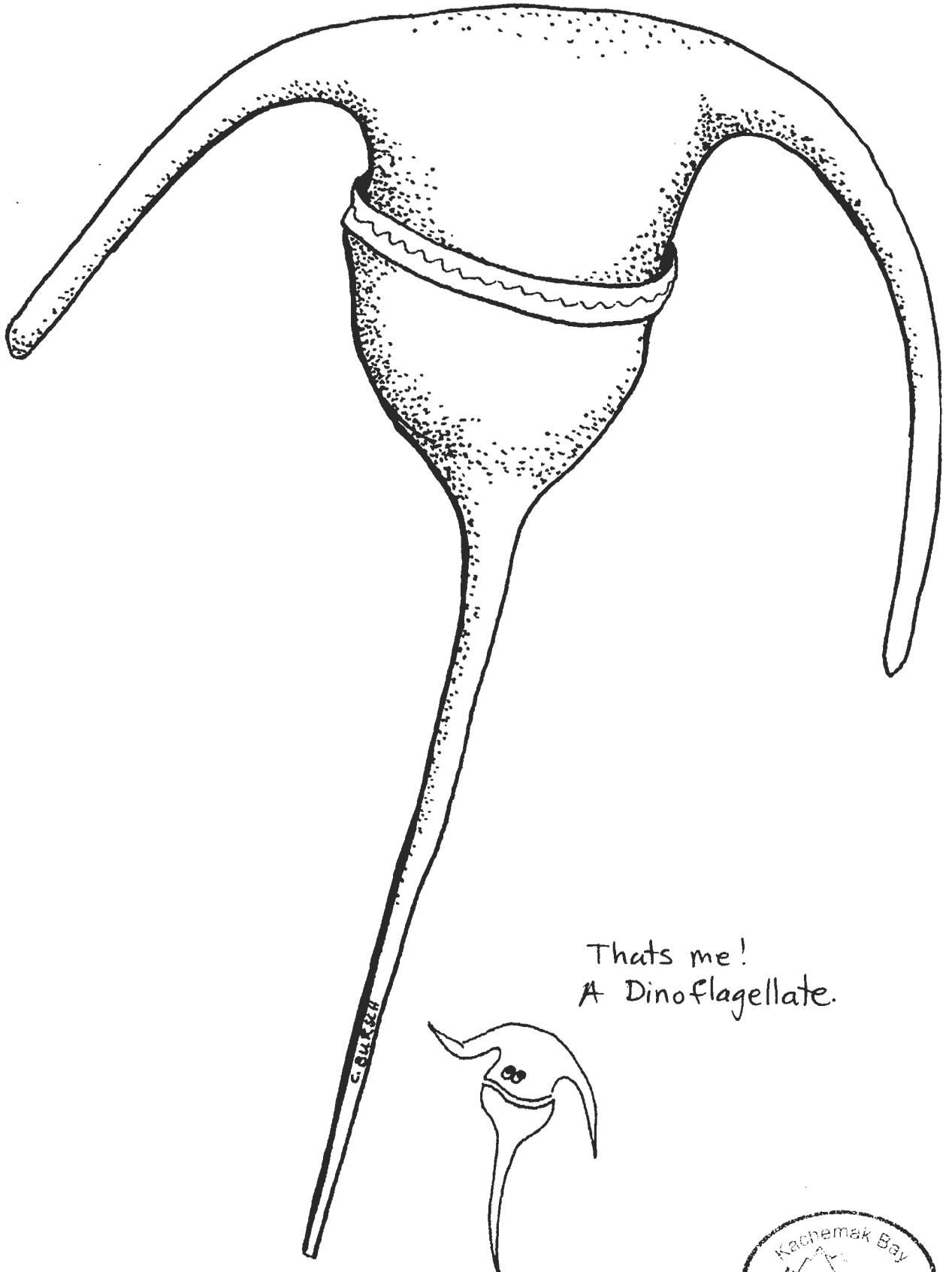
Diatom



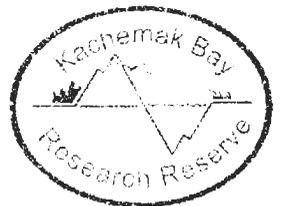
Plankton have
pokey spikes
so predators
won't want to
swallow them.



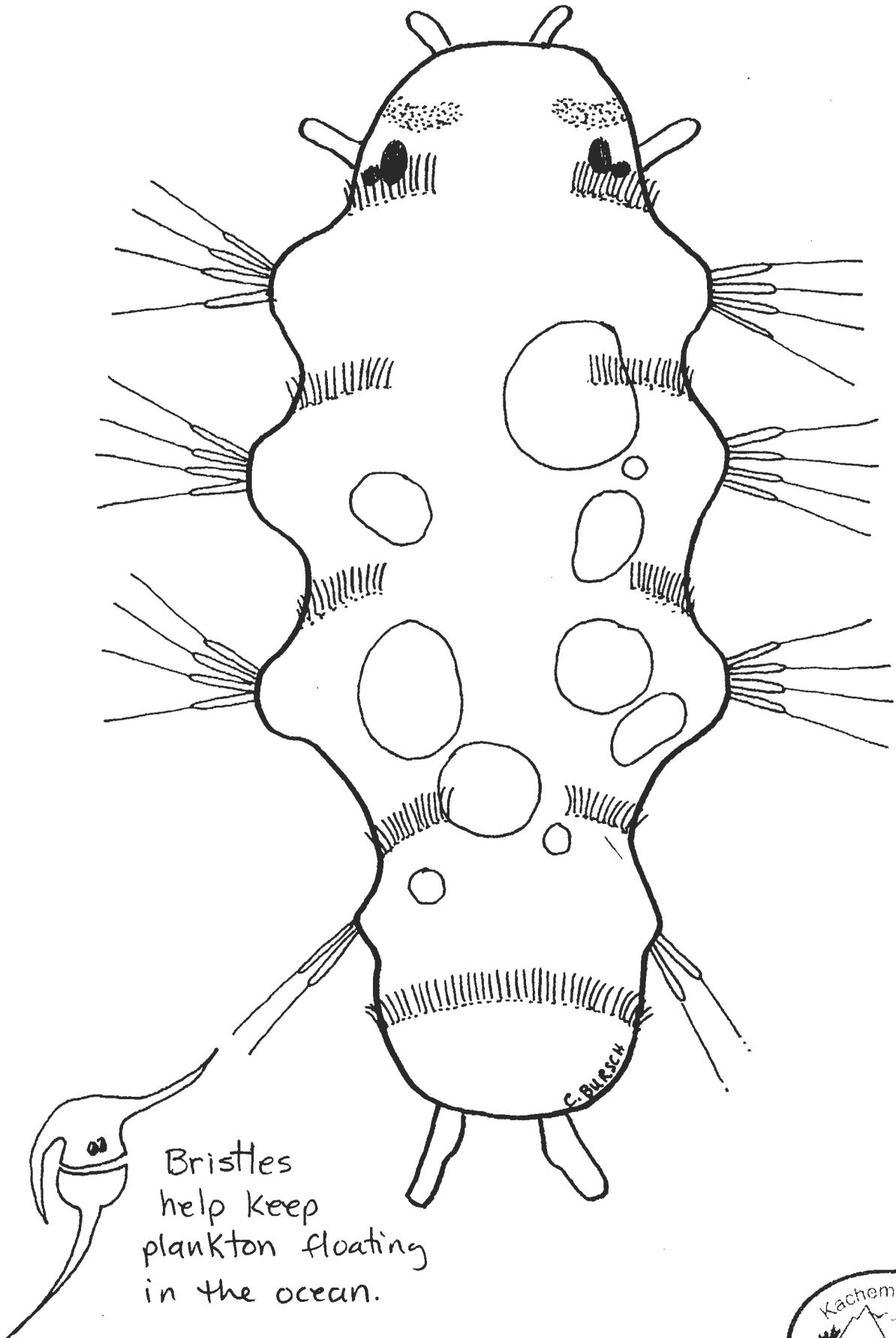
Dinoflagellate



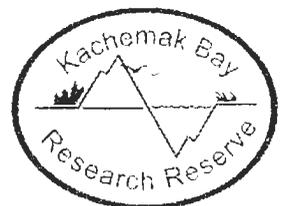
Thats me!
A Dinoflagellate.



Worm larva



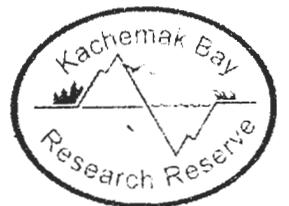
Bristles
help keep
plankton floating
in the ocean.



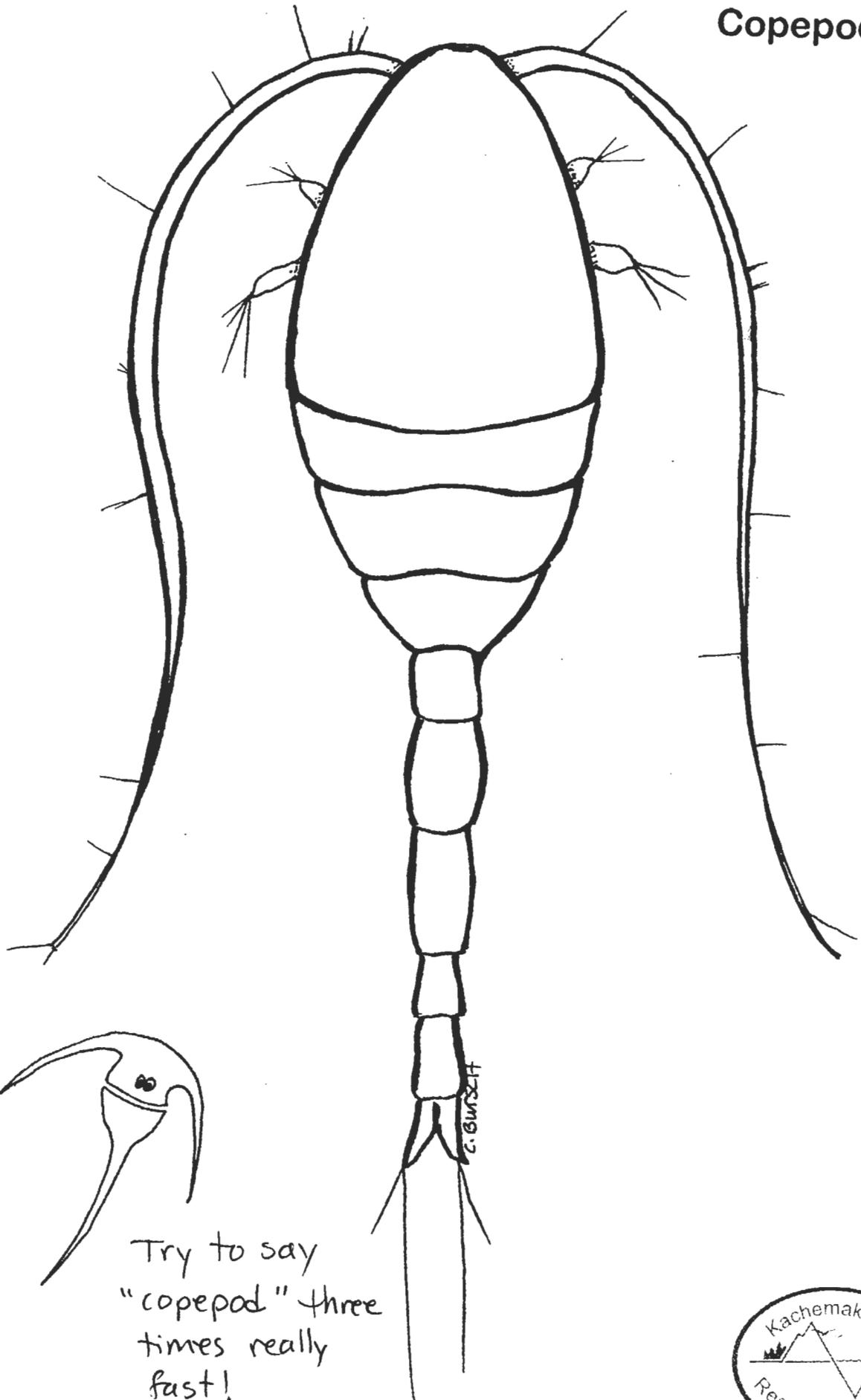
Barnacle nauplius



This barnacle
"nauplius" will
attach to a rock
when it gets
older.



Copepod

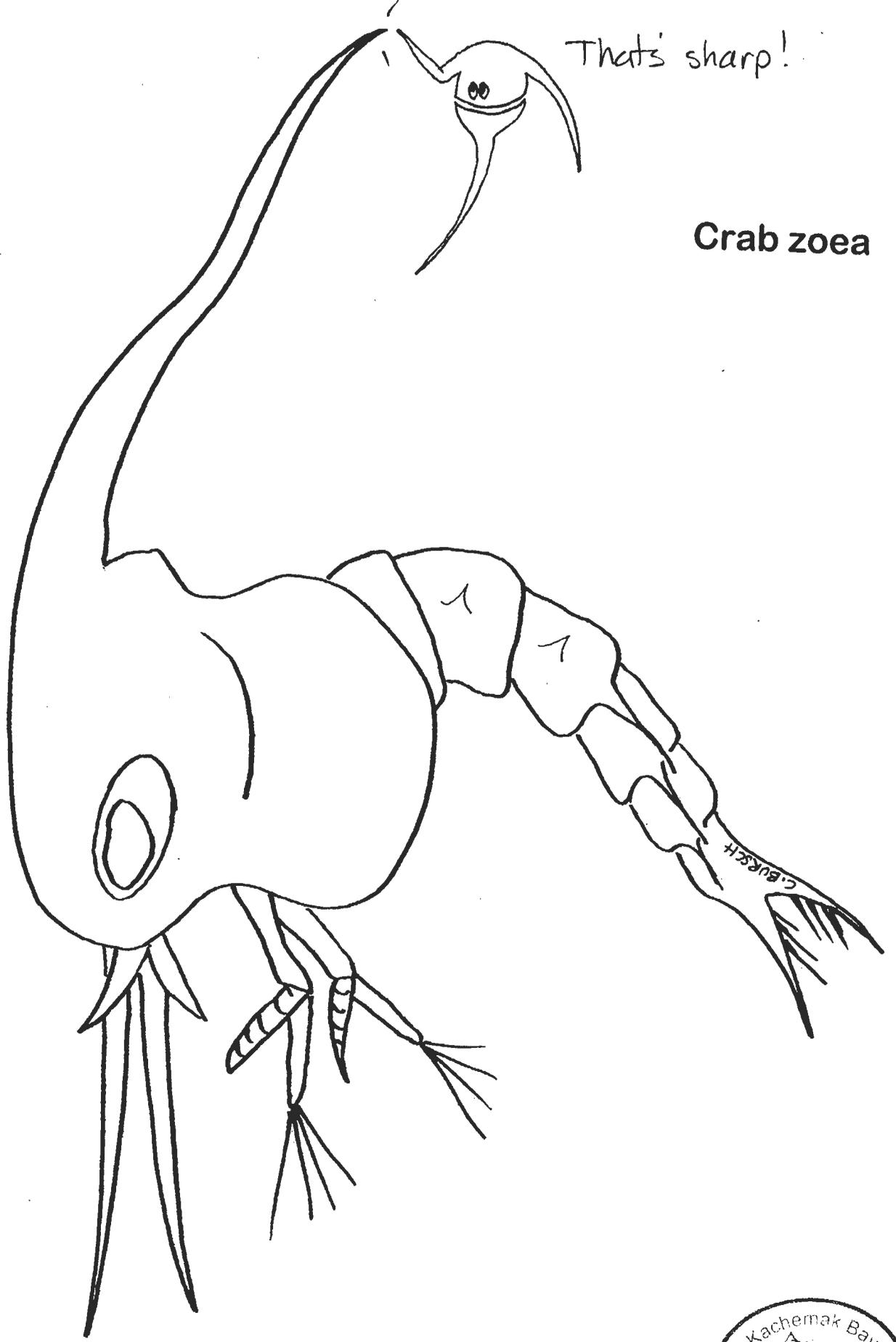


Try to say
"copepod" three
times really
fast!

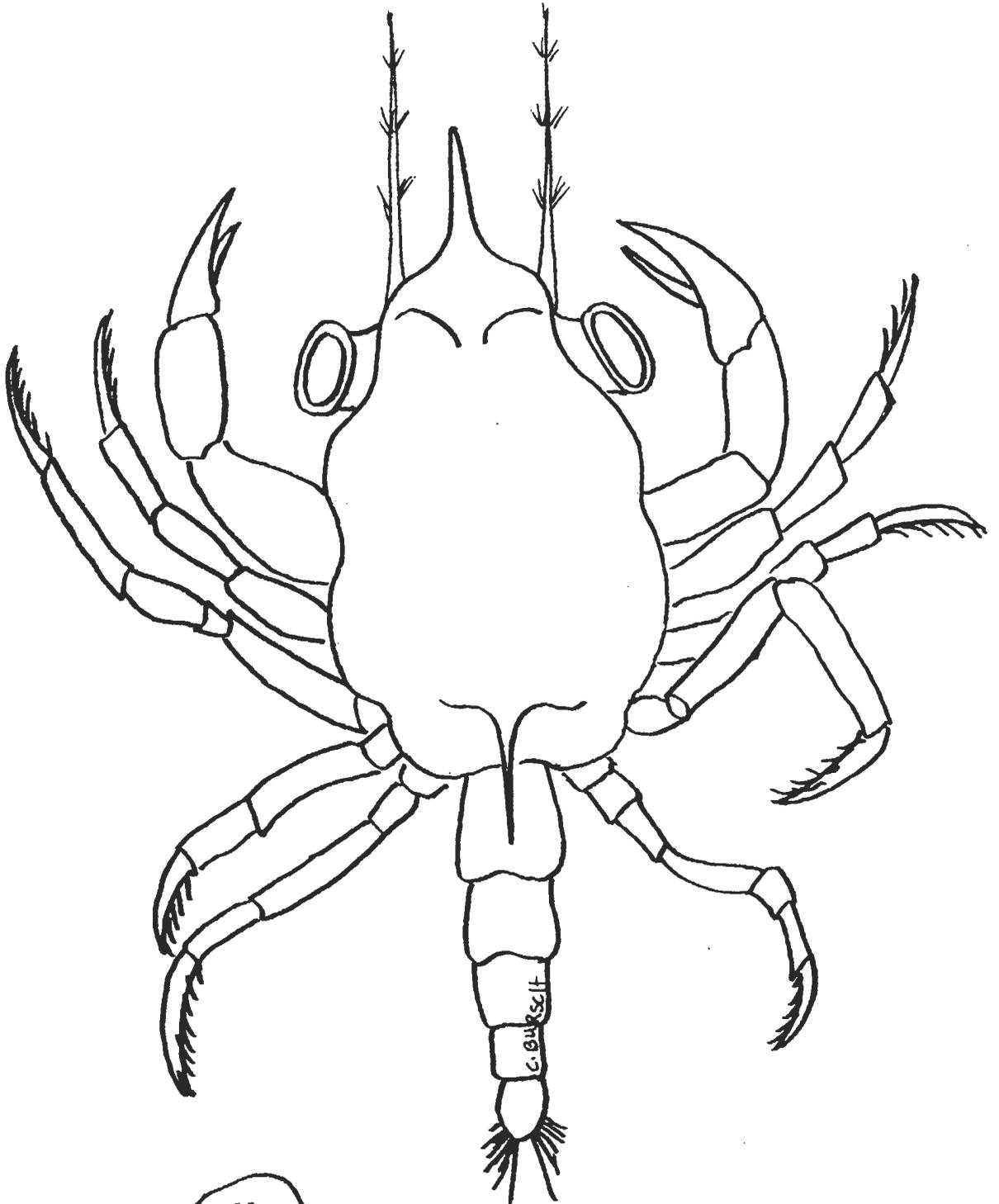


That's sharp!

Crab zoea



Crab megalop



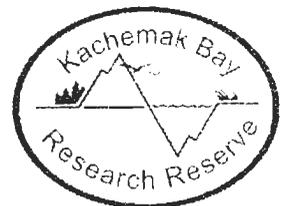
Shhh...
This crab
megalop might
eat me! ★👁!



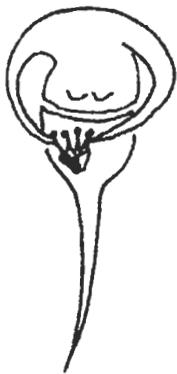
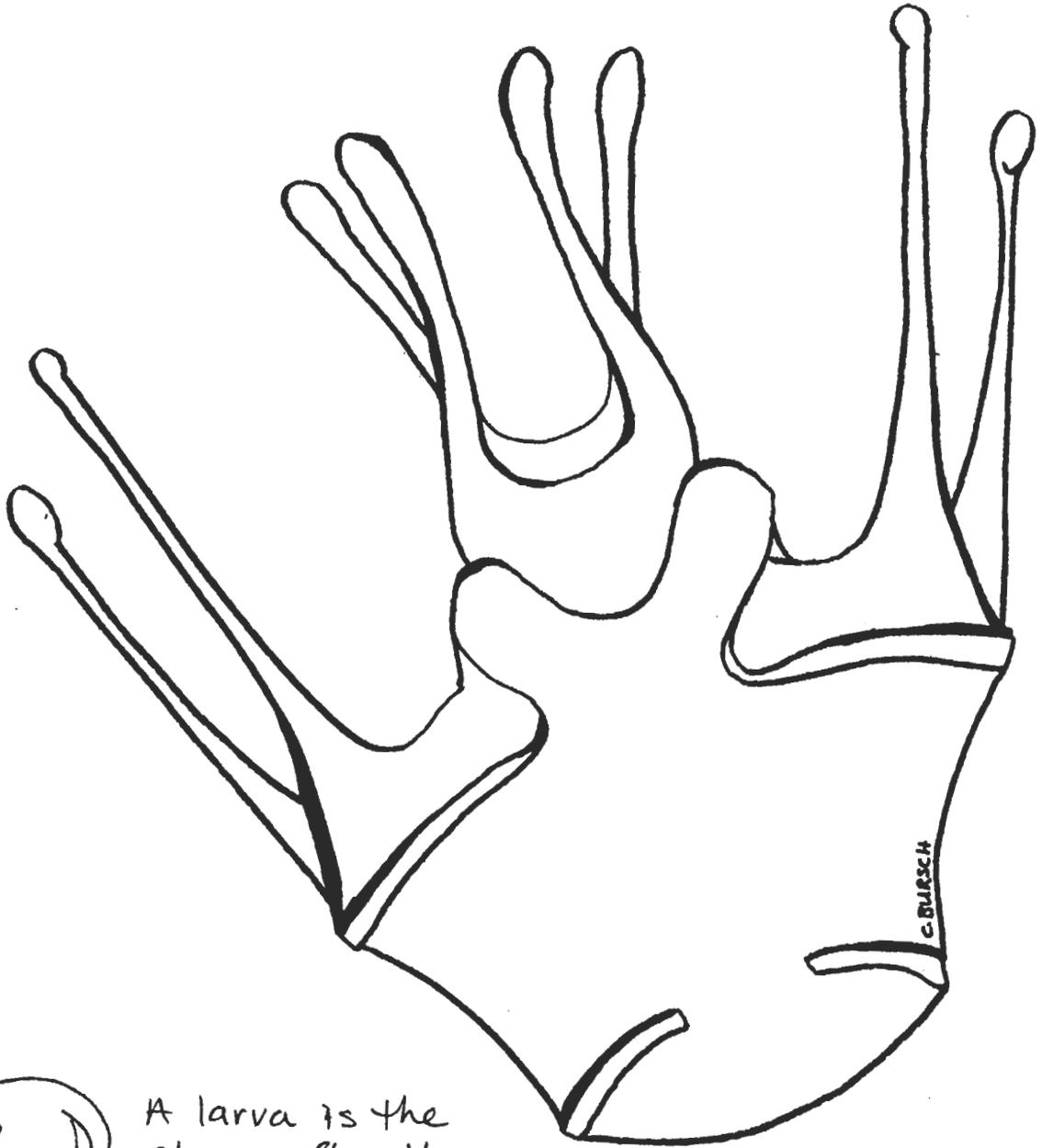
Krill



Big giant whales
love to eat
this plankton ♡!

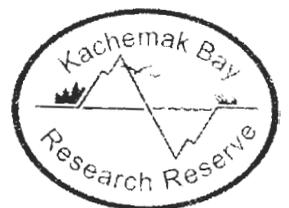


Sea urchin larva

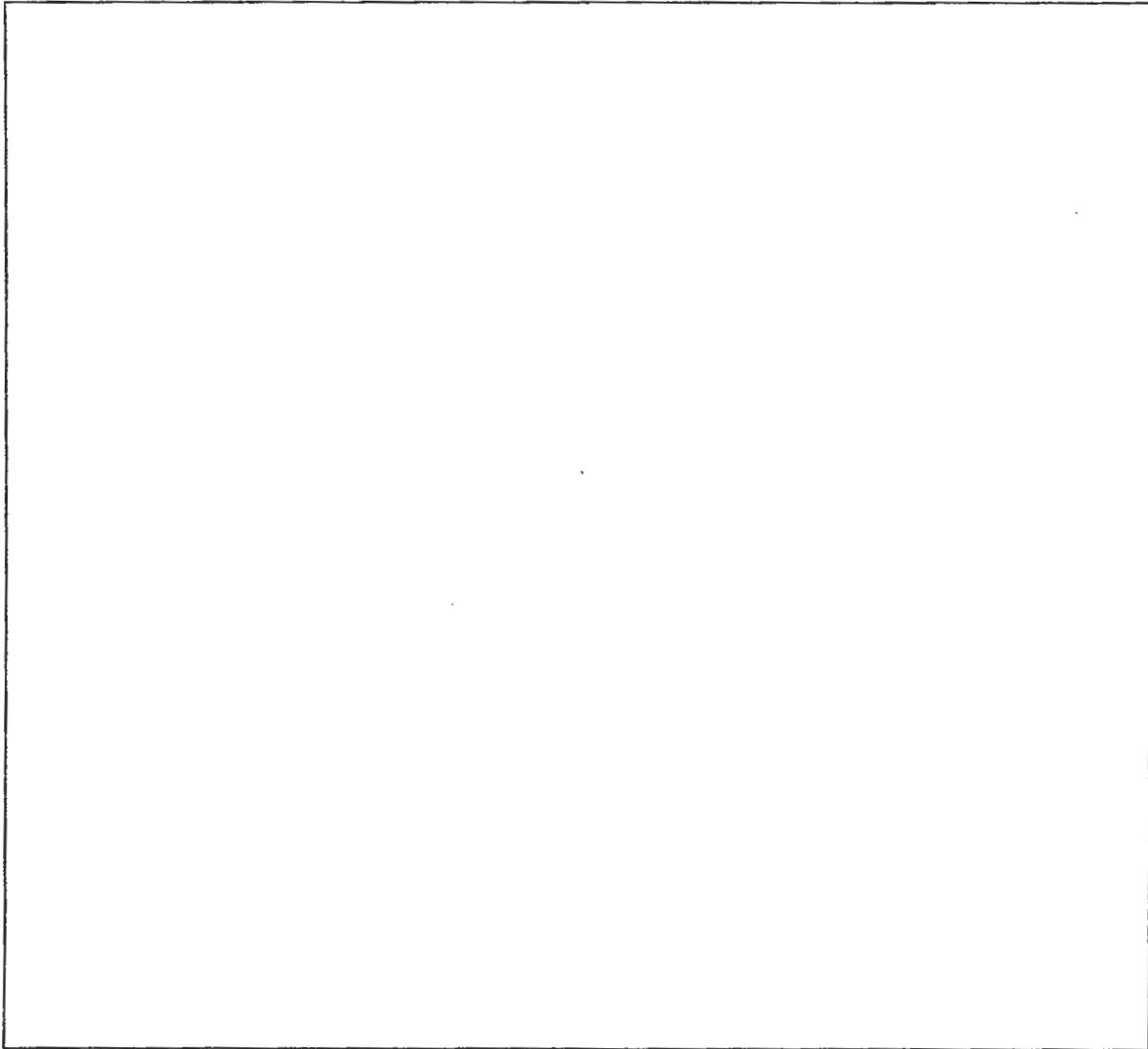


A larva is the stage after the egg, like a baby.

This is a sea urchin larva.



My plankton (design your own)



What do you call your plankton?

That's a new one!



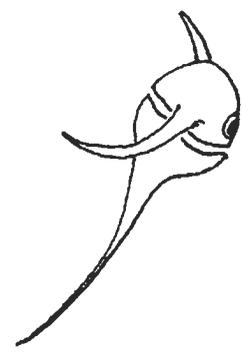
Common name: _____

Scientific name: _____

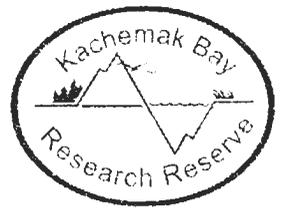




start here → 2 • 78



Wee...
 Lets go dot to dot
 counting by
2's!



MARINE PLANKTON COLORING BOOK

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Illustrations by Catie Bursch

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