

## **Marine Life on the Sandy Shores**

The west side of Kushiro Bay has a smooth, sandy shore and sea bed, with few places for fish to hide. The features and survival techniques of the fish that inhabit this side of the bay are different than those of the fish on the rocky east side.

### *Natural camouflage*

These sandy areas support many species of flatfish, such as the starry flounder (*Platichthys stellatus*), cresthead flounder (*Limanda schrenki*), and mottled skate (*Raja pulchra*). These species have flat bodies and colors that match the sandy sea bed. Thin-bodied fish such as Pacific rainbow smelt (*Osmerus mordax dentex*) and Japanese smelt (*Hypomesus japonicus*) are silvery and inconspicuous against the sand. The soft, sandy bed is the ideal environment for mollusks such as the giant Ezo scallop (*Patinopecten yessoensis*) and the Japanese surf clam (*Pseudocardium sachalinense*), the latter of which can burrow under the sand to evade predators.