

Asterias amurensis Northern Pacific seastar

MARINE PEST GUIDE



Identifying features

- 5 rays (arms) with pointed, **upturned tips**.
- Yellow, orange or red with purple markings on top; uniformly yellow on bottom.
- Upper surface of arms covered in small (2 mm) spines.
- Generally 12 to 24 cm across but can grow up to 40 to 50 cm across.

Where are they found?

- Occurs subtidally, usually on mud, sand and pebbles.
- Found to depths of 200 metres, but generally above 20 metres; prefers sheltered areas.
- Can form large groups around food sources e.g. mussel lines, wharf pilings, shellfish beds.



www.biosecurity.govt.nz
0800 80 99 66



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Up to 50 cm across.
5 arms with upturned tips.
Scattered spines.
Yellow, orange or red with purple markings on top.

If you think you have seen Northern Pacific seastar

- Note the location of where it is growing, and if possible collect samples and freeze in a plastic bag.
- Contact Biosecurity New Zealand on 0800 80 99 66.

What looks similar to it?

Several New Zealand native seastars. **BUT** these native species lack the distinctive upturned tips of *Asterias amurensis*, and differ in colour.

Sclerasterias mollis Cross fish



- Up to 33 cm across
- Usually 5 arms.
- Rows of spines.
- Brick-red to orange, yellow bands.

Astropecten polyacanthus Comb star



- Up to 35 cm across.
- 5 arms.
- Rows of spines around edges of arms.
- Brownish red to fawn, darker in centre.

Allostichaster insignis Three-and-three star



- Up to 17 cm across.
- Usually 6 arms, sometimes 5.
- Rows of spines.
- Orange, red or purple.

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