

STYELA CLAVA

THE CLUBBED TUNICATE – A TYPE OF SEA SQUIRT

This marine pest (a type of sea squirt) is widely established throughout the Hauraki Gulf in Auckland, in smaller numbers in Lyttelton Harbour (marina and port) and in a very small population in the Tutukaka Marina in Northland. It has also been found on isolated vessels in Wellington and Nelson.

Biosecurity New Zealand has established that it is not feasible to eradicate *Styela clava* due to its wide spread distribution and the fact that it has been present in the Auckland area for some years.

Efforts are now focused on managing this pest long term and, importantly, preventing its spread from infested areas to other locations, particularly those of high environmental, social, or economic value (for example the Marlborough Sounds with its high value tourist and aquaculture industries).



Styela clava sea squirt

Prevent its spread

If you are the owner of a vessel that's permanently moored in the water e.g. recreational yachts, launches and commercial vessels, you have a role to play in preventing the spread of *Styela clava* and marine pests like it.

Research shows marine pests are able to move from location to location by establishing themselves as part of fouling on vessel hulls or as larvae in seawater retained in vessels.



Styela clava and other marine organisms in a sack on a mussel farm

Some simple ways to avoid carrying hitchhikers on your next journey are:

- Keep your boat hull free of bio-fouling such as seaweed, barnacles and shellfish.
- Regularly clean your hull and equipment, paying special attention to:
 - the hull, keels and stabilisers;
 - intakes and outlets;
 - propellers and shafts;
 - rudders, rudder shafts and casings;
 - anchors, anchor chains and anchor wells.
- Ensure your vessel is regularly coated with an anti-fouling preparation that is replaced at the interval recommended by the manufacturer/supplier.
- **Check your vessel hull for fouling before moving to a new location and clean if necessary.**

THE THREAT

Styela clava poses a threat to New Zealand's aquaculture industry with its ability to blanket oyster and mussel lines, suffocating growing shellfish and competing for space and food.



For more information on this sea squirt and preventing its spread, visit the website:
www.biosecurity.govt.nz/seasquirt

***Styela clava* description**

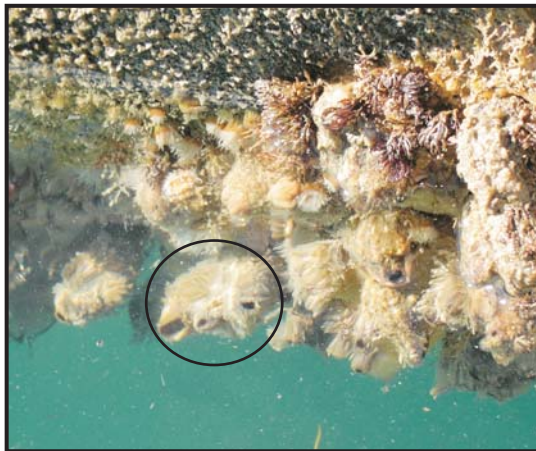
- Individuals are usually club shaped with a tough leathery skin that varies from brownish-white, yellow-brown or reddish-brown.
- The body is cylindrical, tapering to a stalk, with a holdfast that anchors it to surfaces.
- Adults grow up to 16cm long.
- Under water two short siphons are visible on top of the organism, but these are difficult to see out of water.
- Generally organisms appear coated in fouling fuzz and can look furry.
- While solitary organisms, individuals can settle close to one another, covering wharves, docks, boat hulls, mooring lines, buoys and aquaculture structures.



Styela clava sea squirt

Where is the *Styela clava* sea squirt likely to be found?

- *Styela clava* prefers protected areas such as bays and harbours, away from wave action.
- It establishes from the low tide mark down to approximately 25 metres.
- It prefers to settle on hard surfaces, particularly man-made structures. Anything in the water that is not covered in silt or coated with anti-fouling paint is at risk. It may also be found attached to rocks, seaweed and on shellfish.
- The organism can tolerate a wide range of water temperatures and salinity.



Styela clava sea squirt

Don't spread *Styela clava* around New Zealand. Keep your boat bottom clean. If you are moving location, check for fouling and clean if necessary.



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