

# Undaria seaweed

## *Undaria pinnatifida*

### Notify Council

If you have seen or suspect the presence of *Undaria* seaweed outside of known areas please report the sighting to Environment Southland immediately.

### What does it look like?

*Undaria pinnatifida* (*Undaria*) grows from the low intertidal area to subtidal depths of around 15 metres. It grows on any hard surface including shells, reefs, ropes, wharf piles, vessel hulls, moorings and other artificial structures. It can form dense "forests" in sheltered reef areas.

The appearance of *Undaria* differs depending on its maturity. Mature plants are a brown, green and yellow colour and grow up to one to two metres. They have a very visible midrib up the plant. They have a holdfast (which anchors them), a stipe (or stem) and a sporophyll (a spiral shaped reproductive structure which produces spores) found at the base of the stipe. Juvenile plants have a holdfast and stem and an undivided blade (they appear as a single leaf). The distinctive midrib starts becoming apparent once the plant grows over five centimetres. The species can look similar to the New Zealand kelp *Ecklonia radiata*, however *Undaria* has a distinctive midrib up the middle of the blade plus the distinctive sporophyll (spores on underside of leaves).

### Why is it a problem?

The impacts of *Undaria* are not well understood and are likely to vary considerably depending on the location. It can change the structure of ecosystems, especially in areas where native seaweeds are absent and potentially impact on biodiversity.

The weed also has the potential to become a nuisance for marine farms by increasing labour and harvesting costs due to fouling problems.



### Control methods

**You must notify the Environment Southland or the Ministry for Primary Industries if you suspect the presence of this organism outside *Undaria* exemption areas specified in the Southland Regional Pest Management Plan.**

You can avoid spreading marine pests by:

- Regularly cleaning your boat's hull – ideally keep fouling growth to no more than a light slime layer.
- Applying a thorough coating of antifouling paint and keep it in good condition.
- Ensure your hull is clean and free of fouling before you travel to a new area.
- Clean and dry any marine equipment (e.g. ropes, lines and pots) before using in a new area.
- Inspect areas on your boat that retain water for signs of marine life.
- Check for aquatic weeds tangled around anchors, trailers and other equipment.

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### Related links

NIWA - Biosecurity Porthole <https://marinebiosecurity.org.nz/undaria-pinnatifida-harvey-suringar/>

Clean Below, Good to Go <https://www.marinepests.nz/>

MPI - Fiordland Marine Biosecurity Programme for Invasive Seaweed <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity/exotic-pests-and-diseases-in-new-zealand/long-term-biosecurity-management-programmes/fiordland-marine-biosecurity-programme/>

DOC - Undaria threat <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/weeds/common-weeds/asian-seaweed/>

### Summary of rules

If you detect or suspect the presence of *Undaria* outside of known *Undaria* sites (see map), you must immediately report the pest's presence and location to Environment Southland.

Known sites include:

- Breaksea Sound;
- Duck Cove, Dusky Sound\*;
- Bluff;
- Waipapa Point;
- Ruapuke Island;
- Oban;
- Patersons Inlet;
- Big Glory Bay;
- Easy Harbour\* and
- Port Adventure.

\*These sites are not listed in the Southland Regional Pest Management Plan but are known sites that are under active management.

For full rules please see the [Southland Regional Pest Management Plan](#) (Rule 12).

You cannot possess, keep, hold, enclose or otherwise harbour *Undaria* seaweed within the Southland Region.

This means vessels, marine gear and equipment, including but not limited to lobster pots, mooring lines and dive gear, must be free of *Undaria* seaweed.

Vessels solely operating inside the Southern *Undaria* Exemption Area and the Breaksea Sound *Undaria* Exemption Area (see map) are exempt from this rule.

For full rules please see the [Southland Regional Pest Management Plan](#) (Rule 13).

### Request info

<https://eservices.es.govt.nz/online-services/new/BiosecurityRFS/step/1?Subject=PlantPests&Species=115>

### Report this Pest/Weed

<https://eservices.es.govt.nz/online-services/new/BiosecurityIncident/step/1?Subject=PlantPests&Species=115>

### Management programme

Progressive containment