

Undaria pinnatifida
detection in Port
Welshpool

What are marine pests

Marine pests are highly invasive marine plants and animals that can cause significant impacts on marine ecosystems, industry and social amenity. Marine pests compete with native species for space, light, or food, or prey on native species. Some species are also significant foulers of vessels and port infrastructure. A number of marine pests have already established in parts of Victoria following their accidental introduction as larvae in ballast water or as adult hitch-hikers on visiting vessels.

Undaria pinnatifida detection in Port Welshpool

Undaria pinnatifida, an invasive seaweed, has been detected in Port Welshpool. The introduction and spread of *Undaria* is often associated with human activity. It is possible that it was introduced to Port Welshpool via the hulls of vessels coming from Port Phillip Bay.

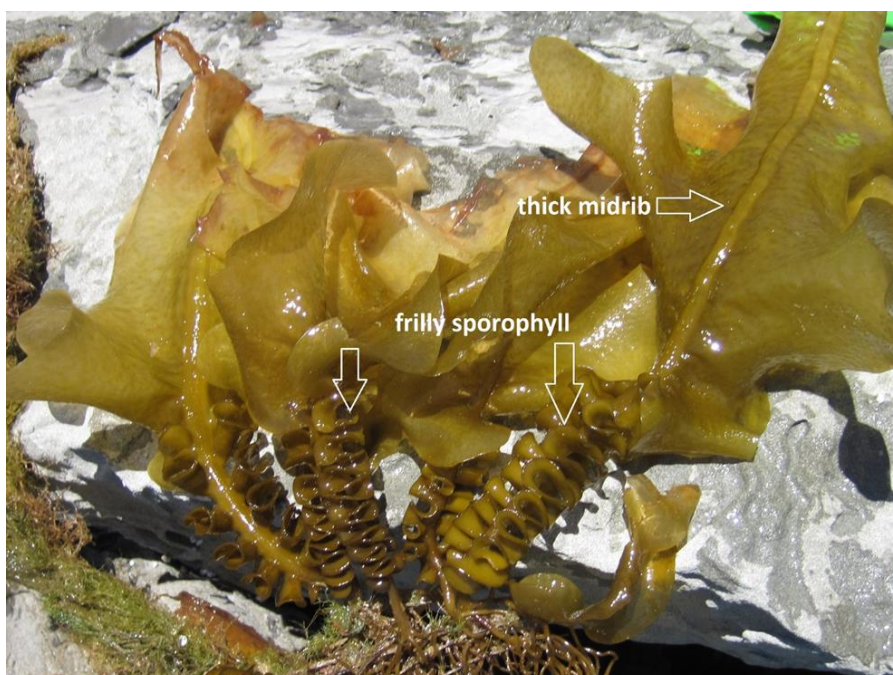
Once established in an area, *Undaria* is virtually impossible to eradicate. Preventing spread to new areas such as the largely pristine waters of Wilsons Promontory, is a priority. Many boats launch from Port Welshpool to travel to places like Refuge Cove and further to Lakes Entrance.

If your vessel is moored at Port Welshpool it may become infested with *Undaria*. The photo below will help you to identify *Undaria*, but please remember that at microscopic stages it may be too small to see. It is therefore important that vessel owners practice good vessel hygiene.

How do I report marine pests?

People who spend time on the water or visit the coast can provide early warning of new marine pests or the spread of existing pests.

If you suspect you have seen a marine pest not currently known to the location, please report your sighting immediately to DEDJTR on 136 186 or email marine.pests@ecodev.vic.gov.au



What can I do to prevent the spread of marine pests?

Marine pests are spread by both natural means and human activity. Vessel owners should be particularly vigilant when moving boats or equipment from water bodies known to have marine pests, particularly Port Phillip Bay, to any other part of Victoria.

To help prevent the spread of marine pests, people should practice good vessel hygiene through the "Check, Clean, Dry" method:

- **Check** any equipment and vessels that have been in marine waters for pests
- **Clean** boats, other watercraft, fishing gear, wetsuits, toys, and other marine equipment after use in fresh water. Pay particular attention to areas that remain wet such as where bilge water collects.
- **Dry** boats and marine equipment thoroughly before moving to new areas.

Owners of resident vessels can maintain good vessel hygiene by regularly inspecting and cleaning their vessels out of the water and applying antifouling coating. This also improves vessel performance by reducing drag and fuel consumption.

Live marine pests must not be used as bait.