

Carpet Sea-squirt found in north Kent

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The invasive Carpet Sea-squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) has recently been found along the north Kent coast.

This immobile tube-like invertebrate occurs in colonies, and has been introduced into British waters through aquaculture equipment, hull fouling and ship ballast water.

The Carpet Sea-squirt grows very quickly. It has been found to carpet whole marine communities in areas that it has invaded, having a significant impact on biodiversity and species richness. It particularly likes to grow on hard surfaces and can become a real problem to marine industries. It has no impact on human health.

Those work directly in the marine environment should remain vigilant for this and other invasive species. The species description document from the Non-native Species Secretariat (NNSS) provides detailed pictures and information about this species' appearance.

For those working along the north Kent coast in particular, please be aware of this issue and take special care to clean, disinfect and preferably dry equipment after use in the area. Hypochlorite has been found to be an effective disinfectant.

If you find any examples of this species, please report them directly to the NNSS.

<http://www.fishnewseu.com/latest-news/uk/7000-carpet-sea-squirt-found-in-north-kent.html>
The Scottish White Fish Producers' Association