ADVICE NOTE June 2023

New Arrival of a Marine Invasive Non-Native Species

Dwarf Surf Clam *Mulinia laterlis* found in the inner Thames Estuary

What is it?

*Mulinia laterlis* is a small bivalve - adults are approximately 15 to 20 mm in length.

It prefers to settle on lower intertidal and shallow subtidal soft sediments in estuaries, lagoons and sheltered inshore waters.

Pathways of introduction and spread are likely through shipping (ballast water), dredging operations or natural dispersal.

What is the problem?

Invasive non-native species (INNS) can pose major threats to native biodiversity, human health and ecosystem services. Marinas and ports are high risk sites for the introduction and spread of these species. Following introduction and establishment, they are extremely difficult to control or eradicate in the marine environment, therefore prevention and early detection are crucial.

The Dwarf Surf Clam has the potential to compete with native species for food and space. It can form dense settlements which may alter the habitat. However, it is unlikely to establish unless the habitat is already disturbed, and the impacts may be short-lived as this species is subject to population crashes.

We don't yet know the current abundance and impact of this species in England. We only have 3 records so far from surveys in 2021 and 2022.

We need your help!

- **Recording**: Raise awareness of this species to be recorded and reported when carrying out or commissioning surveys. Submit records to iRecord.
- Further data will really help us to understand the potential impact of this species and understand the pathways of introduction and spread
- Promote and practice best practice biosecurity to prevent this and other INNS from being introduced and spread [https://www.nonnativespecies.org/biosecurity/marine-biosecurity/](https://www.nonnativespecies.org/biosecurity/marine-biosecurity/)


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