KACHEMAK BAY RESEARCH RESERVE

Invasive Tunicate Monitoring

2015 Progress Report

The main goal of invasive tunicate monitoring is to detect invasive tunicates as soon as possible, should they arrive.

This is the 10th year KBRR has checked settling plates for marine invasives and we thought this was a good time to see if our native species have changed over time.

Kachemak Bay Campus; Semester By The Bay student will be comparing encrusting native organisms that settled on Homer Harbor plates from 2007 to 2015. Every year as we look for invasive species we record the native organisms. No one has ever looked back to see if the encrusting communities have changed over time. Tricia Bhatia, from CUNY-Brooklyn, but studying here in Homer this fall, will be comparing the organisms from one of our colder water summers, 2007, to our warmest summer on record, 2015.

No new invasives found in 2015... Settling plates from Halibut Cove, Peterson Bay, Homer, Jakolof Bay and Seldovia produced no invasive species. NW Hesketh Is. was surveyed for the suspect invasive tunicate found in 2013. It does not appear to be spreading. NW Herring Is. was also surveyed.

Local Homer Harbor dock removal

The Harbor is completing dock upgrades this fall and they are following **best practices** for reducing the spread of salt water invasive species. The Harbor Masters had the launch ramp docks hauled out of the water to dry for 3 weeks. KBRR inspected them and no invasives were found. The drying time was long enough to kill any organisms, if the structures were to be put back in the water. We don't know of any invasives in our harbors, but we do know moving infrastructure around is one of the most common way of spreading them.

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UAA UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

Marine Invasive Species!

BE A HERO TRANSPORT ZERO

Prevent the Spread of Marine Invaders!

- ✓ CLEAN
- ✓ DRAIN
- ✓ DRY

The pictured invasive sea squirt, *Didemnum vexillum,*(Dvex), was found in Whiting Harbor in Sitka. In suitable environmental conditions it can spread over boat hulls, docks, pilings, and other hard surfaces, as well as seafloor substrate. This invader can also smother algae, sea grasses and slow moving organisms such as clams, oysters, mussels, and other invertebrates.
Photo credit: NOAA, 2010

Marine invasive species are non-native plants and animals that can harm ecosystems that support native species. By crowding out native species, these invaders can negatively impact the marine environment. Non-native marine species are most commonly introduced in places with high human traffic, such as boats and harbors. Marine invaders hitchhike on infrastructure transported from these locations causing their spread. A few simple steps can help protect our Bay and ensure marine invaders do not take over:

- **At a minimum, DRY by storing above high tide for 3 weeks;**
- **If possible, CLEAN (scrape or power wash) plants and animals from all equipment away from the water and dispose in the garbage at an upland site;**
- **DRAIN water from any reservoirs.**

Clean, drain, and dry. Every time.

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