

Black striped mussel

Mytilopsis sallei

(Recluz, 1849)

Phylum: Mollusca
Class: Bivalvia
Subclass: Heterodonta
Order: Veneroida
Superfamily: Dreissenoidae
Family: Dreissenidae



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Description

Mytilopsis sallei is a small, finger-nail sized mussel, growing to an average size of 25mm. It has a varied shell colouration, from black through to a light colour, with some small individuals having a light and dark zig-zag pattern. The right valve overlaps the left valve, and is slightly larger. *M. sallei* settles in clusters, and is rarely seen as a single individual.

Reproduction & Growth

M. sallei has high fecundity, rapid growth and fast maturity rate. During their lifespan, individuals change sex, with a proportion of mussels in any population present as hermaphrodites. Eggs and sperm are spawned into the water column, where external fertilisation takes place. Tens of thousands of eggs can be released. Spawning appears to be triggered by changes in salinity. A pelagic larva develops within a day of fertilisation and then settles. Juveniles grow rapidly, and are considered mature after one month. Maximum size is reached within six months, and mussels live for about 12-13 (max 20) months.

Habitat

In its native habitat, *M. sallei* is a colonial surface dweller of sheltered waters, for example, shallow coastal lagoons. In its introduced habitat, it is found in intertidal and shallow waters, at a range of temperatures (10-35°C) and salinities (0-27 ppt). It has not been found any deeper than a few metres. It prefers to settle on vertical surfaces and objects, but is found on all types of substrata.

Feeding Suspension Feeder

M. sallei is a suspension feeder. Zooplankton, phytoplankton and other suspended particulate organic matter are consumed.

Predators

Fish and birds are known predators of this mussel.

Impacts

This mussel has been responsible for massive fouling on wharves and marinas, seawater systems (pumping stations, vessel ballast and cooling systems) and marine farms. In preferred habitats, it forms dense monospecific groups that exclude most other species, leading to a substantial reduction in biodiversity in infected areas.

EXTERNAL VIEW

KEY FEATURES

External colour very variable:

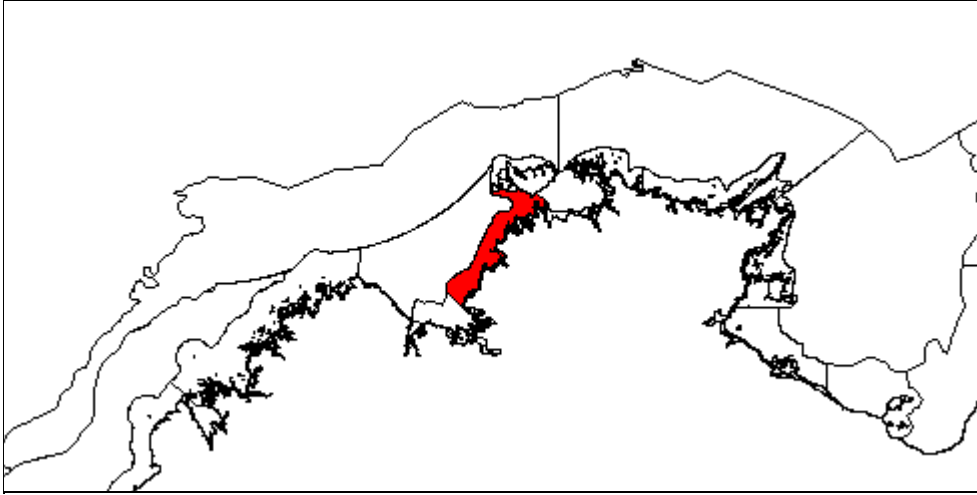
- can be two lines
- can be a zig-zag pattern
- apophysis behind septum inside the beak of the shell (key distinguishing feature)
- shell delicate, easily crushed
- grows to 25mm
- shells unequal in size: left valve fits into right valve
- interior of shell dull, not pearly

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Similar species

- Branchidontes spp.
- Mytilopsis leucophaeata* Conrad, 1831
- Dreissena polymorpha* Pallas, 1771
- Dreissena bugensis* Andrusov, 1897

Australian IMCRA BioRegion Infection Status



Control Options

For control information see the web site: <http://crimp.marine.csiro.au/nimpis>

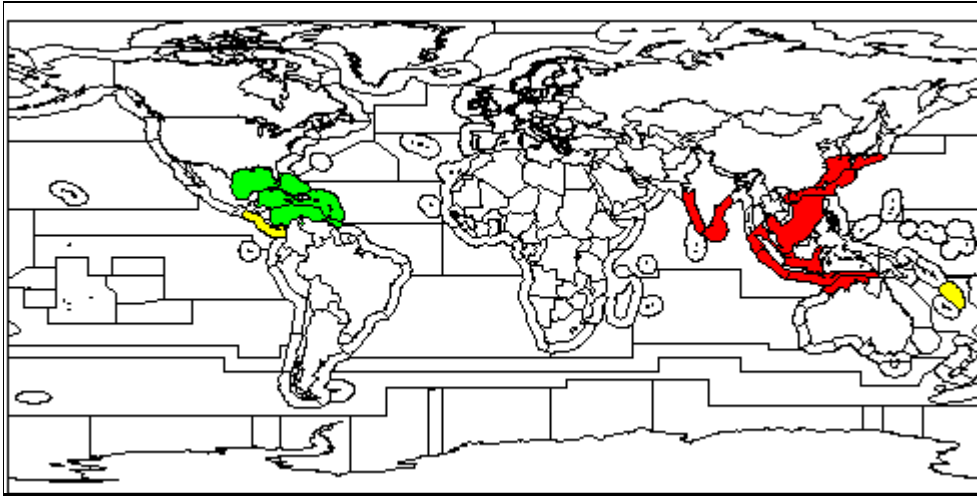
Likely Vectors - Class/Vector

Shipping

Ships: accidental with ballast wat

Ships: accidental as attached or fr

Worldwide BioRegion Infection Status



Key References

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