



## Black-striped mussel



Photo: NT Fisheries

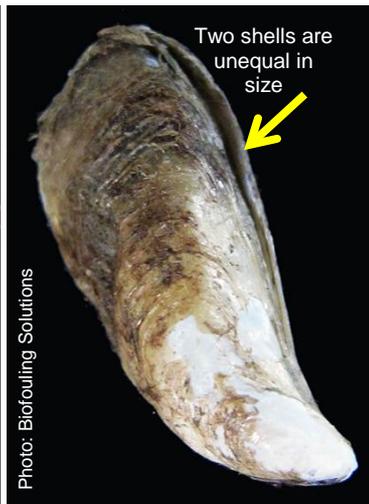


Photo: Biofouling Solutions



Black-striped mussels fouling chair

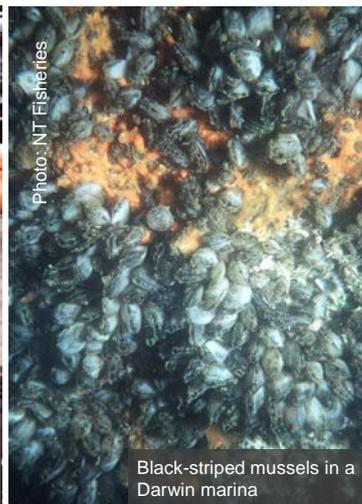


Photo: NT Fisheries

Black-striped mussels in a Darwin marina

Non-native to Australian waters, the black-striped mussel, *Mytilopsis sallei*, is an invasive pest that poses a serious threat to Western Australia's aquatic environment. This mussel is currently **NOT** established in Australia but can spread by recreational and commercial vessels in ballast water and amongst biofouling on vessels and equipment. If you see this pest please call the **FishWatch 24 hour hotline** on **1800 815 507**.

### Key features

- Up to 25 mm long, small, smooth and easy to crush.
- Dark brown/black to white.
- Shells sometimes zigzagged or striped.
- The animal's two shells are unequal in size, one overlapping the other.
- Forms dense clusters and rarely seen as single individuals.

### Impacts

- Fast growing and can displace native species. The population in Darwin reached densities of more than 20 000 per m<sup>2</sup> in the five or six months it was established there.
- Can threaten industries such as fishing, aquaculture, pearl farming and tourism.

### Where to find it?

- Fouls wharf pylons, vessel hulls and pipework, marinas and aquaculture equipment.

- Able to settle on shells such as oysters and other mussels.
- Found in subtropical to tropical, estuarine and marine waters.
- Not known to be established in Australia, but was eradicated from three Darwin marinas in 1999 at a cost of more than \$2.2 million, one of only a few successful eradications of marine pests anywhere in the world.

### What you can do

**Keep an eye out for new and unusual species in your area.** If you think you have found or seen a black-striped mussel:

1. **Photograph it** – from different angles, using a scale or ruler and photos of the location where you found it.
2. **Record it** - make a note of when and where you found or saw it including GPS readings if possible.
3. **Collect it** – collect a sample in a plastic bag and refrigerate but *do not freeze it*.
4. **Report it** – contact the **FishWatch 24 hour hotline** on **1800 815 507**.

# You can help stop this pest from spreading

**Check** your vessel is clean by regularly inspecting the hull and niche areas like internal seawater systems. Also inspect and clean equipment like floats and ropes.

**Levels** of biofouling on your vessel should be kept to a minimum (slime layer only), particularly on unpainted areas. This will reduce fuel costs and increase performance. Also pump out all seawater before travel, or in deep water far away from land.

**Environmentally-friendly** methods should be used to keep the hull clean – keep it out of the water, tarp it when not in use, or clean it at a slipway, dry dock or on land. Don't clean the hull in the water, on the beach or at the boat ramp where pests and contaminants can get back into the water, without first checking with the relevant authorities.

**Antifouling** paint should be renewed regularly in accordance with the manufacturer's directions, and should be suitable for your vessel's intended activity.

**Never** travel into or out of WA without first taking these steps, and keeping records of them and your voyage history in case of queries. If you are travelling within the State, it is also recommended you take these steps.

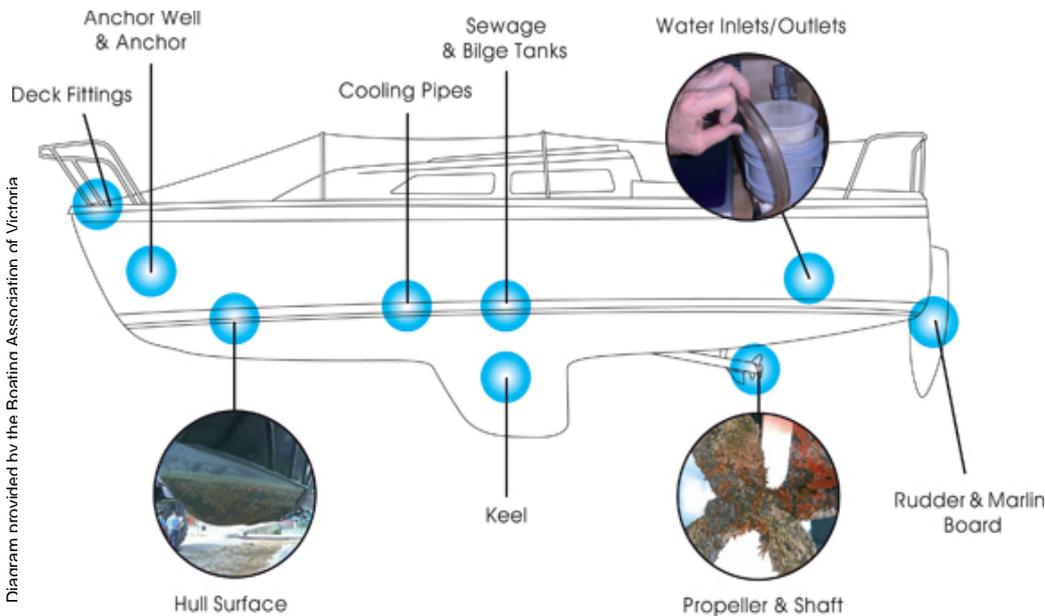


Diagram provided by the Boatinn Association of Victoria

Taking these actions is particularly important for **recreational** and **commercial vessels** coming from overseas locations such as South-East Asia where this mussel is established – this pest has been detected on both these vessel types in Australian waters.

Vessel skippers carrying this species could be in breach of the *Fish Resources Management Act 1994* and regulations made under that Act and are urged to ensure their vessels are clean before they leave for Australia.

Pay particular attention to the above niche areas on a recreational vessel where biofouling can accumulate.

## Similar NATIVE species – Don't confuse these with the black-striped mussel

**Variable mussel** – *Brachidontes ustulatus*



Photo: WA Museum

- Thicker, black/brown shell.
- Strong longitudinal ribs along the length of the shell.
- Attached to rocky shores and hard substrates.
- Found in tropical marine waters.

**Goose barnacles** – *Lepas* species



- White shells on top of a rubbery brown stalk.
- Attached to drift wood and other floating objects including hulls.
- Found in tropical and warm temperate marine waters.