

Isle of Man

Non Native Marine Invasive Species

Alert

Carpet Sea Squirt

Scientific name: *Didemnum species*

Native to: Not known

Habitat: Coastal areas on hard substrates up to 65 m below sea level

Key ID Features: Immobile tube-like invertebrates occurring in colonies with an anterior inhalant and dorsal exhalant through which seawater is filtered for food. They are readily distinguished from other colonial sea squirts by their extensively lobed form. Colonies of *Didemnum* species have been reported to grow in sheets or mats which can be tan, cream, yellow, orange or pinkish in colour. They have been introduced to British waters through a variety of pathways including aquaculture equipment, hull fouling and ship ballast water. Negative impacts are a result of colonies overgrowing and swamping other species and covering fish spawning grounds, aquaculture cages etc. While *Didemnum* sea squirts have been observed primarily colonising artificial substrates in harbours such as boats, submarine structures, pontoons and other human constructions. As this species has only been recently found in the UK a high level of vigilance is important.



If you see this species please record the following details:

- Location of species
- Date and time of sighting
- Depth of water
- Photographs taken ?

and report to Tony Glen (searchiom@hotmail.com) or Philippa Tomlinson (philippa.tomlinson@gov.im).

