



Partners Newsletter

Keeping you informed

February 2013



Toiora te moana - Toiora te tangata
Healthy Seas - Healthy People
2 - 10 March 2013

During March 4-8, Nelson, Picton and Havelock marinas will be alive with children having fun and learning about how to protect our marine environment. Seaweek is endorsed by NZ Association of Environmental Educators, with the theme this year of "Toiora te Moana - Toiora te Tangata" Healthy Seas - Healthy People. We are using this event to help our local school children to learn about and connect with the sea. We are infusing the week with a particular focus on marine biosecurity.

Many local scientists and teachers have donated time and money to make this event a success. Details are being finalised now for Picton/Waikawa and Havelock and extra helpers are needed in these locations.

In Nelson:

- The Cawthron Institute will provide children with hands on experience identifying sea creatures on differing fouled substrates.
- Port Nelson will be giving tours of the port.
- NIWA will be on site with their mini remote control sub to show the kids what lives down below.

- Milo Couldren, through NZ Sea Cadets will be providing a fun mini day skippers course.
- NMIT will run a small workshop on mussel anatomy, with a focus on why marine biosecurity is important.
- Richard de Hamel from NZ Marine Studies Centre, University of Otago, will be running exciting marine-based fun lessons, emphasising the importance of taking care of our oceans.
- Sealord will contribute a speaker from their Deep Water Group and supply some yummy lunches for the crew.
- Matt Shipman from "The Truck" (formerly the Hub) will be on hand for knot tying and sea lore, with the Tasman Bay Cruising Club, and Maitahi Canoe Club providing their support.
- Nelson City Council has contributed funding for the buses to get the children there from their schools to make the event a success.



Barrie's Bilge



Boat fouling survey

In the last newsletter I talked about the importance of having a clean vessel hull, to help reduce the accidental spread of marine pests with boat movements in and around the region. Although many of the boaties I've talked to perceive that their efforts to keep a clean hull won't make any difference to the problem, that's not entirely true.

Many of the organisms you see on marina pontoons and wharf piles, including some that threaten industries like aquaculture, aren't capable of spreading very far by themselves, and hitching a ride on boats can be the main way they spread around the coast. A big part of the coordination team's job is to work with boaties and other stakeholders to get this message through, and get more people into the habit of having a clean hull when they move from place to place.

One of my projects involves trying to figure out whether the team's efforts to achieve these types of changes are making any difference.

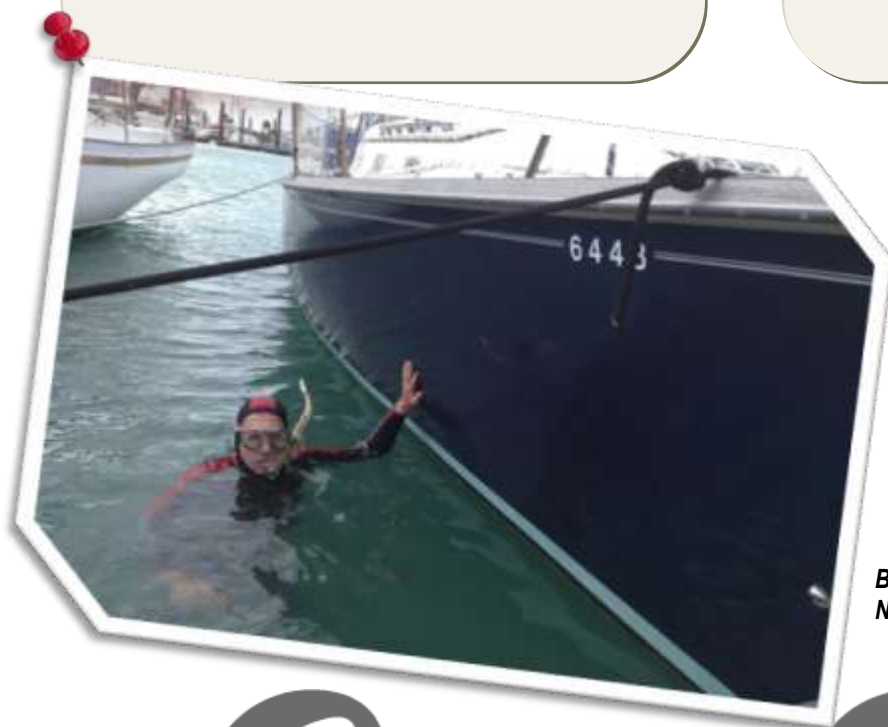
The project involves conducting a survey of recreational vessels in Nelson and Waikawa to assess how fouled they are according to a predefined scale, and to check whether the fouling contains any of the marine pests on the Ministry for Primary Industries' target list of 11 organisms.

The idea is to repeat the survey over time, perhaps every year or two, and see whether key indicators of high fouling risk decrease over time, as people become more aware of the issues.

This project is just getting started, and so far I've walked around Nelson marina to score vessels on a simple fouling scale. In the next phase I'm jumping in the water in Nelson and Waikawa to snorkel around a subset of boats for a look beneath the water-line. So if you see me swimming by, please try and avoid flushing!



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Barrie in the water at Nelson Marina.

Pete's Ponderings



The laws governing marine biosecurity in New Zealand do not form a complete or coherent code. The diagram on the back page shows some of the ways the principal Acts relate to each other.

The Biosecurity Act was passed in 1993. It is empowering rather than prescriptive. Not surprisingly this Act is the big one for marine biosecurity. New provisions for marine biosecurity were made in 2012.

Approaches that were developed with terrestrial biosecurity in mind do not always work in the marine environment. In the sea there is no comprehensive land ownership, the pests are hidden under water, natural transport mechanisms are strong, and the organisms and their ecology poorly understood.

To grapple with this, the revised Act allows for Pathway Plans that focus on vectors of pest and disease spread rather than on named species. We will cover developments in Pathway Plans in the next newsletter.

The other key pieces of law are the Resource Management Act, the Local Government Act, and the conservation legislation.

The Resource Management Act has the next most influence after the Biosecurity Act. This has been highlighted by the inclusion of biosecurity provisions in the NZ Coastal Policy Statement. The RMA deals with uses of coastal space, conflicts between those uses, and with sustainable management of the environment. Within that broad scope, biosecurity is just one of the many things to be considered.

Biosecurity often needs action more than legal controls. Action can be taken by statutory agencies only where the law explicitly allows for it. This is provided for in the Biosecurity Act, Local Government Act and the conservation legislation. It is sorting out how this can work in practice that is the main work of the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Partnership.

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Feature Marine Pest

Australian Droplet Tunicate, *Eudistoma elongatum*

Status in New Zealand: Established.

Why is this a threat?

It is an unsightly invasive marine organism in the native coastal environment. It is also a significant nuisance to marine farming.

Key features:

- Clusters of white or cream coloured tubes or "sausages".
- Each rope or "sausage" is actually a cylinder or tunic, containing numerous small individual organisms and can sometimes appear orange-flecked due to the bright orange larvae within them.
- The long cylindrical heads commonly grow to 30cm, but may get up to 1.5 metres long in some instances. They are generally 5-20mm in diameter.

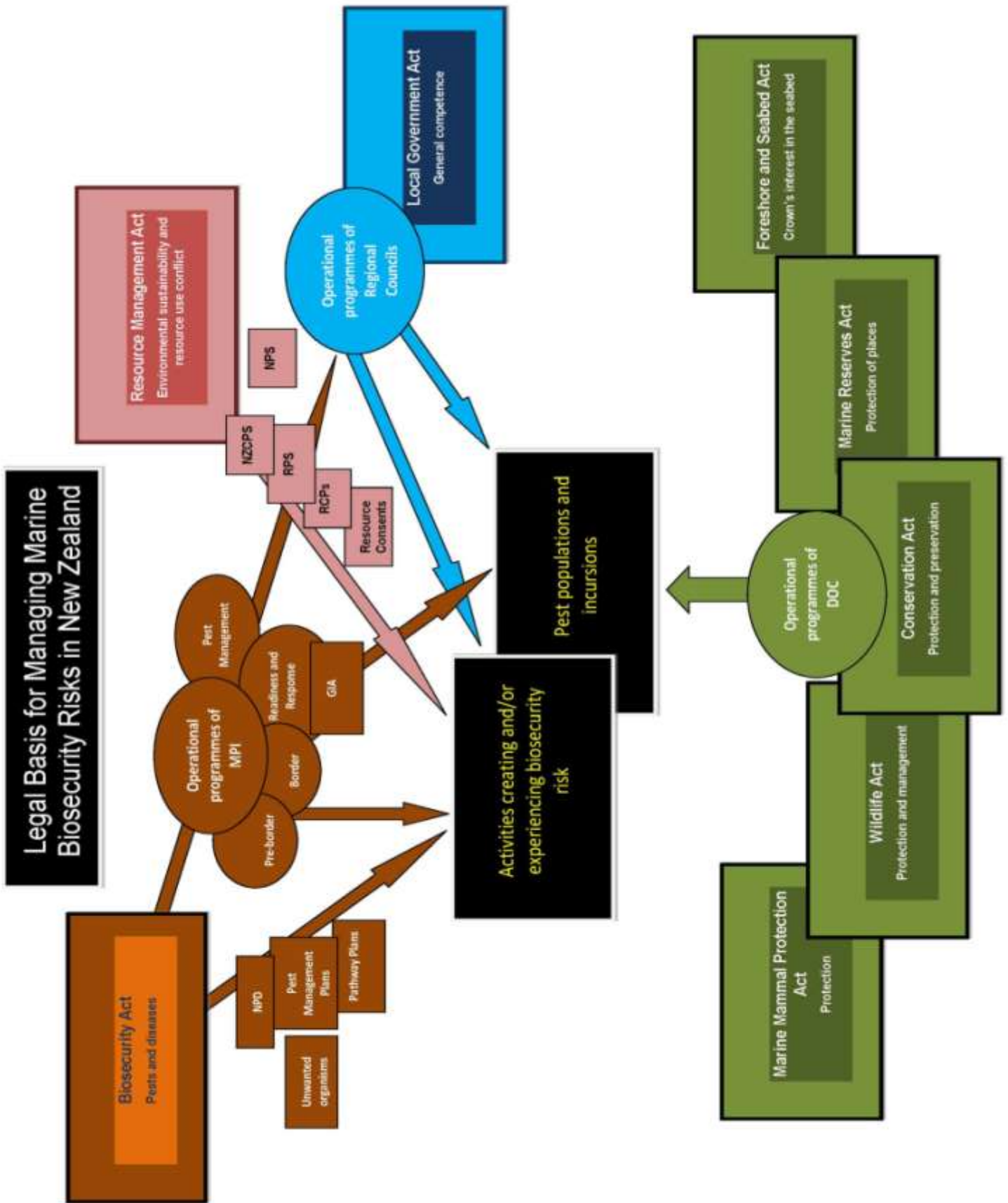
Where are they found?

- In muddy bottomed tidal areas and on man-made structures such as wharf piles and aquaculture equipment.
- Generally submerged just below the waterline, but can often be seen at low tide.



Report sightings:

- Note exact location.
- Take a photo or sample where possible.
- Seal in plastic bag with small amount of seawater and chill, or preserve in methylated spirits.
- DO NOT FREEZE
- Call MPI on 0800 80 99 66.



MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

tasman district council

Nelson City Council *te kaunihera o whakatū*

Department of Conservation *Te Papa Atawhai*

NIWA *Taihoro Nukurangi*

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