

Dwarf Mussel

Semimytilus algosus

D



Pathway

- Aquaculture - may have been unintentionally introduced by oyster farms
- Ballast water
- Hull fouling

Impacts



Biodiversity

Dense beds can exclude native species, and completely carpet rocky shores.



Human Health

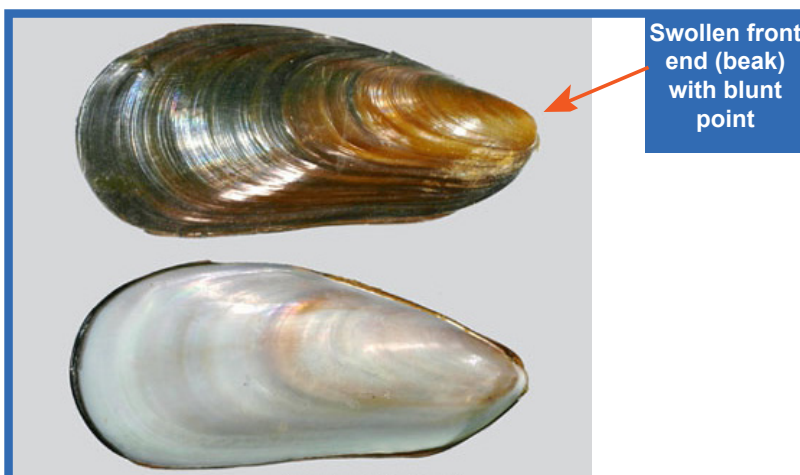
None known.



Economy

None known.

Key ID Features



Description

Shell is elongated and smooth. The front end of the shell is swollen and ends in a blunt point. Shell can become thicker in certain conditions, such as predator exposure.

Size

Up to 5 cm, typically less than 4 cm.

Colour

External shell is green to brown, internal shell is white.

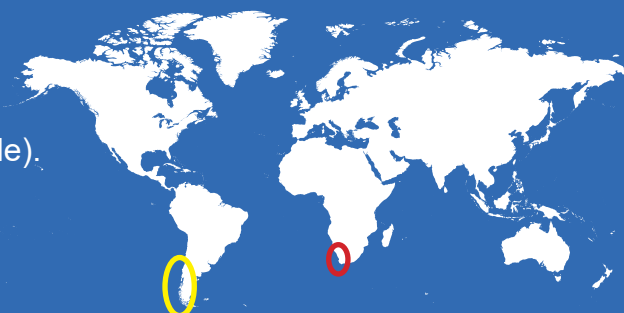
*Note: Images not to scale



Distribution

 **Native range:** Pacific coast of South America (Chile).

 **Non-native range:** West coast of South Africa.



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Habitat and Ecology

Habitat: Wave exposed, intertidal and subtidal rocky shores. Can form dense colonies on flat expanses of rock and emergent rock. Attaches to substrate using byssal threads.

Diet: Filter feeder.

Reproduction: Can be hermaphroditic and can reproduce all year round. Larvae develop rapidly in under a month.

Confusion with similar species

Smaller in size than many other mussels, and genetically distinct.

If you think you have seen this species, please contact the person below who will confirm its identity.

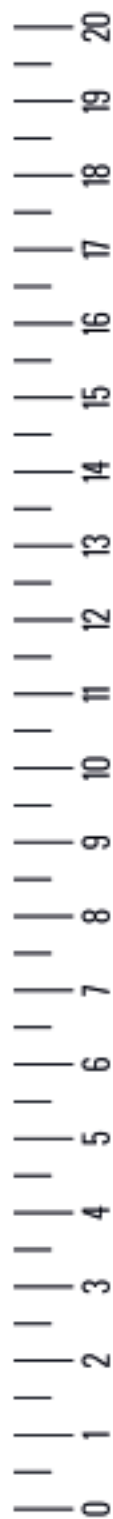
Please also refer to the mitigation strategies guidance document, provided as part of the Marine Biosecurity Toolkit.

Images

Front: Top © Charles Griffiths / Bottom © Charles Griffiths

Further Information

- <https://www.sanbi.org/animal-of-the-week/dwarf-mussel/>
- <https://www.int-res.com/articles/meps2004/276/m276p115.pdf>
- http://www.macrofauna.cl/fi/Semimytilus_algosus.html



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