



MEDITERRANEAN FANWORM

Please clean your hull before you set sail this summer

BACKGROUND

The Mediterranean fanworm has become well established in many parts of the Waitemata Harbour and inner Hauraki Gulf, including in marinas, as well as parts of Whangarei Harbour.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The problem with the fanworm is that it forms very dense colonies, with the worms growing to more than 600mm in length. It has the potential to starve our native marine species of food and living space. The fanworms' larvae settle on boat hulls where they grow into adult worms and get transported to new locations when the boat sets sail. Because the fanworms grow very fast, they can quickly colonise new areas. It has been recently found growing on mussel farms and has also been observed growing on broken shell fragments on the sea floor.

You can find out more about the Mediterranean fanworm on [MPI's website](#).

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP STOP THE SPREAD

To help us stop the spread to our beautiful bays and harbours we're asking you to clean your hull (right down to the bottom of and under the keel, or dead wood, plus any nooks and crannies) before you head off for your summer holidays. You can do this by either, getting your boat lifted and giving the hull a wash off to remove all biofouling or, arranging for a complete hull clean and antifoul if you haven't done this for a while.

If your boat has a live bait tank or a bow thruster, you'll need to check these, as these are problem areas for fanworms, too. Take a careful look at the sides of the live bait tank as this is a prime location for very small fanworms. They may look like a small worm the size of a match. Make sure that you dispose of any that you remove onto land – they will keep growing if put back into the sea.

Marina operators and regional councils in the top of the North Island will be making sure that visiting boats don't present a risk of introducing the Mediterranean fanworm into their waters this summer.

All owners/skippers of visiting boats will need to show that you have either:

- » antifouled your hull within the last six months; or
- » lifted and washed your boat within one month.



This is what Mediterranean fanworm looks like when underwater. The worm lives inside a tube and extends its feeding fan out of the top end of the tube. (Photo: S. Wilkens, NIWA)



This is what Mediterranean fanworm looks like when out of water. (Photo: B. Lines, Diving Services NZ)

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Please keep receipts of haul outs and/or antifouling.

Even if you don't intend to visit a marina, you may get a spot check from a regional council representative while you're at anchor.

Visit the website of the marina you intend to visit for more information on marina requirements and what you need to know about this pest before setting sail.



The bottom of the keel bulb of this yacht wasn't cleaned properly before departing from Auckland. Several fan worms and other marine pests were allowed to grow as a consequence. (Photo: NZ Diving and Salvage)



Don't let your boat look like this! (Photo: H. Lass, Bay of Plenty RC)

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE SEEN THE MEDITERRANEAN FANWORM

If you've seen the Mediterranean fanworm in areas other than the Auckland region or Whangarei Harbour, please call the **MPI Pest and Diseases hotline on 0800 80 99 66**.

Please try to take photos and record some details, like the name of the vessel and where it was moored, or the location if it was found on the sea floor or on structures.

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