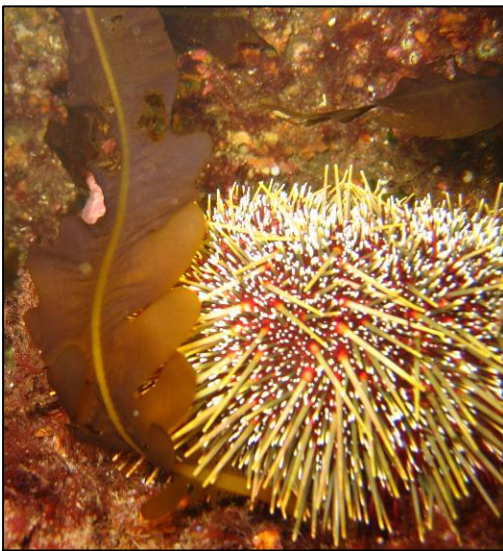




September 2012

The Guardians Newsletter

The Fiordland Marine Guardians are an advisory committee who work with government agencies and their Ministers on the management of the Fiordland marine area. They welcome this chance to keep you informed and up to date with happenings in the Fiordland Marine Area.



Kina on top of Undaria plant—Sunday Cove.
Photograph courtesy of Richard Kinsey, DOC Te Anau

Working towards the successful elimination of Undaria In Sunday Cove

Promising progress has been made in the last 12 months towards local elimination of the pest seaweed, *Undaria*, from a small area in Breaksea Sound. A single mature plant was found there in April 2010 and since then

~25 control operations have been conducted in Sunday Cove to remove this pest.

Over the past year 862 plants have been removed, bringing the total to more than 1800 plants. Of real interest, is the substantial decline in the number of plants found during the surveys over the last 12 months (Figure 1.).

The kina transferred to the area as a biocontrol agent have proven to be very successful, both in clearing the canopy from part of the search area to make searching more effective, and also in grazing directly on *Undaria* plants. New plants are now only being detected in a few small areas, **and the last two surveys have found no plants at all.** It is expected that plants will continue to appear in small numbers as the spores germinate at varying times of the year.

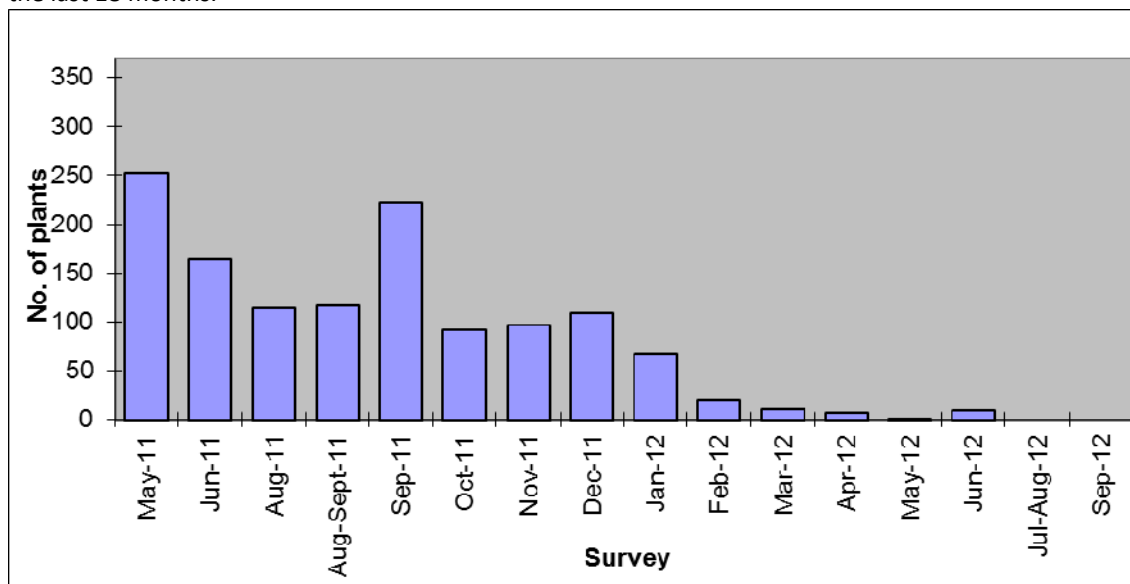
The Response Team (Environment Southland, DOC and MPI) and the Guardians believe that the project is firmly on track to achieve local elimination, and urge boaties to continue to play a very important part in ensuring no more *Undaria*, or indeed any other marine pests, are transferred to the FMA.

It is hoped that within the next 1 – 2 years, Fiordland will once again be free of *Undaria*. This will be significant for the area's unique marine biodiversity, as well as being very important to protect the commercial, recreational and cultural uses.

Tim Riding, Environment Southland.

Figure 1.

Number of *Undaria* plants removed from Sunday Cove, Breaksea Sound, Fiordland during the joint agency surveillance trip over the last 18 months.



New Zealand's Marine Pest Identification Guide

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has recently published a Marine Pest Identification Guide that contains 11 marine pests we do not want in, or spread around New Zealand's waters. These marine pests are:

- Styela clava* (clubbed tunicate/leathery sea squirt)
- Sabella spallanzanii* (the Mediterranean fanworm)
- Caulerpa taxifolia* (an aquarium weed)
- Potamocorbula amurensis* (Asian clam)
- Eriocheir sinensis* (Chinese mitten crab)
- Carinus meanas* (European shore crab)
- Undaria pinnatifida* (Japanese kelp)
- Asterias amurensis* (Northern pacific seastar)
- Carybdis japonica* (Asian paddle crab)
- Pyura praeputialis* (Pyura)
- Eudistoma elongatum* (Australian droplet tunicate)

This guide has been sent to a range of organisations and people with an interest in the marine environment such as central and regional government agencies, Iwi, marine scientists, marine farm operators, and recreational and commercial divers. The Guide is also available from MPI's website at

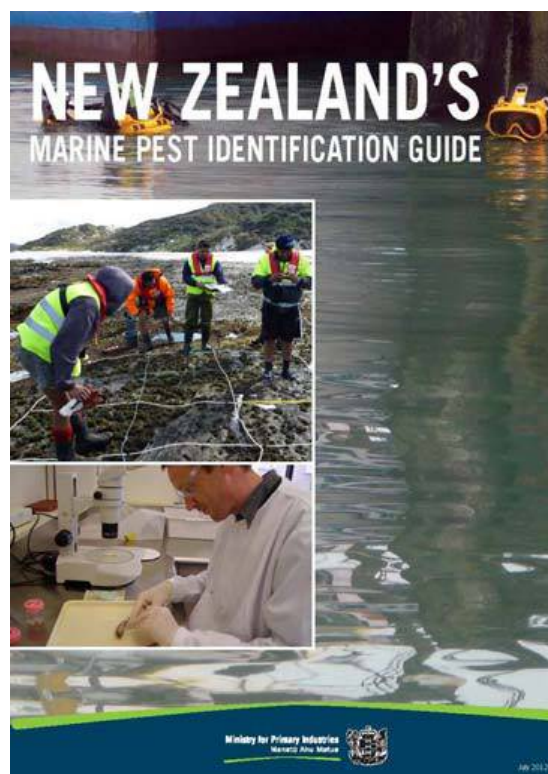
<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests/salt-freshwater/saltwater>

If you come across a suspect marine animal or plant, or a mass death or illness event in marine life, report it as soon as possible to MPI by calling the Exotic Disease and Pest Hotline 0800 80 99 66.

For more information on biosecurity matters relating to Fiordland please refer to

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/fiordland>

Jen Brunton, MPI, Wellington



DOC Minister visits Fiordland



Fiordland Marine Guardians (from left) Stewart Bull, Ken Grange, Malcolm Lawson, Conservation Minister Kate Wilkinson, Jerry Excell, Anne McDermott, Sir Alan Mark, Alan Key and Mark Psychers pictured on the GV 'Southern Winds' in Doubtful Sound.

Photograph courtesy of Kath Blakemore, DOC, Te Anau

Conservation Minister Kate Wilkinson visited Fiordland at the invitation of the Fiordland Marine Guardians in early July. This was her first visit to the area and she said that she was most impressed with the grandeur of Doubtful Sound and the natural beauty of the area .

The Minister said that she was an advocate for the Guardians model and was impressed with its work, although until her visit she admitted that she had not fully appreciated the magnitude of the work being undertaken by the Guardians and agency personnel.

Malcolm Lawson (Guardians Chairman) pointed out the importance of continuing to host visits by Ministers so that they can get a better understanding of the unique challenges and characteristics of the area.

Alison O'Sullivan,

VHF Coverage in Fiordland

When the Environment Southland oil spill response team receive notification of a boating accident in Fiordland one of the biggest issues is usually communication, or a lack of it. Often we have had to rely on other boats to relay information through Bluff Fishermen's Radio or Fiordland Fishermen's Radio, because many of the fiords have little or no radio coverage.

In the past Single Sideband (SSB or MF/HF) radios were the usual mode of communication on fishing boats, and they worked well in isolated areas, particularly at night. Today VHF radios are more common, relying on line of sight, which limits their range, although they can achieve better coverage using repeater stations.

There are several stations in Fiordland operated by private users or by Maritime New Zealand (Maritime Radio), some line of sight (Simplex) and others repeater stations (Duplex or semi-Duplex), but reception is patchy in many areas and non-existent in others. The repeaters are in elevated areas such as Wednesday Peak, Mount Irene and Mount Rakeahua, in order for the signal to be received at greater distances; but there are other masts or structures, sometimes at lower elevations, that could work as repeater stations, with the right antennae attached (shared maintenance trips would reduce operating costs too).

To begin a project to improve VHF radio coverage communications in Fiordland Environment Southland has asked ASI Limited to look at the existing VHF radio coverage in Fiordland, and advise on how this could be improved using existing VHF repeaters and links, as well as integrating other structures to enlarge a VHF network.

This is a long term project, but it is important to establish what is already in place, how well the current VHF channels work, before examining what needs to be done to improve communications in Fiordland.

Kevin O'Sullivan, Harbour Master, Environment Southland



Guardians' Alan Key, Anne McDermott, Malcolm Lawson, Sir Alan Mark and Guardians' secretary Alison O'Sullivan at the awards ceremony.

Another Accolade for The Guardians!

On 25th July the Fiordland Marine Guardians accepted an Environmental Achiever Award at the Southland Environment and Conservation Awards. Chairman of the Guardians, Malcolm Lawson, in accepting the award commented that the award was in recognition of the work of not just the Guardians but also the government agencies involved in the management of the Fiordland Marine Area who made it all possible.

Alison O'Sullivan, Secretary, FMG

Progress on Changes From 2010 Rules Review

During 2011 the Guardians produced and released a public discussion paper to seek submissions regarding the current suite of rules that are in place to assist in the Management of the Fiordland Marine Area. The current rule regime was introduced in 2005 as a result of the recommendations included in the document *Beneath the Reflections – Fiordland Marine Conservation Strategy* which was developed by the original Guardians of Fiordland's Fisheries and Marine Environment.

The Guardians have been working towards the implementation of a number of the suggestions received in submissions.

Communications

We are always looking to improve our methods of communication. Check out the newly revamped website (www.fmg.org.nz). New links to appropriate information are in the process of being established on the website which is also easier to navigate. A number of people wanted access to scientific reports and survey results and these will be added over time as we continue make more information available.

Values of Special Significance

There was concern that the number of legal mechanisms available to allow the Guardians to respond to implement appropriate changes to management of special areas were few, and did not allow quick responses. In conjunction with Ministry for the Environment we are currently exploring options, including the possibility of introducing interim management measures until a more long-term response can be implemented.

Fisheries

A number of recommendations are currently being progressed:

The Guardians have now received the research reports on the Doubtful and Milford Sounds blue cod fisheries. This information will be used to begin to develop a management plan at our next meeting.

A recommendation is currently with the Ministry for Primary Industries to make the daily bag limit for rock lobster 6 per person in all of the FMA. Effectively this removes the lesser limit of 3 that is currently in place for the inner waters of all fiords. The one exception to this is the inner waters of Milford Sound where it will remain at 3. There is limited habitat within Milford Sound and there is a real concern that lifting the limit could lead to localised depletion. Based on the comments received in submissions the accumulation limit will remain at 15 of which a limit of 3 can be taken from the inner waters of Milford Sound.

The Ministry for Primary industries is also considering the recommendation to review the use of recreational rock lobster holding pots. Currently there is a limit of 2 rock lobster holding pots permitted to be used from a boat. The problem arises in the identification of each fisher's catch where more than one fisher is utilising the holding pot to store their catch. Some method of identification and/or record is required.

As part of the formal process a public consultation round on proposed changes will be conducted by MPI. Please make sure that you have your say.

Compliance

Comments on compliance within the FMA have been passed on to the agencies for consideration.

Malcolm Lawson, Chairman, FMG



Aphelodoris luctuosa – photograph courtesy of Richard Kinsey, DOC Te Anau

Beautiful Slugs! (You be the judge)

When someone tells you how beautiful slugs can be it is very easy to think that they are completely mad.

Slugs conjure up visions of slimy brown creatures slipping in to the vegie garden at night and eating all of the greens. However for the marine team in Te Anau, sea slugs, or nudibranchs as they are properly named are anything but boring.



Jason mirabilis 1 – photograph courtesy of Richard Kinsey, DOC, Te Anau

During recent trips to Breaksea Sound in Fiordland to eradicate the pest seaweed *Undaria*, a number of mysterious nudibranchs have been identified, some of which have never been seen in Fiordland before, and some that are common but equally as beautiful.

The pictures show what a weird and wonderful group of animals nudibranchs are, and how much more spectacular they can be when compared to the common garden slug.

If you would like any more information about the beautiful world under the water in Fiordland please contact the marine team in the Te Anau office.

Richard Kinsey, DOC, Te Anau



Polycera maddoxi, Dusky Sound, photograph courtesy of Richard Kinsey, DOC, Te Anau.

Update on nominations for new Fiordland Marine Guardians

In the March 2012 newsletter we asked for people to register interest in becoming a Fiordland Marine Guardian. Nominations were formally sought in August 2012 and we received a good response. We are part way through the process and expect to be able to advise of the outcomes in the next newsletter.

Jacqui Yeates, MfE, Wellington

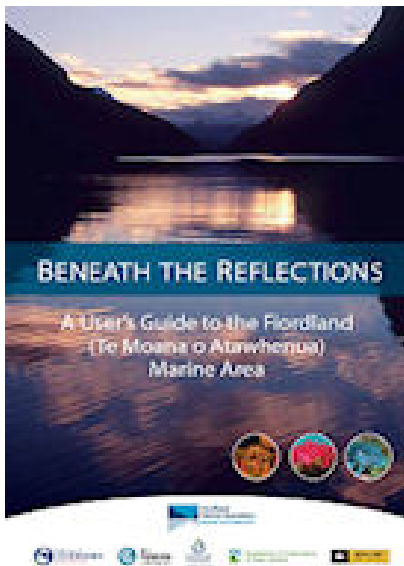
How would you like to receive future Newsletters and Annual Reports ?

Since it was suggested in a previous newsletter article, a considerable number of people have opted to have newsletters sent to them electronically. One of the main benefits is the beauty of the photographs which are able to be viewed in full colour, whilst the printed newsletter photographs are displayed in black and white due to financial constraints.

If you too would like to receive newsletters and Annual Reports electronically flick an email through to Alison and she will ensure that they are sent to you. Email: info@fmg.org.nz

Alison O'Sullivan, Secretary, FMG

DON'T FORGET YOUR COPY OF BENEATH THE REFLECTIONS –



A User's Guide to the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area

This is a practical Guide to everyone who visits, or intends to visit the Fiordland Marine Area.

It has all the relevant information pertaining to the area including the history of the area, practical user information, Fisheries information and guidelines, along with a Fiord-by-Fiord guide containing maps of each Sound with navigational information. The book is full of beautiful colour photographs of the area and is a MUST HAVE for all.

Water resistant paper is an added attraction of the User Guide for those people wanting to make full use of all the practical information it contains while in the area.

Stocks are still available at The Department of Conservation Visitor Centre in Te Anau and at the DOC office in Invercargill. The User Guide will also be available in selected retail outlets in Te Anau, Invercargill, and Gore