

What is the AWT doing?

The presence of Pacific oysters on Alderney was first verified by the AWT in 2023 (in addition to the abandoned farm). Since then, the AWT, through the Alderney State of Nature Project (ASoN), has initiated an **annual citizen science project**, with the aim to record the presence, location, abundance, size and condition of Pacific oysters across Alderney. The results from these surveys have identified an increase in Pacific oyster abundance at a number of sites.

Based on these results, a **trial to remove Pacific oysters** at a number of these sites was setup in 2026, as a potential management option of this marine INNS. Advice on the appropriate removal methods was provided by independent oyster experts, with the removal trial supported by key island marine stakeholders.



Pacific oyster near Houme Herbe, recorded in 2026
| Photo by Nicolas Jouault

What can I do to help?

Information on the presence, location and abundance of Pacific oysters on Alderney is still poor. You can help record Pacific oysters by **submitting your sightings**.



Take a photo, note where, when and how many Pacific oysters you have seen, and then either:

- ▶ Record via the online app 'iRecord' (<https://irecord.org.uk/>)
- ▶ Record via the Alderney Biological Records Centre website (<https://alderneybiodiversitycentre.org/>) or
- ▶ Pop into the AWT office to let us know

If you are interested in joining our annual Pacific oyster citizen science survey, please contact Mel Broadhurst-Allen via marine@alderneywildlife.org for further details.



Pacific oyster in Longis Bay, recorded in 2026
| Photo by Nicolas Jouault

PACIFIC OYSTER

Q&A



Pacific oyster found in Longis Bay in 2024
| Photo by Mel Broadhurst-Allen

MARINE INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Protect Alderney's wildlife
for future generations



Alderney
Wildlife Trust

What is it?

The Pacific oyster (*Magallana gigas*; Thunberg, 1793) is a marine suspension feeding mollusc, with an oval, white-yellow shell with deep purple patches. It is found from the intertidal (lower) shore environment down to a depth of around 80 m. Its native range is Asia and Japan.



Pacific oyster with its wavy/saw toothed shell margins | Photo by Lou Collings

Tips to ID Pacific oysters:

Thick rough hinged shells up to 18 cm long

Solid surface with distinctive wavy/saw toothed shell margins

What is the problem?

Marine Invasive Non-Native Species (marine INNS) can pose a major threat to native biological diversity, human health and ecosystem services.

From the late 1960s the Pacific oyster was introduced intentionally across the globe as

a key commercial food source. By the 1970s, wild (escapee) Pacific oysters were found forming dense reefs outside of commercial hatcheries and cultivation sites in adjacent native environments. At a regional level, a number of commercial hatcheries and cultivation sites are found throughout Europe, UK and the Channel Islands. There are no active hatcheries or cultivation sites on Alderney, although an attempt was made to establish one at Longis Bay but was abandoned in the late 1970s. In addition,



Pacific oysters attached to a pontoon leg in the UK | Photo by Lou Collings

Pacific oysters were first considered not to proliferate/spawn across Europe, due to the species requiring sea surface temperatures 20°C+ to do so. However, due to rising sea surface temperatures (as result from natural sea temperature fluctuations, climate change and milder winters), the potential for this species to spawn and spread is now viable.



Close-up of a Pacific Oyster | Photo by Lou Collings

Pacific oysters can form dense aggregations and reefs rapidly, potentially **changing the native habitat type and species community therein**. It can cause **economic damage** through heavy fouling of harbour infrastructure and vessels, with increased costs associated with reduced efficiency. Pacific oysters are also recognised as '**disease agents**', through unintentionally carrying and spreading other marine INNS, diseases and/or viruses to new areas. For humans, it also has a physically sharp shell which can **hurt/cut/break skin** (e.g. when walking upon). As such, this species is considered a marine INNS on Alderney.