

NOBANIS - Marine invasive species in Nordic waters - Fact Sheet

Ficopomatus enigmaticus

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Species description

Species name

Ficopomatus enigmaticus, Fauvel, 1923 – Australian tube-worm

Synonyms

Mercierella enigmatica Fauvel, 1923

Common names

Australian tube-worm (UK, USA); Australsk kalkrørsorm (DK, NO); Australisk kalkrörsmask (SE); Tüten-Kalkröhrenwurm (DE); Trompetkalkkokerworm (NL).

Identification

This species is characterized by its calcareous tubes, which are circular in transverse section and coil or twist irregularly. The tubes have a number of “rings” at different intervals, corresponding to growth of the worm. When conditions are favourable the tubes may intertwine to form reef-like mounds, which significantly alter the habitat. The worm itself has several branching tentacles surrounding the mouth. One tentacle is specialized to form an operculum, which can seal the tube when the worm is withdrawn. It may be confused with the native tube-worms, *Pomatoceros triqueter*, Linnaeus, 1758, and *Hydroides norvegicus* Gunnerus, 1768. Several species of Hydroides have been introduced to waters just outside the Nordic countries, e.g. the southern North Sea and English Channel and may spread to our waters in the future.



Ficopomatus enigmaticus is often found building calcareous reefs on all kinds of structures, causing major problems in harbours, on boats etc. Photo by Aline Blanchet.

Further information

Information on *Ficopomatus enigmaticus* see:

<http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-1700> ,

http://www.exoticguide.org/species_pages/f_enigmaticus.html,

http://www.frammandearter.se/0/2english/pdf/Ficopomatus_enigmaticus.pdf,

<http://www.issg.org/database/species/ecology.asp?fr=1&sts=&lang=EN&si=1382>,

http://www.europe-aliens.org/pdf/Ficopomatus_enigmaticus.pdf,

<http://www.shellfish.uga.edu/invasive%20webitems/meet%20guests/fico%20tubeworm.pdf>,

<http://www.marlin.ac.uk/speciesfullreview.php?speciesID=3335>,

<http://www.padil.gov.au/viewPest.aspx?id=1046>

Information on *Pomatoceros triqueter* (Linnaeus, 1758) see:

<http://www.marlin.ac.uk/speciesfullreview.php?speciesID=4179> and

http://species-identification.org/species.php?species_group=macrobenthos_polychaeta&id=847

Information on *Hydroides norvegicus* Gunnerus, 1768 see:

http://species-identification.org/species.php?species_group=macrobenthos_polychaeta&id=615