Cordylophora caspia

Hydroid

Threat scores

1. Ecological impact
    - Fouling of pipes; causes changes in species compositions
    - 'Benthic colonial predator' that preys upon chronomids and other larval insects
    - The ecological impacts have not yet been thoroughly studied
    - Uncolonized substrate introduced to C. caspia and subsequently colonizied had different relative abundances of other invertebrates as compared to substrates not colonized by C. caspia
    - Other studies have suggested that C. caspia may contribute to a restructuring of benthic and pelagic freshwater communities
2. Invasive potential
    - An organism requiring assisted transport to expand alien range.
    - A common aquarium species - released into Lake Erie
    - May reproduce asexually by budding to establish firm presence in introduced regions
    - Fragmentation of the colony may be an important factor in dispersal
    - Rafting on floating debris as dormant stages or reproductive adults, together with their potentially long life span may have allowed hydroids to disperse over a wide area in the long term
3. Geographic extent
    - Regionally pervasive
4. Management difficulty
    - No known controls in marine/freshwater environments once established
    - Preyed upon by nudibranch

Geography and Habitat

1. Native: Black and Caspian Seas
2. Introduced: Atlantic Coast from Virginia to Florida, Washington to California, Gulf of Mexico
3. Habitats
    - Estuaries/bays, shallow lagoons, brackish water
    - Sporadic distribution associated with areas of low salinity within estuaries and brackish lagoons

Invasion Pathways

1. Whole plant
2. Hull/Surface fouling
3. Ballast water and sediments
4. Pet, aquarium and water garden trade release

Non native locations

1. 41- Virginian
2. 42- Carolinian
3. 43- Northern Gulf of Mexico
4. 56- Puget Trough/Georgia Basin
5. 57- WA, OR, Vancouver

6. 58- Northern California
7. 70- Floridian

Sources

1. Molnar, Jennifer, et al. 2008. "Assessing the global threat of invasive species to marine biodiversity." *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*. 6 (9), pp. 485-492.
2. http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/global.invasive.assessment
3. http://www.marlin.ac.uk/imgs/o_corcas.jpg