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Invasive tunicates spread in the Sound

Three invasive species of tunicate are threatening Puget Sound. The tiny saltwater animals siphon food from water and spread quickly. They are considered a top problem in the Sound.



Ciona savignyi

Origin:
Native to Japan.

How it got here:
Unknown. Possibly inside ships.

Impact: Not fully known. It could crowd out native species. It blankets some underwater parts of Hood Canal.



Georgia Arrow

Styela clava

Origin:
Native of Korea and Japan.

How it got here:
Unknown. Possibly inside ships.

Impact: Big problem for shellfish growers in eastern Canada's Prince Edward Island.



Janna Nichols

Didemnum

Origin:
Unknown

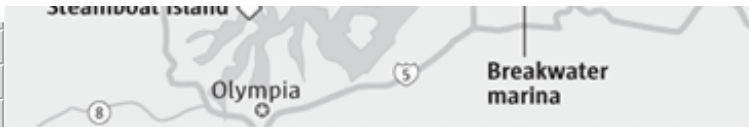
How it got here:
Unknown.

Impact: Possibly on contaminated shellfish or equipment at shellfish farms. Can cover gravel ocean bottoms in a slimy mass, potentially cutting off fish from the bottom-dwelling animals they eat. Fouls equipment and mussels and



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bottom-dwelling animals they eat. Fouls equipment and mussels and oysters grown at shellfish farms.

Source: Puget Sound Action Team, Seattle Times research by Warren Cornwall

MICHELE LEE MCMULLEN / THE SEATTLE TIMES

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