

Capital City Weekly Inbox

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Invasive species colonizes waters around Sitka

The invasive tunicate *Didemnum vexillum*, referred to commonly as "D. vex", is established in Whiting Harbor, Sitka. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game requests that Whiting Harbor be avoided, unless in an emergency situation. This will reduce the possibility of spreading the invasive tunicate to areas outside of Whiting Harbor on anchors, lines, buoys, nets or other gear.

If the entrance to Whiting Harbor cannot be avoided, decontaminate anything that comes into contact with the sea floor or water in Whiting Harbor. Even if you don't see visible signs of the tunicate, decontaminate by either completely drying gear, soaking gear in fresh water for 48 hours or washing gear with a bleach solution. Also, add a small amount of bleach to bilge tanks to kill anything in the water brought onboard while in Whiting Harbor.

If you believe you've found *D. vex* anywhere outside of Whiting Harbor, take a photo if possible, note the location, and then call the invasive species HOTLINE: 1-877-INVASIV.

Tammy Davis

