Mussel Restoration Project for the Marlborough Sounds – A year in review 2021

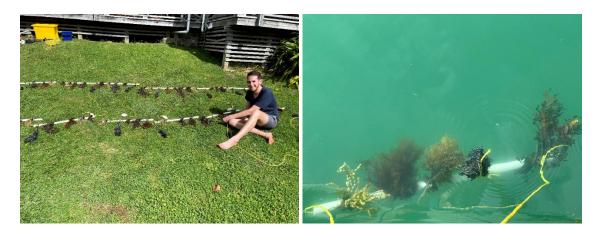
Wow - 2021 has been a year full of surprises, but with extensive teamwork the mussel restoration project has had a very successful second full year. Here are some highlights!

January: 20 tonnes of mussels were restored in January across $\sim 400 \text{ m}^2$, testing the benefits of utilizing recycled industry mussel shell put on the seafloor to aid in mussel restoration.



March: The project was on international news! Here is the link if you're interested in watching it: <u>https://youtu.be/ncNqCctRa_o</u>

We undertook spat sampling to look for recruitment around our mussel beds and onto natural surfaces in the Sounds, finding some unique patterns of spat settlement.



April: The restoration project won the marine category award at the Cawthron Marlborough Environment Awards.



May: The MFA took students to snorkel the mussel beds and teach them about restoration.



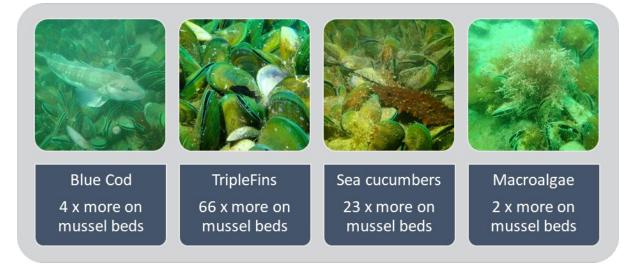
June: 5 tonnes of mussels were restored in June across \sim 75 m², split between the subtidal and the intertidal for our first effort restoring mussels in shallow waters of the Sounds.



July: 30 tonnes of mussels were deployed in July across $\sim 500 \text{ m}^2$, testing the use of subadult mussels for restoration and the ideal density of intertidal subadults.



October: Finished a comprehensive biodiversity assessment on our initial restored mussel plots, here are some of the findings.



As always, if you have any questions or comments on this project, please feel free to reach out to Emilee Benjamin via email at <u>egol669@aucklanduni.ac.nz</u> or Trevyn Toone at <u>ttoo112@aucklanduni.ac.nz</u>.