

Mussel Restoration Project for the Marlborough Sounds – October 2021

Biodiversity assessment on small mussel plots

For our first mussel deployment we placed down four tonnes of mussels into five locations in January 2020. We performed two biodiversity assessments on four of the five locations after the mussels had been on the seafloor for five months and after one year. Among other results the assessments showed that blue cod were observed four times more often on the mussel beds when compared to areas 20 m away and triplefin fish were observed 66 times more on the mussel plots. Sea cucumbers were 23 times more abundant on mussel plots than on adjacent control plots, while macroalgae were two times more abundant on the mussel plots.



These results show that by restoring mussels in Pelorus Sound we can restore habitats for many other animals and help to restore overall ecosystem health. Mussels provide many services to the ecosystems they are found in including habitat generation, and this study emphasizes that mussels can provide these benefits even when the beds are small. These results are encouraging for mussel restoration and the benefits it can have on important species.

Community Day

We have decided to postpone the community event due to covid uncertainty until after the new year.

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