

Seacare submission to senate enquiry into climate related invasive species

From: Seacare
Simon Brooks

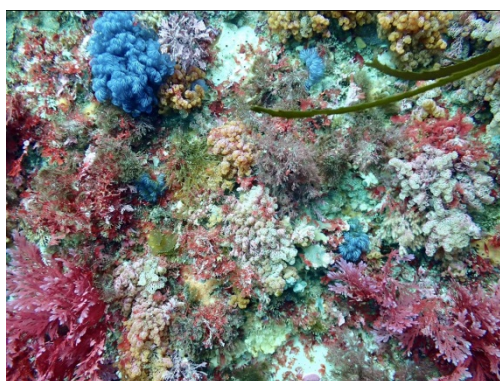
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My name is Simon Brooks. I am a Seacare (<https://seacare.org.au/>) representative and have been recreational diving on the southern coast of Tasmania for 25 years.

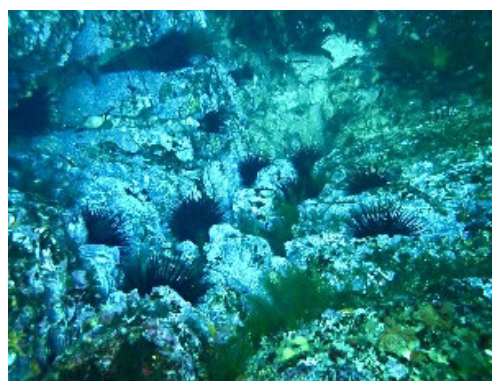
Seacare is a volunteer organisation focused on marine habitat restoration projects along the southeast coast of Tasmania. Marine heatwave events have had an extremely negative effect causing habitat loss. The last extreme event in the summer of 2015-16 was the last of the giant kelp forest on the Tasman Peninsula. Compounding this problem, is the rapidly increasing numbers of the Long-spined sea urchin (*Centrostephanus rodgersii*) which is now the most serious threat to our marine environment.

Over the last four years I've been managing a 'Centro' cull program, clearing them from some of our boutique dive sites. Information noted included urchin numbers, size, location and photos in an attempt (admittedly at a non-professional level!) to monitor any change to the habitat over time. Several of these sites have been prime tourist dive sites visited regularly by the Eaglehawk Dive Centre, the main dive tourism operator on the Tasman Peninsula. An example of the tourist sites is the iconic Waterfall Bay, which has a huge diversity of colourful sessile invertebrates on the steep rocky walls (see image below) compared to neighbouring reefs devastatingly impacted by the Long-spined sea urchin (image far below) just a matter of metres away.

Seacare has volunteered their diving effort to help control urchins at giant kelp restorations areas, where significant effort is required to clear this pest from the replanting sites. Restoration absolutely requires the removal of these urchins to prevent annihilation of the juvenile plants.



Diversity before *C. rodgersii*



Diversity after *C. rodgersii*