



# Biosecurity alert: Exotic oysters

Suminoe oyster (*Magallana ariakensis*), black scar oyster (*Magallana bilineata*) and pacific oyster (*Magallana gigas*)

## The pest and its impacts

The *Magallana* genus of oysters are non-native marine bivalves with potential to disrupt Western Australia's coastal ecosystems. These species originate from Asia but have been introduced to other regions through aquaculture, ballast water, and biofouling on vessels.

These oysters grow rapidly, tolerate a wide range of environmental conditions, and may outcompete our native oysters for space and food. They pose a risk to WA's reef structures, biodiversity, commercial and recreational fisheries and are known carriers of diseases and parasites that can impact native species and aquaculture industry.



## LOOK for these pests

Suminoe oysters were detected at multiple locations in Queensland in 2023. Black scar oysters were initially identified in Queensland in 2020 and subsequently detected in the Northern Territory in 2025. Pacific oysters, originally introduced for aquaculture, are now widely established in several parts of Australia.

These species can be difficult to differentiate from native oysters until they reach a more mature size.

## Key differences from our native rock oysters include:

- **Black or purple 'scar':** The muscle scar on the inner surface of the valves is large and purple to black in colour.
- **Large shell:** Suminoe and black scar oysters are fast growing and can grow much larger (up to 24cm) than native oysters.
- **Lack of chomata:** *Magallana* oysters lack a chomata; a series of small teeth like ridges on the inside margin of the shell that are present in most native oyster species.



Adult and juvenile suminoe oysters (left and right) compared with a native oyster (middle)



Black scar oyster displaying its characteristic inner-shell scar



Black scar oysters growing on rocks in Trinity Bay, Queensland

## How you can help: look, act, report

- Inspect aquaculture gear, boat hulls, marine equipment and submerged and floating infrastructure for unusual oyster species.
- Do not release live or dead non-native oysters or shellfish into WA waters.
- Do not import or translocate live oysters without approval.
- Report any sightings of unfamiliar oyster species, especially near ports, marinas, estuaries, or aquaculture zones.



### REPORT your observations

Your reports help protect WA.  
Contact FishWatch 24/7 or submit photos via MyPestGuide®.



Scan to report via MyPestGuide®



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