



Japanese wireweed

Sargassum muticum (Yendo) Fensholt, 1955

KEY FEATURES



- Golden brown to mustard brown seaweed, 2–10 m tall, main axis usually solitary, lateral branches spirally arranged, repeatedly and alternately branched to form an intricate, bushy structure
- Leaves on base of stipe are linear-lanceolate with toothed margins, on the upper stipe leaves are narrow, often only 4 mm long, with toothed or smooth margins
- Prefers hard substrate to settle and develop, habitats with stones less than 10 cm in diameter, gravel and sand are unsuitable
- Buoyant, with a propensity to drift, fertile branches can float, reproduce, and survive for up to 3 months
- Although generally considered a temperate species, it has been recorded to tolerate temperatures between -1 to 30°C, although ideal growth conditions are 25°C and salinity of 34

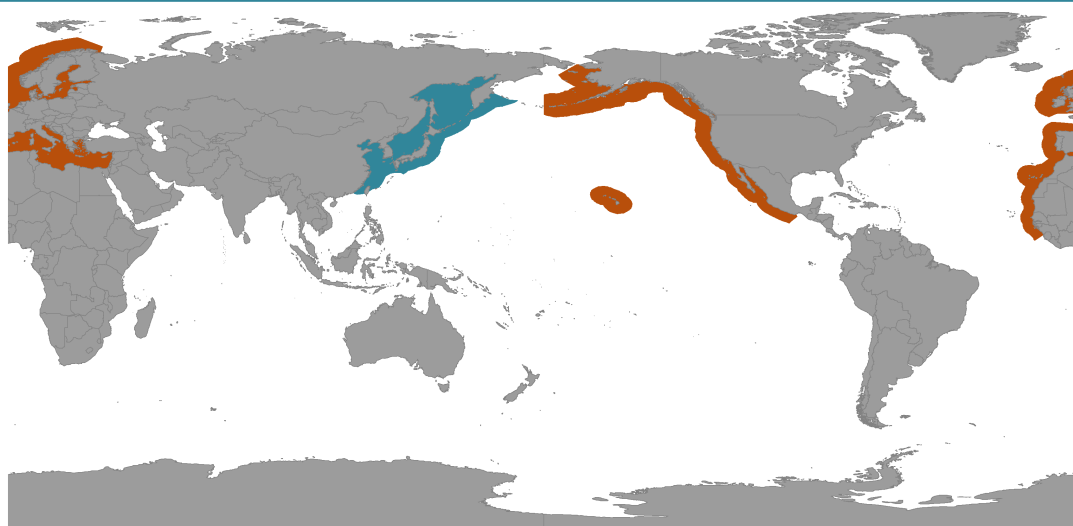
PATHWAY

✓ ballast water

✓ biofouling

✓ aquaculture transfer

Native
Cryptogenic
Non-indigenous





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IMPACTS



Environmental impacts

Significant habitat-forming species in the shallow subtidal. Can occupy habitats dominated by seagrass and may interfere with seagrass regeneration. Can affect subtidal native assemblages through overgrowing and shading underlying species; can displace many other kelp species



Human health impacts

Species of *Sargassum* have been reported to cause allergic contact dermatitis



Social & cultural impacts

None known



Economic impacts

Considered a pest and fouling species which can interfere with recreational and commercial use of waterways, forming large floating masses when detached. Responsible for fouling fishing gear, fouling boat propellers, and blocking intake pipes of aquaculture facilities

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- Could be confused with *Halidrys siliquosa* (Linnaeus) Lyngbye, 1819, and species of *Cystoseira* C.Agardh, 1820
- Growth rates under optimal conditions around 2–4 cm per day, high fecundity

DISTRIBUTION

Not present in the Republic of the Marshall Islands

Native range Japan, China, Korea

Non-indigenous range Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK, Canada, Mexico, USA Pacific Northeast, Hawai'i

CREDITS AND REFERENCES (click reference for more information)

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References [Peaucelle and Couder \(2016\)](#), [Manson \(2008\)](#), [Norton \(1977\)](#), [Josefsson and Jansson \(2011\)](#)