

# Carpet Sea Squirt

## *Didemnum vexillum*

This invasive non-native species was first recorded in Kent on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011 in the lower shore zone at Seasalter. Not only was this the first sighting for Kent but nationally this was the first record of *D. vex* outside of a harbour or marina environment.

*D. vex* is a very aggressive invader capable of smothering native species, modifying habitats and fouling man-made structures.

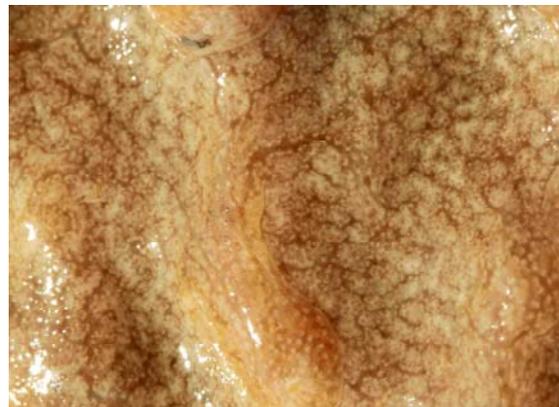
It can settle in flat layers or can extend lobes when attached under boulders or on man-made structures. The surface feels "leathery" rather than "slimy" and has a veined marble appearance.

The following photos may help with ID. I took all these photos between Seasalter and Minnis Bay. They show typical appearance and attachment modes seen so far in Kent.

Also included are photos of a couple of native species which are abundant locally and may be mistaken for *D.vex*.

This species has been named "Marine Vomit"! When you see your first specimen you will understand why!

## *Didemnum vexillum*





Beware !  
Native species which look similar are:

*Botrylloides leachi*



*Halichondria panicea*

