

## **MFA Mussel Restoration Project – May 2021 Update**

### **Aquaculture on-water days**

The MFA hosted a week of aquaculture on-water days, where Jonathan Large took out hundreds of high school kids to show them different job opportunities relating to the aquaculture industry. Jonathan and Aiden Gane (Marine Farm Management), Dave Taylor (Aquaculture NZ), Kristen Norfield (NMIT), and Emilee gave talks to the students about each of our career paths and different opportunities they might be interested in. On Friday, we took high school students to snorkel the restored mussel beds in Grant Bay and taught them about the restoration we are doing throughout Pelorus Sound.



*Figure 1: Left: Jonathan Large skippering his boat full of high school students. Right: Emilee and a high school class getting ready to snorkel the restored mussel beds.*

### **Surveying for remnant subtidal mussel beds**

A key part of any restoration project is knowing how widespread the current population is. Last year we began this process in Kenepuru Sound by surveying the intertidal shoreline and documenting the abundance and distribution of green-lipped mussels. This month we completed the second part of this process – a subtidal survey of Kenepuru Sound to look for deeper remnant populations. We used a drop camera to complete this survey, which consists of a waterproof camera attached to a long cord and frame which we deployed from a NIWA boat. In total we took 44 drop camera videos across the Sound with a specific emphasis on areas with evidence of historical mussel beds. Ultimately mussels were not seen in any of the recorded footage which, together with the intertidal surveys, confirms that current mussel populations in the Sound are very limited. This information will be useful for our restoration efforts as it provides a baseline so we can measure future populations and know how successful restoration was.



*Figure 2: Left: Trevyn Toone deploying the drop camera in search of remnant subtidal mussel beds. Middle: Deployed float rope covered in blue mussels being eaten starfish. Left: A drop camera image of the seafloor from Kenepuru Sound.*

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](mailto:egol669@aucklanduni.ac.nz)