MUSSEL CONDITION INDEX AND LARVAE MONITORING

Weekly Bulletin

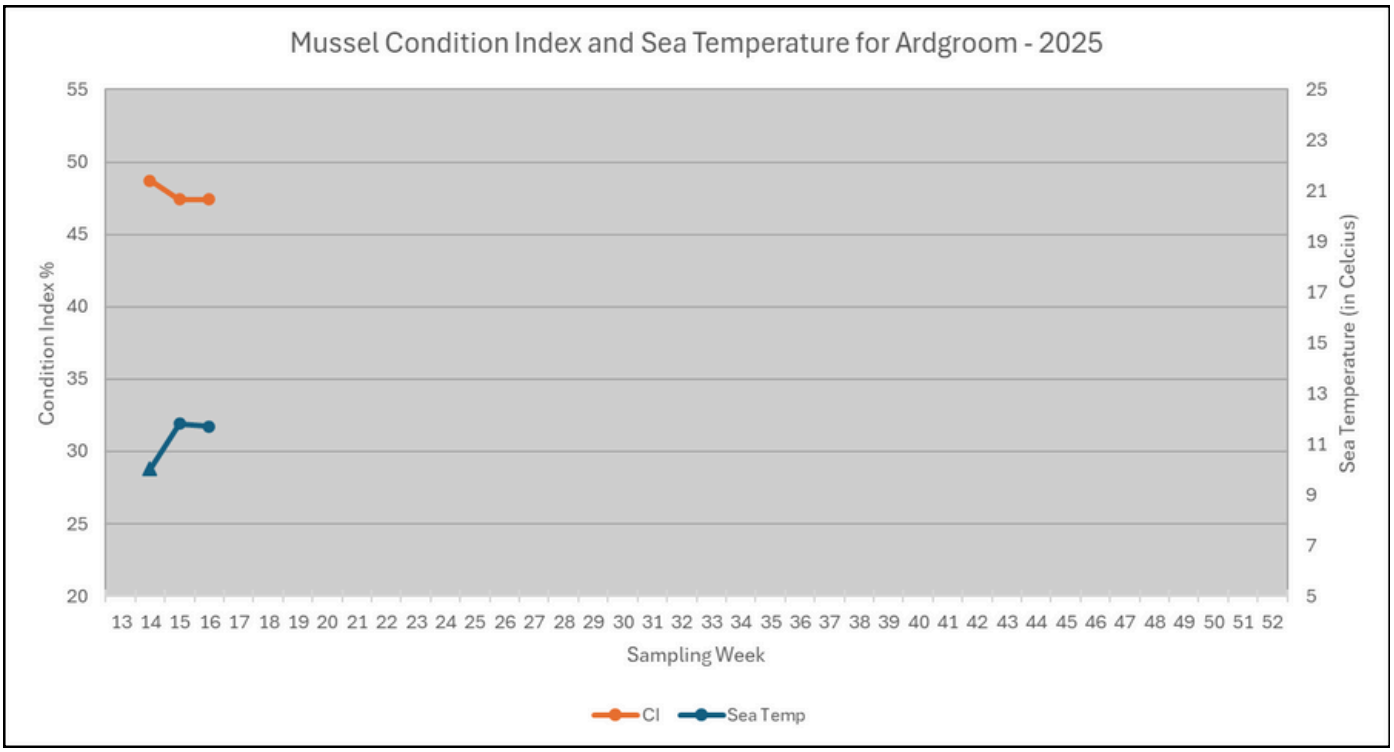
Ardgroom Harbour

Southwest Mussel Larvae sampling

17th April 2025

Week 16 (14/04/2025 to 20/04/2025)

Condition Index (CI) for Ardgroom Harbour



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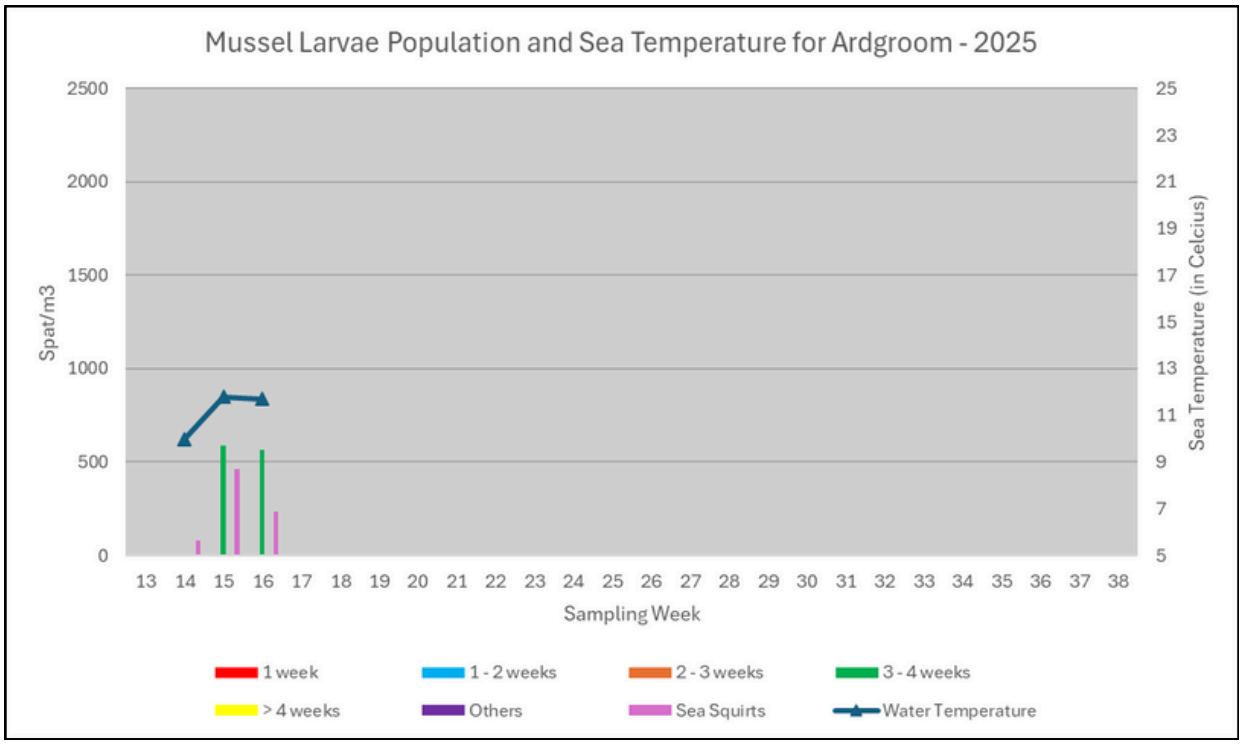
Larvae population evolution for Ardgroom Harbour

For each sample, mussel larvae are classed by age: 1 week old, 1 to 2 weeks old, 2 to 3 weeks old, 3 to 4 weeks old, over 4 weeks old and others (younger or older).



Commentary

The Condition Index (CI) in Ardgroom is stable at 47.4% while the sea temperature has only dropped by 0.1°c (11.7°c), probably due to the sampling time.

As per Week 15, the level of 2 to 4 weeks old larvae for inner Ardgroom is stable at 567 spat/$m^{3,}$ while the sample taken at outer Ardgroom only presented 86 spat/m3 of 1 to 2 weeks old larvae.

Considering the levels observed in the inner Ardgroom sample, it is possible that a primary settlement could happen in the next 2 to 3 weeks.

- Ardgroom inner: the concentration of sea squirts has dropped from Week 15 to 235 individual/m^3. Phaeocystis remains at a high bloom level. The copepods level was moderate, while barnacles and crabs levels were low.
- Ardgroom outer: The concentration of sea squirts for the outer Ardgroom was 166 individuals/m^3 (not in the graph). Again, there is a large bloom of Phaeocystis. The concentration of copepods was high, while barnacles and crabs levels remained low. An unidentified offshore species was also present in the sample.

The phytoplankton concentration was 678,240 cells/litre dominated by Phaeocystis.

Considering the levels of Phaeocystis across the sampling stations and the recent spawning, it would be advisable to limit stress levels on adult mussels.

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