MUSSEL CONDITION INDEX AND LARVAE MONITORING

Weekly Bulletin

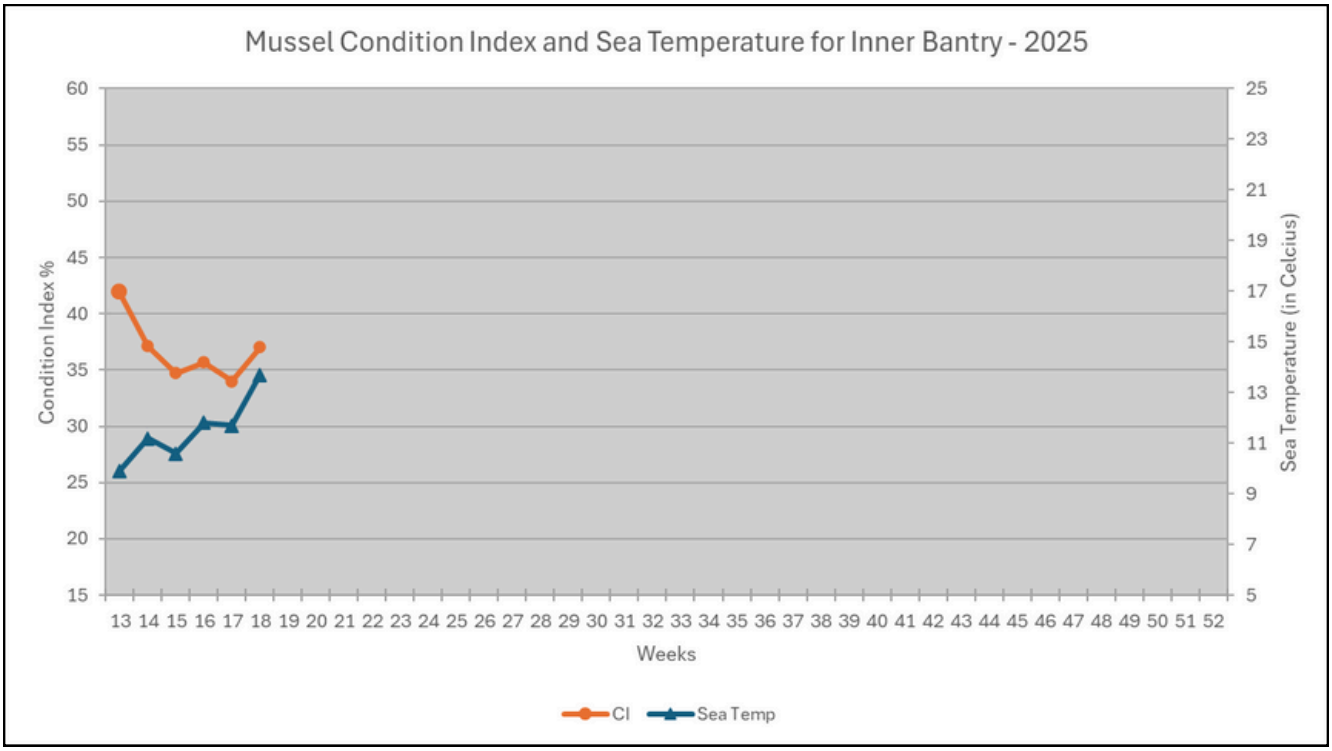
Bantry Bay (North South and NorthChapel)

Southwest Mussel Larvae sampling

2nd May 2025

Week 18 (28/04/2025 to 4/05/2025)

Condition Index (CI) for Inner Bantry



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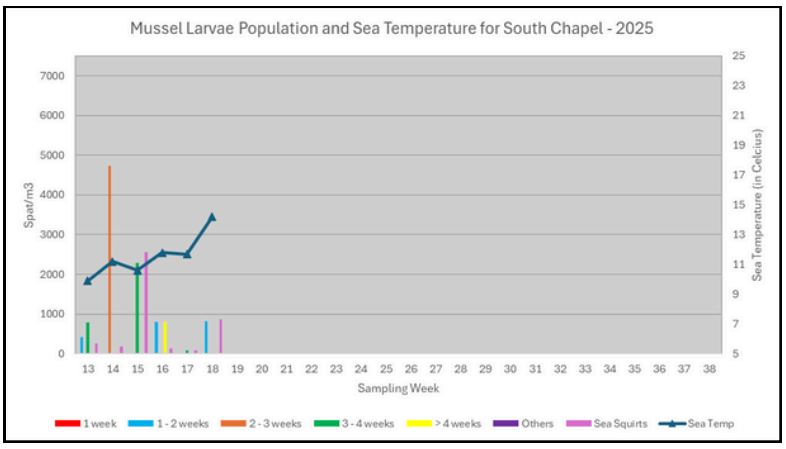
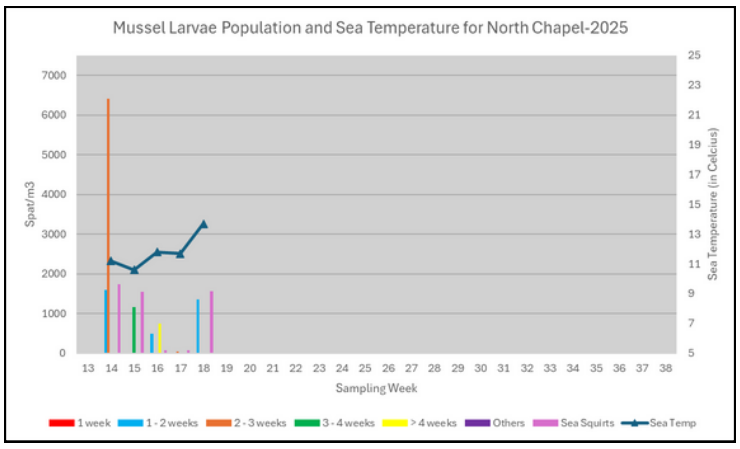
Larvae population evolution for Bantry (South and North Chapel)

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 Bantry increased by 3 % in Week 18 (from 34% to 37%), potentially indicating the end of a spawning period with some level of reconditioning. The sea temperature is significantly up from last week by 2°c (from 11.7°c to 13.7 °c).

Larvae Population:

- South Chapel: the number of larvae has increased from Week 17 to 824 spat/m^3 of 1 to 2 weeks old.
- North Chapel: there has been a significant increase in the larvae number for the North Chapel sampling site: 1357 spat/m^3 of 1 to 2 weeks old larvae.

Both sampling sites do not indicate any other age category, which could indicate that the larvae observed in the samples may not be directly related to the mussels sampled for CI.

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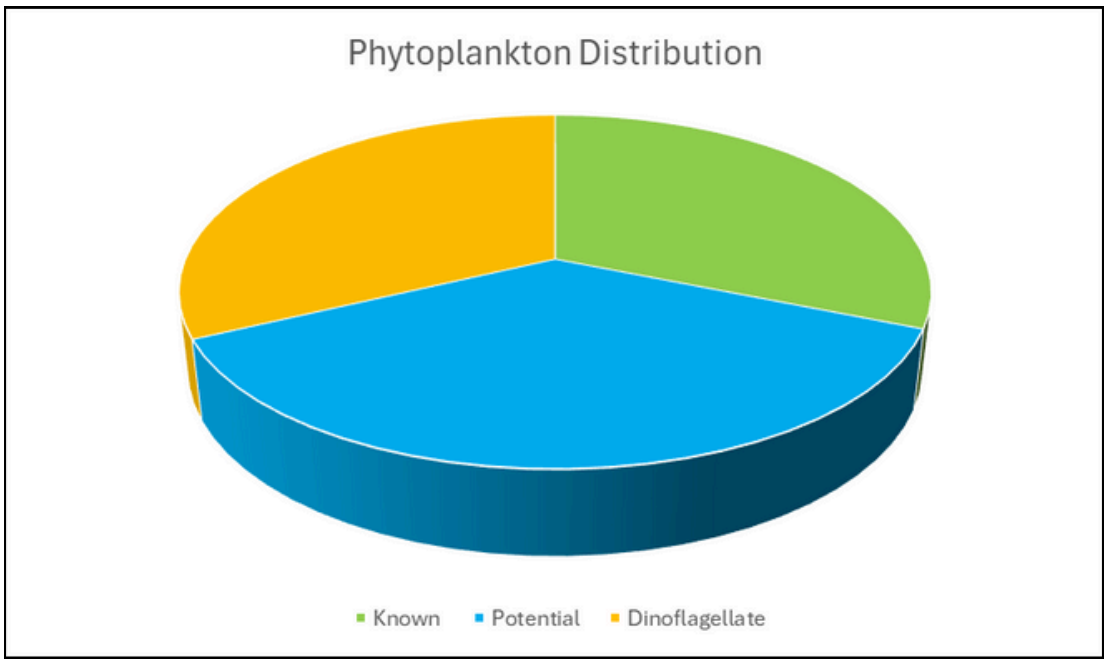
Sample details:

- South Chapel: The concentration of sea squirts sharply increased to 861 individuals/ m^3. Potential eggs were observed in moderate numbers. Copepods and sea matting were also in moderate concentrations. Rhizosolenia, Ceratium,Pseudo nitzschia delicatissima were in moderate quantities. Finally, a low boom of Phaeocystis was present.

- North Chapel: The quantity of sea squirts is surging to 1556 individuals/ m^3 for the North Chapel sampling site. Levels of barnacles and seamatting were low in the sample. Phaeocystis, Pseudo nitzschia delicatissima and Rhizosolenia were all in moderate concentrations.

The phytoplankton level in Bantry has decreased from the previous week (down to 26,400 cells/litre) nearly evenly distributed between the three categories (see graph below).



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