

LONGSPINED SEA URCHIN *CENTROSTEPHANUS RODGERSII*

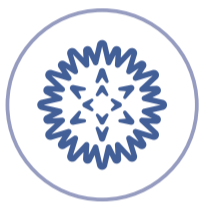
WHAT ARE LONGSPINED SEA URCHINS?

Longspined sea urchins are marine invertebrates with long, hollow spines. Their spines can reach up to 9cm in length and have brown/black hues with a subtle sheen. They consume both macro and microalgae and were first sighted in lutruwita/Tasmania in 1978. Climate change has driven their movement southward in search of warmer waters¹.



Image source: Great Southern Reef Foundation

"THE SINGLE LARGEST IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT TO ROCKY REEF COMMUNITIES IN EASTERN TASMANIA" JOHNSON ET AL. 2011.



20m+

LONGSPINED SEA URCHINS IN TASMANIAN WATERS²



\$50m+

OF ANNUAL ABALONE PRODUCTION AT RISK²



15%

OF TASMANIA'S EAST COAST OCCUPIES URCHIN BARRENS³



150

LESS SPECIES LIVING IN TASMANIAN WATERS⁴



494+

TONNES OF LONGSPINED SEA URCHIN IS FISHED ANNUALLY IN TASMANIA⁵

THE IMPACT

The high numbers of urchins grazing on kelps beds has seen a shift in reef structure from healthy diverse reefs to desolate urchin barrens.

Longspined sea urchins can maintain barrens by moving into a static state and switching their diet from macroalgae to microalgae or drift seaweed. They can also take up amino acids directly from seawater that allows them to persist in harsh environments. There are no significant predators of the urchins to help reduce and maintain their numbers (except people!). If left unchecked, up to 50% of Tasmania's east coast reefs could be subject to urchin barrens in the future³.

DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know, Tasmania has a native shortspined sea urchin that looks very similar to the longspined sea urchin? Click **here**, or scan the QR code to learn how to identify between the species.

OCEAN TO PLATE



Longspined sea urchin is a delicacy both in Australia and internationally. Ask your local seafood supplier whether they sell urchin roe, or forage for it yourself. Search for suppliers, or recipes at **Gotta Love Tassie Seafood** and ask your favourite restaurant or food van if they sell it.

FROM HEALTHY, BIODIVERSE REEFS TO DESOLATE URCHIN BARRENS



Image source: Great Southern Reef Foundation

Image source: IMAS

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



Eat it



Fish for it



Spread the word

If you spot a longspined sea urchin, report it to **centro.enquiries@nre.tas.gov.au**. Make sure to include a GPS location or waypoint in your email.

