

## Pacific oysters: Timeline of key events, status changes, and legislation

| Year                 | Event  | Status/legislation  | Notes  |
|----------------------|--|---|--|
| <a href="#">1890</a> | Pacific oysters introduced to Poole Harbour from France.   | Introduced - aquaculture  | Early private-sector introduction to supplement native stocks. Imports to England continue, with specific controls placed in 1960s.  |
| <b>1920</b>          | First <a href="#">confirmed record</a> of wild Pacific oyster in England.  | Wild settlement   | Essex.   |
| 1960s                | <a href="#">Controls</a> placed on deposits to control imported oyster diseases.   | <a href="#">Sea Fish Industry Act 1962</a>                      | Pacific oysters had suffered from diseases brought in from American stock.   |
| <a href="#">1965</a> | MAFF introduces disease-free oysters from Canada to Britain.   | —   | Government trials to support industry via production of disease-free oyster stock. Pacific oysters already known to be capable of wild breeding in England.  |
| 1967                 | Consolidation of enactments relating to shellfish fisheries.   | <a href="#">Sea Fisheries (Shellfish) Act 1967</a>              | Provides powers to make Orders for shellfish.  |
| <b>1981</b>          | <a href="#">Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981</a> enacted.   | <a href="#">WCA</a> : Pacific oysters 'not ordinarily resident' | Unlike species such as the grey squirrel, Pacific Oyster is not a ' <a href="#">species of special concern</a> '.  |
| <b>1982</b>          | <a href="#">Government issues general licence</a> via WCA 1981 <b>to allow release or escape into the wild of Pacific oyster.</b>  | 'Already resident'  | The WCA 1981 could have prevented such release if the species was considered "not ordinarily resident"; rationale for the general licence for the species was that it was <b>considered "<a href="#">already resident</a>"</b> . Regarded as 'feral'/' <a href="#">naturalised</a> ' by 1990s.   |
| 2001                 | Waddeton Order established.  | <a href="#">The Waddeton Fishery Order 2001</a>                 | Hybrid Regulating Order held by Devon Sea Fisheries Committee (SFC: IFCA predecessor); expands area covered by the <a href="#">1972 Waddeton Court Fishery Order</a> . Shellfish movements to and from Aquaculture Production Businesses are subject to checks regarding non-native species and biosecurity. These checks operate through regulations not listed here.   |
| <b>2011</b>          | Devon and Severn IFCA established.   | <a href="#">Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009</a>              | D&S IFCA succeeds Devon SFC. Increased <b>statutory conservation remit</b> including protection of Marine Conservation Zones, such as the Dart Estuary MCZ. In undertaking fisheries management (including aquaculture), <b>IFCAs must ensure protection of MPA features</b> (also under <a href="#">Habitats Regs</a> ). D&S IFCA <b>Officers are Biosecurity Managers</b> for the Waddeton Order.  |
| 2011                 | Non-native Species Secretariat ( <a href="#">NNSS</a> ) risk assessment undertaken. [Note: no recent update undertaken to reflect evidence of spread from wild populations.] | 'Invasive non-native' (change in terminology under NNSS)        | Risk assessment highlights that <b>eradication is unlikely</b> in many areas, and action by the UK is unlikely to be an option due to potential for settlement from Europe. States that majority of <b>eradication campaigns would themselves result in environmental degradation</b> . In 2024, IFCA/industry collaboration proposed to find suitable control/removal mechanism that <b>supports local environment and thriving, responsible aquaculture</b> .  |
| <b>2022</b>          | Defra sets out Pacific oyster policy:  |   | The Pacific oyster " <i>is currently considered to be <b>established in England south of latitude 52°N</b> and therefore, with current technology, cannot be prevented from establishing in, or be successfully or economically eradicated from, this area</i> ". " <i>South of 52°N, authorisations for farms within 5km of MPAs will continue to be granted only after the regulator has considered the outcome of site based environmental impact assessments. These assessments will take into account the impact of Pacific oysters on the current condition of local MPAs. If Pacific oysters are likely to have an adverse impact on these sites, <b>Defra supports regulators to introduce mitigating authorisation conditions, such as triploidy or monitoring.</b></i> " D&S IFCA and the Fish Health Inspectorate have worked with Natural England on site assessments which show <b>no risk from Pacific oyster farming</b> to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives. |