



Spotted handfish—Installing and assessing new artificial breeding habitat (TAS)

Funding

\$50,000

Project

This project replaces breeding habitat for spotted handfish (*Brachionichthys hirsutus*) that has been destroyed by invasive species.

Spotted handfish are small, colourful, slow-moving fish that ‘walk’ along the riverbed. Adults are typically 7–9 cm long and found only in south-east Tasmania.

The critically endangered species attaches clusters of eggs to semi-rigid substrate like the stalks of kelp and seagrass. The loss of this habitat was identified as one of the primary threats to the spotted handfish in a recent draft recovery plan.

This funding will triple the area of artificial spawning habitat previously deployed, replicating the vital habitat spotted handfish need to reproduce. It will also support the science community in assessing the use and success of the breeding habitat and in monitoring spotted handfish colonies.



Photo credit: Barry D Bruce

Partners

CSIRO’s Oceans and Atmosphere Flagship and the University of Tasmania’s Institute of Marine and Antarctica Studies. Close collaboration will also occur with Marine and Safety Tasmania, which regulates yacht moorings.

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