



HOW TO GUIDE: COLLECTING POSIDONIA AUSTRALIS

The *Posidonia australis* fragments that you will be collecting will be used as donor shoots in the restoration. Healthy *Posidonia australis* is vibrant green, with long, wide leaves growing straight upward from a woody base that runs flat along the seafloor – the rhizome.

POSIDONIA OR ZOSTERA?

Posidonia and *Zostera* are two seagrasses that can be found in the waters around Port Stephens. There are a few key differences in telling the difference between the two, the biggest difference being **LEAF WIDTH**.

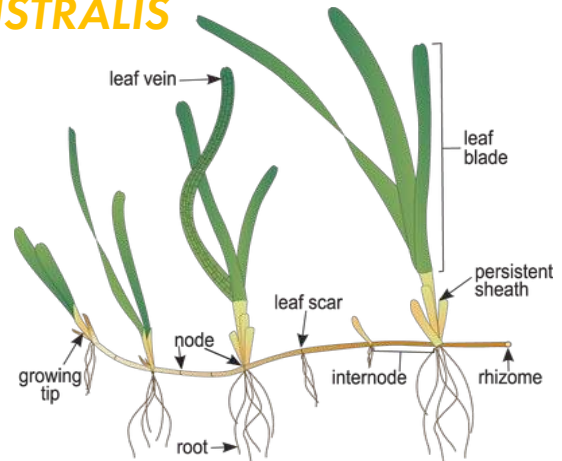


Fig 1. *Posidonia australis* Source: JCU

Posidonia – Strapweed or Broadweed	Zostera – Eelgrass or Ribbonweed
Bright green leaves	Olive green/yellow/brown leaves
Thick, stiff, strap-like leaves	Soft, flexible leaves
Wide leaf (1cm-1.5cm – a fingers width)	Narrow leaf (0.1cm-0.5cm wide)
Long leaf (30cm-60cm)	Shorter leaf (1cm-50cm)
Leaves in bundles of 1-4	Leaves in bundles of 4-6
Leaf tip square/ragged	Leaf tip rounded
Thick, woody rhizome	Slender rhizome



Fig 2. *Zostera* leaf (left), *Posidonia australis* leaf (right) Source: Dave Briskham

DEAD OR ALIVE?

When *Posidonia australis* dies, it loses the vivid green colour and turns a muddy brown. We cannot replant dead *Posidonia* so it's best to leave it on the beach.



Fig 3: Living *Posidonia* on the left, dead *Posidonia* on the right.



RHIZOME OR NO RHIZOME?

We can only replant *Posidonia* that is still attached to its rhizome: the part that is brown and woody and is usually quite stiff. If the leaves are not attached to a rhizome then you should leave it on the beach.

WHEN IS BEST TO GO STORM SQUADDING?

The best conditions to comb the beach for fresh fragments are just **after** windy days or storm events that may cause rough coastal conditions where *Posidonia* will break away from its meadow. It is best to time your collection just after a morning high tide starts to recede, leaving the strands of broken *Posidonia* washed up on the beach.

WHERE IS BEST TO COLLECT POSIDONIA AUSTRALIS?

The best location to go depend on which way the wind is blowing. Windward side of bays and beaches will be where the broken *Posidonia* fragments washes ashore.

Hotspots (weather dependant) are:

- Salamander Bay
- Corlette Beach
- Soldiers Point
- Pindimar South and Upper Pindimar

DO I NEED TO BRING ANYTHING WHEN I GO OUT TO COLLECT?

Yes! It's a good idea to bring several things:

- A damp bag/container to carry collected fragments
- A bucket in the car to put your fragment bag in
- Gardening gloves can be handy when fossicking through wrack

A good bag option for collecting is a pale coloured plastic with a small amount of water in the bottom or a wet canvas bag, which prevents the *Posidonia* from the heat and stops it from drying out.

SAFETY!

There are many things that also wash up on beach that may sting, bite or cut, so it is a good idea to be aware of this when beachcombing. Using common sense and wearing a pair of gardening gloves if you are sorting through wrack can reduce most of these hazards.

WHAT DO I DO WITH THE COLLECTED POSIDONIA?

You can drop off your collected fragments to the Anchorage Marina - the collection area is best entered along the eastern boardwalk from Corlette Beach. If you have time to provide some data just follow the instructions in the datasheets near the collection station. If you don't have time, that's perfectly fine! Any healthy fragments will help us in our restoration efforts.

**HAPPY STORM SQUADDING! THANK YOU FOR HELPING US RESTORE
POSIDONIA AUSTRALIS IN OUR BEAUTIFUL BLUE BACKYARD**

This Project has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust

