**Mycale grandis** Gray, 1867

The orange key-hole sponge *Mycale grandis* is an introduced sponge that is considered invasive and a potential threat to corals and reefs in Hawaiian waters. *M. grandis* is native to the Australasia-Pacific Region and is present on the main Hawaiian Islands. It is most likely to have been introduced unintentionally as a fouling organism on ship hulls. *M. grandis* is generally restricted to shallow-water fouling communities in major harbours with associated disturbed habitats.

The orange-red colouring is both internal and external. It can grow as thickly encrusting to lobate-massive cushions up to 1 metre diameter and 0.5m thick or larger. The upper surfaces of large sponges show large ostia or "keyholes", hence the common name. The sponge’s surface is uneven. The texture is fibrous and firm but compressible, and can be torn easily. The interior is cavernous, and often packed with small ophiuroids (*Ophiactis cf. savignyi*) (Eldredge and Smith 2001).

*M. grandis* was first observed in Kane‘ohe‘ohe Bay, in the mid 1990s, by 2004 it was observed overgrowing the finger coral *Porites compressa* and the ‘Near Threatened (NT)’ rice coral *Montipora capitata*, the two dominant reef-forming coral species (Coles & Bolick 2006). Its ecological impacts have not been studied but there are concerns that this aggressive sponge could compete for space with native corals and sponge species of Kane‘ohe‘ohe Bay and eventually become dominant (Coles & Bolick 2007).

**References:**
