
The COFFS COAST
Advocate

Jelly balls normal: scientist

162 words

4 November 2008

Coffs Coast Advocate

Main

7

English

Copyright 2008 APN Newspapers Pty Ltd. All Rights Reserved

SCIENTISTS say that strange “jelly balls” washing up on Coffs Coast beaches pose no threat to swimmers, and may actually play a role in fighting climate change.

Populations of the 10-centimetre long gelatinous creature, known as a salp, have increased tenfold over the past 70 years, according to a marine survey conducted by the University of New South Wales and the CSIRO.

The barrel-shaped salps, which resemble jellyfish, have been washing up in increasing numbers on NSW beaches, UNSW professor Iain **Suthers** said.

“The appearance of these animals is seasonal, but this spring their abundance seems to be enhanced by a strong Eastern Australian Current,” Prof **Suthers** said.

“This brings more nutrients to the surface waters for the algae that the salps like to eat,” Prof **Suthers** said.

Those algae absorb carbon, which is then taken out of the environment by the salps.

Document COFFS00020081103e4b40005o