Caulerpa alternans  
Womersley

Techniques needed

Classification

Phylum: Chlorophyta; Order: Bryopsidales; Family: Caulerpaceae

*Descriptive name

mini herring-bone Caulerpa

Features

1. plant green to only **100mm tall**
2. upright stalks arise from a **very slender, naked** horizontal runner
3. ultimate branches (ramuli) are **cylindrical** (terete) and **alternate** along the stalks

Variations

the ramuli may be curved upwards and taper

Special requirements

1. view the tiny, **cylindrical** side branches (ramuli) that **alternate** in one flat surface along 2 sides of upright branches (axes)
2. the ramuli are only 1.5-2.5mm long, and up to **0.5mm wide**

Occurrences

apparently rare, in Spencer and St Vincent gulfs, and Pt Phillip Heads Victoria

Usual Habitat

a deep water species (13-40m)

Similar Species

distinctive because of its small size and narrow ramuli

Description in the Benthic Flora

Part I, pages 256-257, 259

Details of Anatomy

1,2. Two magnifications of a preserved (bleached) and colourised specimen of Caulerpa alternans (A33416), from Troubridge Point off Edithburgh, S. Australia, showing the alternating narrow ramuli in two rows, widely spaced in some parts of the branch.

* Descriptive names are inventions to aid identification, and are not commonly used

“Algae Revealed” R N Baldock, S Australian State Herbarium, August 2005
Caulerpa alternans Womersley, (A33416), from Troubridge Point off Edithburgh, S. Australia

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