



MACRO  
PLANT



## Techniques needed and plant shape

## Classification

Phylum: Chlorophyta; Order: Bryopsidales; Family: Caulerpaceae

## \*Descriptive name

scalpel caulerpa; §serrated caulerpa

## Features

1. plant dark green, 40-200mm tall
2. upright branches arise from a *slender, naked* runner
3. ultimate branches (ramuli) *flat, widest* where they attach, almost *touching* at the base, *alternate* along 2 sides of upright branches

## Variations

slender (calm water) and robust (rough water) forms exist. Robust forms have broad, short ramuli

## Special requirements



1. ultimate flat branches (ramuli) are 2-4mm long and 1-5mm across
2. view the scalpel-shaped ramuli (curved on *both sides*) ending *abruptly* in a sharp *point*

## Occurrences

from near Perth, W. Australia to Victoria and Tasmania

## Usual Habitat

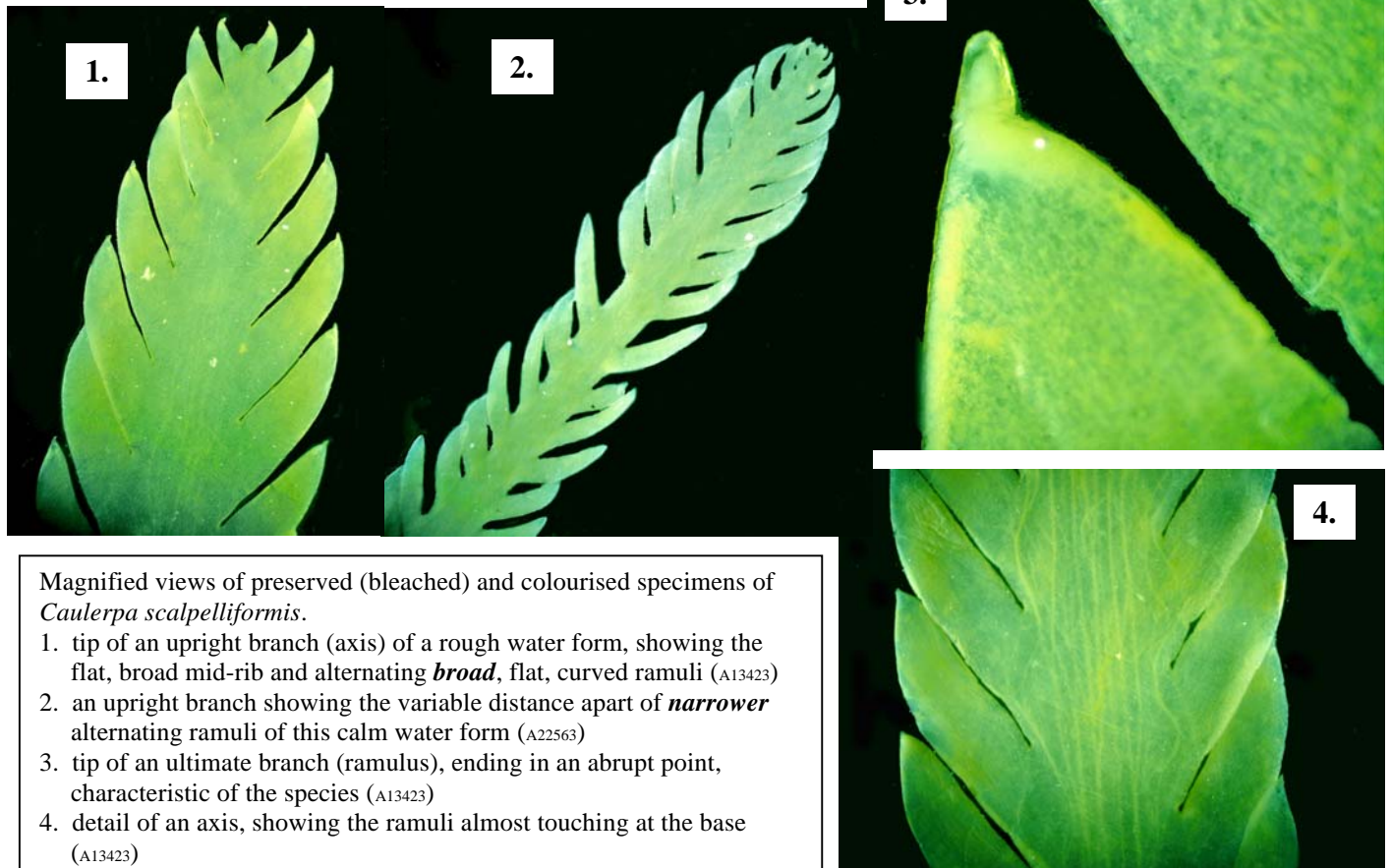
in shallow water

## Similar Species

1. calm water forms approach *Caulerpa distichophylla*, but this species has ramuli that arise *oppositely* along the axes
2. pieces may superficially look like *Caulerpa ellistoniae*, but that species has axes that branch several times over, and the ramuli are *straight* on the bottom edge, with no separate terminal point

Description in the Benthic Flora Part I, pages 257-259

## Details of Anatomy



Magnified views of preserved (bleached) and colourised specimens of *Caulerpa scalpelliformis*.

1. tip of an upright branch (axis) of a rough water form, showing the flat, broad mid-rib and alternating *broad, flat, curved* ramuli (A13423)
2. an upright branch showing the variable distance apart of *narrower* alternating ramuli of this calm water form (A22563)
3. tip of an ultimate branch (ramulus), ending in an abrupt point, characteristic of the species (A13423)
4. detail of an axis, showing the ramuli almost touching at the base (A13423)

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

§ name used in Edgar, G. *Australian Marine Life, 2nd Ed.* (2008)

“Algae Revealed” R N Baldock, S Australian State Herbarium, August 2005



Two magnifications of  
*Caulerpa scalpelliformis* (R.  
Brown ex Turner) C. Agardh  
(A46806), a narrow, calm water  
form from Coffin Bay, S.  
Australia

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