Techniques needed

Classification
Phylum: Chlorophyta; Order: Bryopsidales; Family: Codiaceae

*Descriptive name
narrow-forked velvet-weed

Features
plants yellow green, to 250mm tall branches rubbery, with velvety surface, cylindrical, ≈5mm in diameter, tapering towards the tips, forked many times

Variations
plants may be eroded to a thick base that regenerates narrower upper parts

Special requirements
shave off or tease out a few of the microscopic, flask-shaped outer structures (utricles) and view them under the microscope. Utricles club-shaped, 290-960μm long and 130-520μm in diameter, a unique internal projection in the rounded tips, and paired threads basally with an internal constriction (plug)

Occurrences
southern W Australia to Victoria

Usual Habitat
on rock below low water level to 11m deep on coasts of moderate wave energy

Similar Species
several species with forked branching, especially Codium australicum. Microscopic investigation of the utricles is needed to separate the species.

Description in the Benthic Flora
Part I, pages 236-239

Details of Anatomy

Preserved (bleached) specimens of Codium muelleri (A19874) viewed microscopically
1. single utricle showing the unique internal projection of the thickened end wall (arrowed) and basal threads with a plug (pl) relatively distant from the utricle base
2. narrow utricle highlighting the in-growing end wall

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

“Algae Revealed” R N Baldock, S Australian State Herbarium, July 2003
3. *Codium muelleri* Kützing, (A35176) from Robe, S. Australia with a thickened, perennial base and narrow highly-branched upper parts

4. utricles from a shaving of the plant surface, using phase contrast microscope imaging to highlight the thickened end walls of utricles (A19874)

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