

Techniques needed and plant shape

Classification

Phylum: Chlorophyta; Order: Bryopsidales; Family: Caulerpaceae

*Descriptive name

fluffy caulerpa; §bushy caulerpa

Features



1. plant dark green, 100-300mm tall
2. upright branches (axes) arise from a *coarse*, runner, covered with *spines*
3. short side branches arising *radially* from axes are covered with *unbranched* cylindrical, ultimate branches (ramuli), giving the plant a fluffy appearance

Variations

1. upright branches (axes) are occasionally branched
2. the ultimate branches (ramuli) may be forked near their tips
3. ramuli may lie along the short side axes *in 2 rows* rather than irregularly

Special requirements

1. view microscopically the ultimate branches (ramuli), 2-10mm long and usually arranged *irregularly* along thin, short, side branches
2. view the *1-3* microscopic spines on ramuli tips

Occurrences

from SW W. Australia to Victoria and Tasmania

Usual Habitat

common in rock pools, to 35m deep, on rough water coasts

Similar Species

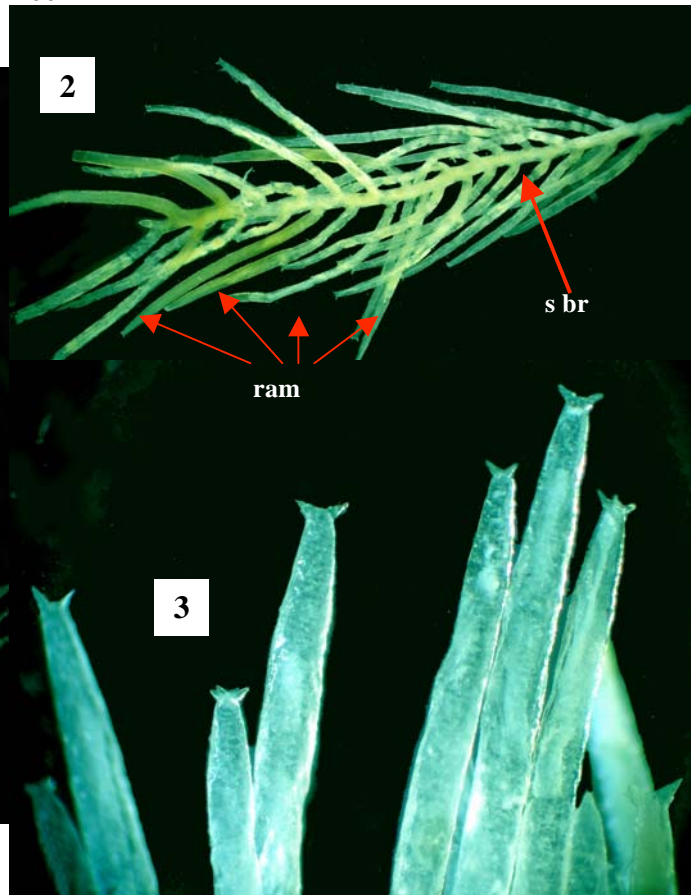
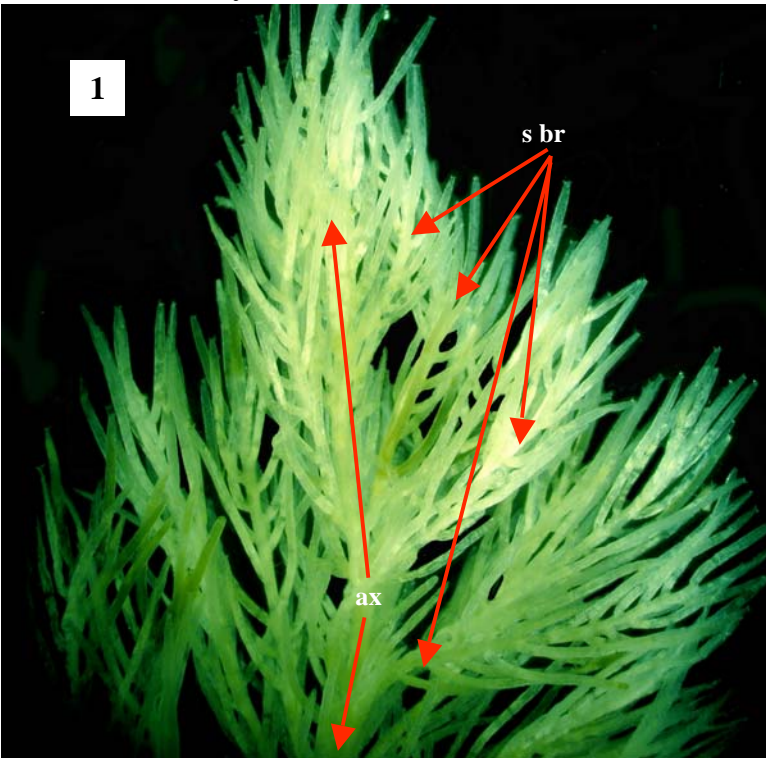


1. *Caulerpa cliftonii*, but in that species the runner is *naked* and ramuli are branched *1-3 times* a short distance from the axis.
2. *Caulerpa flexilis*, but in that species side branches occur in *2 rows*.

Description in the Benthic Flora

Part I, pages 261, 263, 265-266

Details of Anatomy



Magnified views of a preserved (bleached) and coloured specimen of *Caulerpa obscura* (A5704) from Kangaroo I., S. Australia.

1. near the tip of an upright branch (axis, *ax*) showing the radially arranged, short side branches (*s br*)
2. a detached, short, side branch, with simple ultimate branches (ramuli, *ram*) arranged radially
3. highly magnified view of ramuli tips, showing the 2 and 3 spines or points, characteristic of the species

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, June 2005



Two magnifications of *Caulerpa obscura* Sonder (A13357), showing the coarse runner covered with tiny spines and upright branches (axes) clothed in short side branches densely covered with ultimate branches (ramuli)

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