

## Killer algae

### *Caulerpa taxifolia*

#### Description

Widely used as a decorative aquarium plant in the 1980s and was first observed in the Mediterranean Sea in 1984.

#### Habit

Light green macroalgae with upright leaf-like fronds arising from creeping stolons.

#### Leaves

Feather-like "leaf blades" called fronds which have a relatively wide central axis (rachis) from which grow many pinnules. Primary fronds grow directly on the stolons at regularly spaced intervals; may be quite short or even absent in shallow water, becoming long in deeper water in low light. Primary fronds are 2-15 cm long. Pinnules are up to 1 cm long, number 4-7 per cm



along each side of the frond axis, usually upcurved and tapering at the ends.

### **Stems**

Stolons bear the fronds and the rhizoids. Stolon length tends to be around 220 mm

### **Flowers**

### **Fruits and Seeds**

### **Habitat**

Native to the tropical oceans and seas of the world including Australia, Brazil, Ceylon, Indonesia, Philippines, Tanzania and Vietnam. Found on a wide variety of substrates from rock, sand and mud to sea grasses. Usually at a depth of 3-35 m, but has been recorded at depths down to 100 meters.

### **Reproduction**

Vegetatively via stolons or fragments.

### **Similar**

### **Monitoring and Rapid Response**

Covering colonies with black PVC plastic was found to be reasonable successful in Croatia. The use of a suction pump to remove all fragments has also shown moderate success.

### **Credits**

The information provided in this factsheet was gathered from the Global Invasive Species Database and The University of Florida's Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants. Individual species images that appear with a number in a black box are courtesy of the Bugwood.org network (<http://www.invasive.org>). Individual photo author credits may not be included due to the small display size of the images and subsequent difficulty of reading the provided text. All other images appear courtesy of Google (<http://images.google.com>).