

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

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