

# 🚩 Your Eyes Can Help Find *Caulerpa* Invasions!

We're counting on you to find the next invasion of the nonnative aquarium seaweed *Caulerpa taxifolia*. Watch for it!

*Caulerpa taxifolia* is one of nine saltwater aquarium *Caulerpa* species banned in California because of the threat it poses to the marine environment. In the Mediterranean Sea, *Caulerpa* has invaded over 30,000 acres of marine habitat after an accidental release from a public aquarium. It took six years and cost \$7 million to eradicate it from two places in California where it was released from aquariums into the wild.

When *Caulerpa* gets into our coastal waters, its rapid, dense growth can overwhelm and displace native marine life. Early detection increases the likelihood of successful eradication. The help of SCUBA divers is critical to finding new infestations of *Caulerpa*.



Identify *Caulerpa taxifolia* by its bright green color, feather-like fronds, and long, horizontal runners. *Caulerpa* does NOT float and is most likely to be found on the seafloor, rather than on docks, boats, seawalls, or beaches.

## How Divers Can Help:

- Learn to recognize *Caulerpa*.
- Watch for it on all saltwater dives (oceans, harbors, bays).
- Report it, if found.
  - Note the location, depth, and patch size.
  - Record the location with a GPS if available.
  - Take a photo if possible.
  - Otherwise, collect a small piece and press it flat in newspaper (be careful- even a 1-mm piece can start a new infestation).

Report sightings to [www.sccat.net](http://www.sccat.net) or CDFG at 858-467-4218. To learn more about *Caulerpa*, visit [www.sccat.net](http://www.sccat.net)

