

# Exotic Caulerpa

Exotic Caulerpa is an invasive seaweed that colonises the seabed by forming large dense mats, killing our native seaweeds that many of our kaimoana, like snapper and crayfish, feed off.

This seaweed was first found at Aotea Great Barrier Island in 2021.

Exotic Caulerpa is easy to spread and hard to remove. A small fragment of the plant caught up in netting or on an anchor and released in another location is more than enough to help this invasive plant spread further.

## Exotic caulerpa seaweeds in New Zealand

Exotic caulerpa seaweeds have been found in waters at Great Barrier Island (Aotea), Great Mercury Island (Ahuahu), Te Rāwhiti Inlet in the Bay of Islands, Kawau Island, and Waiheke Island in the Hauraki Gulf. These exotic (from overseas) seaweeds can spread rapidly and could affect native species. Find out about them and what you can do to stop the spread.

## What can you do?

Our best tool against exotic Caulerpa is awareness, familiarise yourself with what it looks like and share this knowledge with friends and family.

Check your fishing and boating equipment for any pieces of Caulerpa that may have been caught up. If it looks like Caulerpa, treat it as Caulerpa, bag it, record the location, and take it home to dispose of it in the bin or compost, report the location to MPI

If you believe you have seen exotic Caulerpa (either in the water, or washed up on the beach, do not try and remove it as this can help spread it, take a photo if you can, note its location and report it – Phone 0800 80 99 66 or online at <https://report.mpi.govt.nz/pest/>

## Removal methods

### REMOVE, REDUCE, ELIMINATE

Work has included placing legal controls on risk activities (including fishing and anchoring) and widespread campaigns involving local communities, mana whenua, regional councils and others to educate people about Caulerpa.

**For full information go to:** [www.biosecurity.govt.nz/caulerpa](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/caulerpa)

**Video:** How to identify and report exotic Caulerpa  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrnyTVFKFrw>

**other information:**

[Caulerpa DL flyer for all areas](#) [PDF, 1.6 MB]

[Caulerpa ID guide for divers and other ocean users](#) [PDF, 3.7 MB]