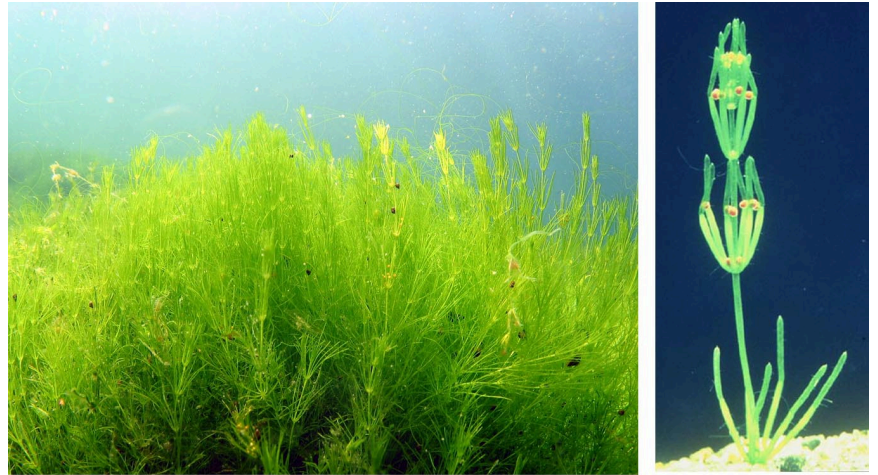


# Charophyte species

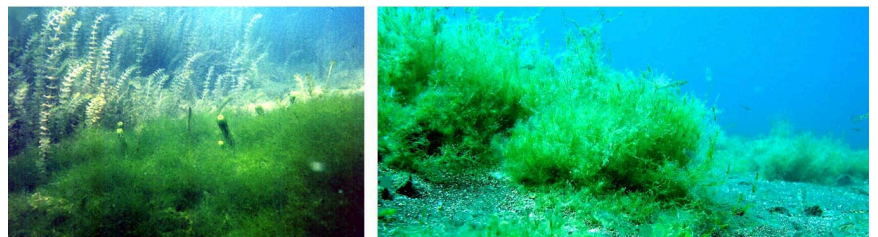
## Description

- Highly developed macroalgae, which lack true leaves and stems (no vascular tissue).
- The 'stems' are single celled and are sometimes enclosed by another layer of cells (two species of *Chara* only).
- The main 'stem' of charophytes bears whorls of branchlets, which are clustered at regularly spaced intervals.
- Some species of *Chara* are easily identifiable by the strong musky smell.
- Most are bright green in colour.
- Can form 'meadows' across the bed of lakes to depth exceeding 20m. (LakeSPI charophyte meadows = >75% cover of charophytes)



## Similar species

Not to be confused with Milfoil species or short stunted forms of *Ceratophyllum demersum*.



## Presence in New Zealand

Widespread throughout New Zealand.

## Management Value

Charophyte species have been identified as key submerged plant indicators for the assessment of lake ecological condition using LakeSPI. Charophyte meadows (>75% cover of charophytes) are also recognised in LakeSPI as providing additional value to the indicator system.

## Included Species

Includes all species of *Nitella* and *Chara*. Including:

*Chara australis*  
*Chara fibrosa*  
*Chara globularis*  
*Nitella* sp. aff. *cristata*  
*Nitella psuedoflabellata*  
*Nitella stuartii*  
*Nitella hyalina*  
*Nitella claytonii*