At last a book that clearly describes algae and aquatic plants of south-western Australia. A simple key guides you to information about each species, which is shown in full colour as it appears in a waterway, and in close up or microscopic detail to aid identification. Then taxonomic and ecological information, together with environmental and health implications of the plant, are clearly set out in a quick and easy-to-read format.
This book is designed to help people without any previous knowledge, identify plants and algae and distinguish them from other substances in a wetland or estuary. The book is set out primarily in a visual format (see overleaf) with brief notes on the environmental and health implications of the plant, where it grows (Habitat) and what it looks like (Habit), some microscopic features that might help you identify it, its taxonomic classification and a few notes of interest under “Fascinating Facts”. There are also guidelines on how to collect, preserve, store and identify plants and algae; an itemised reference list including books journal article and webpages for each plant/group for people seeking further information; and a glossary of technical terms.

The book is set out in four sections (Aquatic Plants, Macroalgae, Scums and Water Colour) which can be rapidly accessed by a simple key at the beginning of the book. The “Stick Test” (see overleaf) asks you to pull out the plant, algae or substance out of the wetland with a stick (no getting wet or touching toxic substances) and from its appearance on the stick, described with photographs, you are directed to one of the four sections. A further key at the beginning of each section enables identification of the plant. Bright symbols on the photographic page (eg Toxic: skull and crossbones) indicate whether the plant is harmful or healthy, and what role they play in the ecology of the wetland. The book is restricted to plants found in the open water, not weeds and emergent plants in the fringing vegetation, but also includes common substances in the water (eg tannin-staining, iron bacteria, oil films, foam).

The book is designed as a field guide. It is small (A5 size), approx 100 pages and is spiral bound. It has a laminated cover and waterproof pages.

The book is designed for anyone interested in algae and aquatic plants... water managers, government agencies, technical officers, primary or high school students and teachers, university lecturers and students, community groups, conservation groups, wetland enthusiasts.

Many of the species in the book are found throughout Australia and some are cosmopolitan, making this book of value to anyone interested in wetland plants, not just within the geographical confines of south-western Australia.

Algae and aquatic plants included:

1. Aquatic Plants: Lemna, Azolla, Salvinia, Eichhornia, Myriophyllum, Callitriche, Halophila, Potamogeton, Triglochin, Vallisneria, Ruppia, Lepilaena

2. Macroalgae: Spirogyra, Sirogonium, Zygnema, Mougeotia, Oedogonium, Chaetomorpha, Rhizoclonium, Cladophora, Lyngbya, Scytonema, Enteromorpha, Compsopogon, Gracilaria, Ulva, Charophytes

3. Scums: Anabaena, Microcystis, Nodularia, Oscillatoria, Trichodesmium, Euglenophytes, Criscophaera, Botryococcus, Algae-related scum, Iron bacteria/staining, Oil, Foam, Pollen

4. Colour: Phytoplankton, Cylindrospermopsis, Diatoms, Dinoflagellates, Tannins, Turbidity

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