

# Nitella hyalina

## COMMON NAME

Stonewort

## FAMILY

Characeae

## AUTHORITY

*Nitella hyalina* (DC.) Ag.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Non-vascular – Native

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Small usually low growing plant with pom-poms of many branched stems up the main stem.

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North, South and Chatham Islands. Widespread globally.

## HABITAT

Shallow zone of lakes, in swamps and slow flowing waters.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Aquatic, submerged, macro-algae. Small (0.1-0.4 m) compact plant, often with 'pom-poms' of forked branchlet whorls along the central stems, which are anchored in the sediment by colourless rhizoids. Each whorl comprises two tiers of branchlets, with shorter branches in the bottom tier. Two cells beyond the last fork include a terminal, small, conical end cell. Stem and branchlets are comprised of strings of single cells that are easily punctured. Plant is monoecious, with antheridia and oogonia on the same plant, usually located together on terminal branchlets and usually covered by heavy mucus present on rounded, terminal fertile branches.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Can resemble *Nitella pseudoflabellata*, *N. subtilissima* and *N. stuartii*, but is distinguished by the lower tier of shorter branchlets at each whorl.

## FRUITING

Monoecious plant Oospores are dun to chestnut brown, laterally compressed, between 330 and 450 µm in length, with low spiral ridges and a fibrous membrane surface.

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Fragments or oospores.

## ETYMOLOGY

**hyalina:** Without colour

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Broady, P.A.; Flint, E.A.; Nelson, W.A.; Cassie Cooper, V.; de Winton, M.D.; Novis P.M. Chapter 23 Twenty –Three :Phyla Chlorophyta and Charophyta (Green Algae). In: New Zealand Inventory of Biodiversity (Volume 3), Gordon, D.P. (Ed), Canterbury University Press, 616pp.

Casanova, M.T.; de Winton, M.D.; Karol, K.G.; Clayton J.S. (2007). *Nitella hookeri* A. Braun (Characeae, Charophyceae) in New Zealand and Australia: implications for endemism, speciation and biogeography. *Charophytes* (1): 2-18

de Winton, M.D.; Dugdale, A.M.; Clayton, J.S. (2007). An identification key for oospores of the extant charophytes of New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany*:463-476

Wood RD, Mason R 1977. Characeae of New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 15: 87-180.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/nitella-hyalina/>

