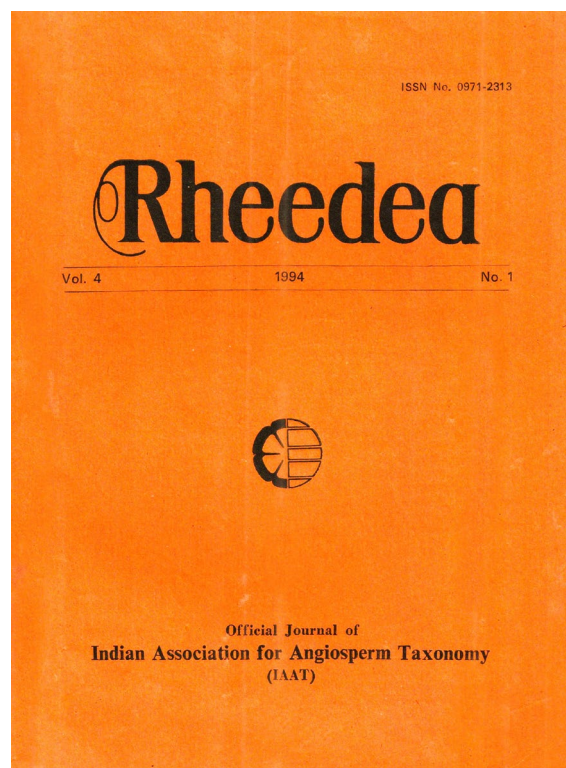




Halophila ovalis (R.Br.) Hook.f. subsp. *ramamurthiana* Ravik. & Ganes. from the West Coast of India: a new record

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Halophila ovalis (R. Br.) Hook. f. subsp. *ramamurthiana*
Ravik. & Ganes. from the West Coast of India:
a new record

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Abstract

Halophila ovalis (R. Br.) Hook. f. subsp. *ramamurthiana* Ravikumar & Ganesan (Hydrocharitaceae) recorded for the first time from Gujarat, West Cost of India.

Halophila ovalis (R. Br.) Hook. f. is a widely distributed sea-grass species occurring along the coast of East Africa and Madagascar through the entire Indian Ocean and Red sea through Malesia to Australia and from Tasmania to Japan (Hartog, 1959) and displaying wide - ranging morphological variability. Recently, Ravikumar and Ganesan (1990) described a new subspecies viz. subsp. *ramamurthiana* from the Coromandel coast of India.

The two taxa can easily be distinguished as follows:

1. Lamina obovate-spathulate, oblong-elliptic or rarely linear, rounded or obtuse at apex, symmetrically truncate or cuneate at base, cross veins 10—25 pairs, often forked; spathal bracts acute at apex; fruits 20—30 seeded.....subsp. *ovalis*
1. Lamina oblong, rarely elliptic, acute at apex, assymmetrically cuneate or attenuate at base, cross veins 7—16 pairs, rarely forked; spathal bracts acuminate or mucronate at apex; fruits 6—18 seeded.....subsp. *ramamurthiana*

During our explorations in the mangrove creeks of Gujarat, we collected this taxon from Somnath which forms the first record of this taxon from the Malabar coast of India, where it sets flowers and fruits during May - September. It was found growing closely associated with its allied subspecies *ovalis* and a green filamentous alga with calcareous depositions.

Specimens examined: Somnath near Veraval, Gujarat, Kothari 170981 (BSI); Kothari 159809A (BSI, MH).

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