



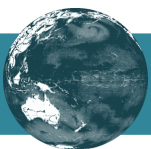
# Halophila seagrass

*Halophila stipulacea* (Forsskål) Ascherson, 1867

## KEY FEATURES



- Tropical marine plant with elliptical to oblong blades, 2–6 cm long, translucent pale green to dark green in life
- Pairs of blades extend from each rhizome node and are covered at the base by folded, elliptical leaf scales, 2–10 mm wide, 6–18 mm long; margins at the apex are serrated
- Rhizomes, 0.5–2 cm diameter, creeping and branched with a single root present at each node
- Blade and rhizome characteristics vary by depth
- Grows in sublittoral sediments on sand, mud, and coral rubble
- Tolerates a wide range of salinities



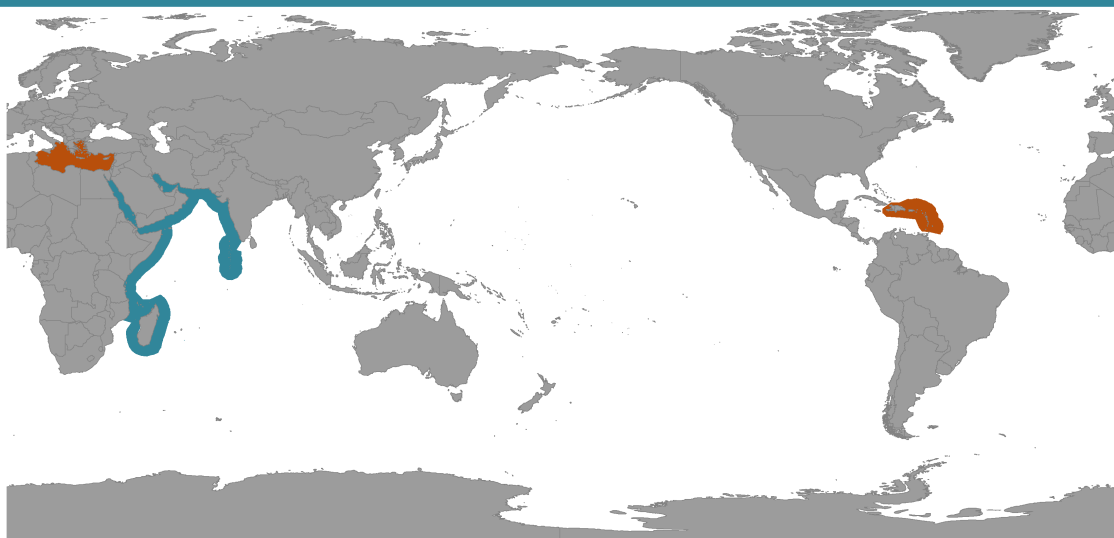
## PATHWAY

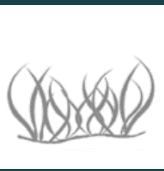
✓ ballast water

✓ biofouling

✓ aquaculture transfer

Native  
Cryptogenic  
Non-indigenous





# Halophila seagrass

REPUBLIC OF THE  
MARSHALL ISLANDS

*Halophila stipulacea* (Forsskål) Ascherson, 1867

## IMPACTS



Environmental  
impacts

Can outcompete native seagrasses and is included in the 100 worst alien species in Europe. Canopy heights are much lower than native seagrasses. Can partially overgrow coral reefs, causing trophic level 'knock-on' effects on fish composition in some habitats



Human health  
impacts

None known



Social & cultural  
impacts

None known



Economic  
impacts

None known

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- Can reproduce through fragmentation and asexual reproduction and disperse on water currents
- Flowers are rarely observed in the invasive ranges of this species
- Highly resilient to small-scale disturbances and can grow over damaged areas up to 30 times faster than native seagrasses, which gives it an advantage in areas that sustain regular physical damage, such as harbours and anchorages

## DISTRIBUTION

**Not present in the Republic of the Marshall Islands**

### Native range

India, Eastern Africa, Madagascar, Red Sea, Persian Gulf

### Non-indigenous range

Mediterranean and Ionian Sea, West Indies, British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Venezuela

## CREDITS AND REFERENCES (click reference for more information)

### Images

Top: Gidon Winters from [Winters et al. \(2020\)](#), bottom: [Hemprich F.G. & Ehrenberg \(2002\)](#)

### References

[Houk and Camacho \(2010\)](#), [Willette and Ambrose \(2009\)](#), [Winters et al. \(2020\)](#)