

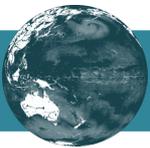
Halophila seagrass

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



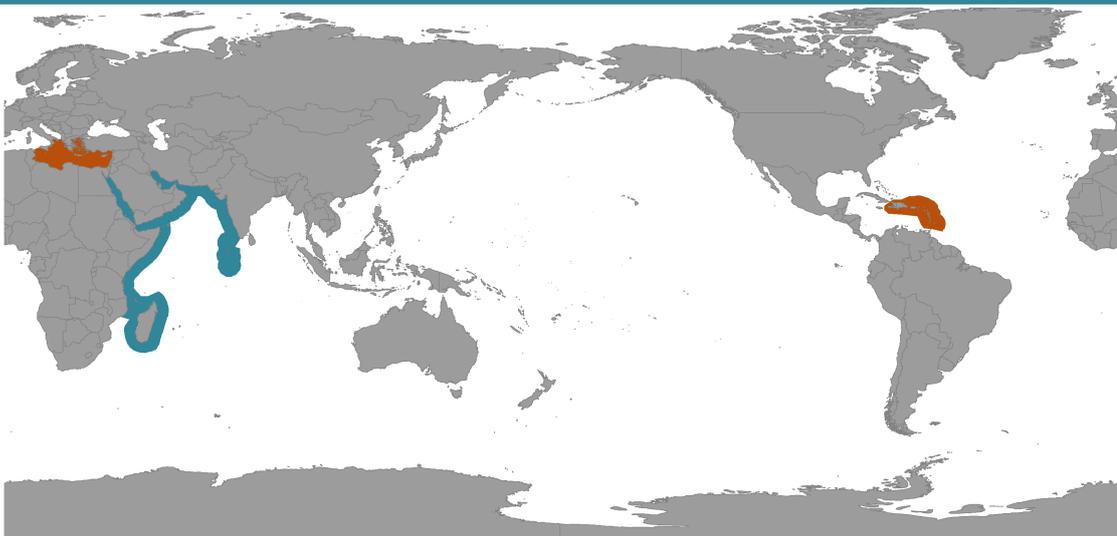
PATHWAY

✓ ballast water

✓ biofouling

✓ aquaculture transfer

■ Native
■ Cryptogenic
■ Non-indigenous



Halophila seagrass

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 TUVALU

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](#)

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