

Short Note

OCCURRENCE OF *HALOPHILA DECIPIENS* OSTENFELD ON TENERIFE, CANARY ISLANDS

M.C. GIL-RODRIGUEZ, J. AFONSO-CARRILLO and W. WILDPRET DE LA TORRE

Departamento de Botánica, Facultad de Biología, Universidad de La Laguna, Tenerife, Canary Islands (Spain)

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On 23 July 1980 a large number of specimens of *Halophila decipiens* Ostenfeld were collected along the south coast of Tenerife in a place called 'El Confital'. They grew on clayey sand at a depth between 19–23 m in rather localized stands. Later, on 24 October 1980, another population of this species was discovered in a place called 'Costa Caricia', between 13–40 m depth, and here it was abundant (Figs. 1–3).

The presence of this phanerogam on the sandy-loamy bottoms in the sublittoral of Tenerife, means a new record for the marine flora of the Canary Islands, and, according to the monograph of den Hartog (1970), it is also the first record of this pantropical species from the eastern coasts of the Atlantic Ocean. Although the communities of *H. decipiens* are monospecific they are

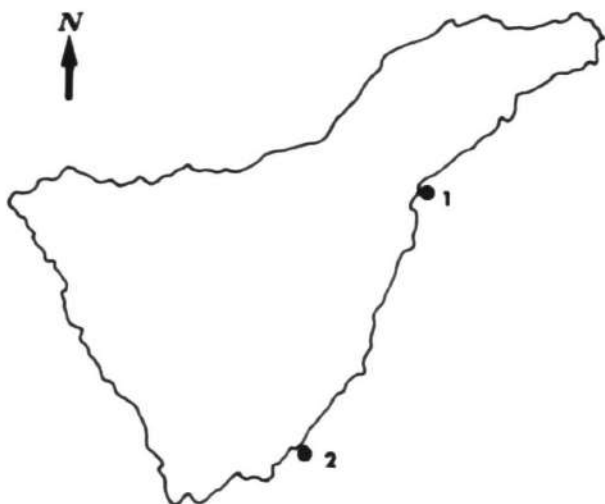


Fig. 1. Localities of *H. decipiens* on Tenerife. 1, Costa Caricia; 2, El Confital.



Fig. 2. General aspect of the beds of *H. decipiens*, at 17 m depth in El Confital, Tenerife (December 1980).



Fig. 3. General aspect of the beds of *H. decipiens* at 32 m depth in Costa Caricia, Tenerife (November 1980).

often covered by detritus of *Cymodocea nodosa* (Ucria) Aschers., a seagrass that forms extensive beds between 3–15 m depth mainly along the south coast of the island (Afonso-Carrillo and Gil-Rodriguez, 1980).

With *H. decipiens* the share of the tropical element in the benthic flora of the Canary Islands has increased. According to Gil-Rodriguez and Afonso-Carrillo (1980) this share is 28.6% out of 434 species recorded up to now, and the Rhodophyceae-Phaeophyceae ratio of the region, 3.4, is well in accordance with this situation.

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