

RUPPIACEAE

DUTCHGRASS FAMILY

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Submerged aquatic herbs, annual or rarely perennial. STEMS erect in water column, filiform, simple, or branched. LEAVES alternate to subopposite, linear-filiform, delicate, sessile, with a non-persistent stipular sheath. INFLORESCENCES terminal spikes, at first enclosed in a spathe, pedunculate, the peduncles elongating after fertilization to the water surface, often spiraling; bracts absent. FLOWERS bisexual; perianth absent; stamens 2, the filaments short, broad, the anthers extrorse, 2-celled, dehiscing longitudinally; pistils 4 to 16, sessile at anthesis; ovary with a single parietal ovule. FRUITS small, drupaceous, indehiscent, on a long slender stipe that continues to elongate and spiral as the fruit matures; seed 1.—A monogeneric family, ca. 10 spp., worldwide. Haynes (2000).

Ruppia L. Ditchgrass

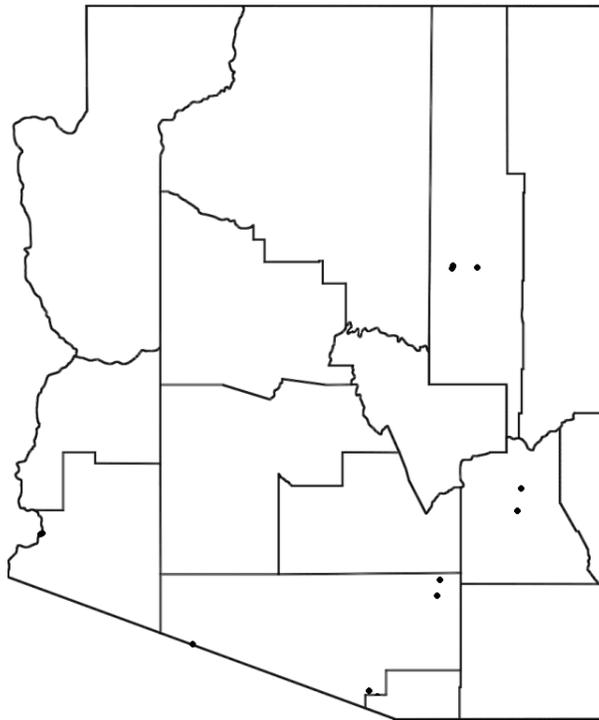
Characters of the family.—(named in honor of Heinrich Bernhard Ruppius, 1689–1719, a German Botanist and the author of the *Flora Jenensis*).

Ruppia cirrhosa (Petagna) Grande (tendrilled). Spiral Ditchgrass. —Submerged annuals. STEMS to 55 cm long, 0.1–0.3 mm wide, greenish to brownish. LEAVES 3.2–45 cm long, 0.2–0.5 mm wide, apically acute, the margins entire at the base, minutely serrulate near the apex, 1-nerved. INFLORESCENCES fewer than 20-flowered; peduncles with 5 to 30 coils, 3–30 cm long, 0.05 cm wide. FLOWERS with stamens early deciduous; pistils 4 to 6. FRUITS 1.5–2 mm long, 1.1–1.5 mm wide; gynophore 2–3.5 cm long; beak lateral, erect, 0.5–1 mm long. $2n = 40$ [from Eur. material]. [*Buccaferrea cirrhosa* Petagna].—Lakes and ponds: Graham, Navajo, Pima, Yuma cos.; 50–450 m (160–1500 ft.); flowering and fruiting summer-fall, overwintering in some warm locations); throughout N. Amer. and Eur.

Until recently, in AZ, this entity has been called *Ruppia maritima* L., a primarily coastal species with shorter peduncles in fruit and with fewer coils. However, our material is better referred to *R. cirrhosa*, the more commonly known European species.

LITERATURE CITED

HAYNES, R. R. 2000. Ruppiaceae. Pp. 76–77. In: Flora of North America Editorial Committee (eds.). *Flora of North America north of Mexico*. Vol. 22. New York: Oxford University Press.



Ruppiaceae. Figure 1. Distribution of *Ruppia cirrhosa*.



Ruppiaceae. Figure 2. *Ruppia cirrhosa*. A) Habit. B) Flowering branch (incl. a spicate inflorescence partially enclosed in a spathe and emerging new leaves). C) Cluster of single-carpel fruits from one flower. D). Single stalked fruit of one carpel. [Drawn by Jon Ricketson].