

**THE IDENTITY OF ZOSTERA MARINA VAR. ANGUSTIFOLIA  
HORNEMANN (POTAMOGETONACEAE).**

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Since Hornemann (Fl. Dan. 9, 1816, p. 3, pl. 1501) published the name *Zostera marina* var. *angustifolia* together with a very poor drawing and the extremely short diagnosis 'foliis subnerviis' several interpretations of the identity of this taxon have been given. Some authors regarded it as a separate species closely related to *Z. marina* L., e.g. Reichenbach (Ic. Fl. Germ. 7, 1845, p. 3, as *Z. angustifolia*), and Tutin (J. Bot. 74, 1936, p. 227—230, as *Z. hornemanniana*). Others thought that it was a hybrid between *Z. marina* and *Z. noltii* Hornem., e.g. Ascherson (in Boissier, Fl. Orient. 5, 1882, p. 25), Prahl (Krit. Fl. Schlesw.-Holst. 2, 1890, p. 211), and Rouy (Fl. Fr. 13, 1912, p. 290, as *Z. hornemanni*). Recently I myself expressed the opinion that Hornemann's variety was merely a brackish-water form of *Z. noltii* (Den Hartog, Sea-grasses of the world, 1970, p. 68).

Thanks to the kindness of Mr. A. Hansen I was able to study two sheets of original material of Hornemann's taxon and as a result all the above-mentioned interpretations can be ruled out. One of the two sheets is marked 'cotypus' and is labelled '*Zostera marina angustifolia, e sinu Othiniensi, Hornemann*', the labelling in the characteristic handwriting of Prof. J. W. Hornemann himself. The specimens mounted on this sheet are all extremely narrow-leaved *Z. marina*. The specimens on the other sheet are very similar, and were collected from the same place; the labelling, however, is in the handwriting of N. Hofmann Bang, who was a close friend of Hornemann and owned the manor Hofmannsgave near the type locality.

Most of these specimens have leaves with only 3 nerves, but there are some 5-nerved leaves as well. All have leaf-tips with the typical obtuse shape characteristic for *Z. marina*. Between any two nerves there are 4—7 accessory bundles. There are 4—6 roots per node. On the sheet labelled by Hofmann Bang there is one specimen with a terminal generative shoot. The inflorescences of this have no retinacula. From these data only one conclusion is possible, viz. that *Z. marina* var. *angustifolia* is nothing else than a narrow-leaved form of *Z. marina*.

It has to be admitted that there is a distinct discrepancy between the material of *Z. marina* var. *angustifolia* and the illustration in Flora Danica. The illustration shows a plant with a lateral generative shoot; this is characteristic for *Z. noltii*. However, the figure is insufficiently detailed with respect to characters which are generally used to distinguish *Z. marina* and *Z. noltii*, such as the shape of the leaf-tip, the nervation, and the structure of the seed testa. Now that I have seen the original material of *Z. marina* var. *angustifolia*, I am almost sure that the illustration is a composition of more than one specimen; otherwise such a confusing error as the depicted lateral generative shoot cannot be explained.

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