

***Myriogloea pedicellata* sp. nov.
(Chordariaceae, Phaeophyceae) from the Sultanate
of Oman, northern Arabian Sea**

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Abstract — *Myriogloea pedicellata*, a new species of brown algae, is described from the Sultanate of Oman, the Arabian Peninsula. The noteworthy features of this alga from exposed supralittoral rocks are its unbranched, or barely branched, habit, its length (often to 1 m) and diameter of several millimetres, its pseudoparenchymatous construction and its lack of true ("phaeophycean") hairs. In thallus construction the new species agrees with *Myriogloea* (Chordariaceae, Ectocarpales). Unilocular sporangia are borne usually on multicellular pedicels at the bases of assimilatory filaments. The multicellular nature of the pedicels distinguishes this species from others in the genus.

Arabian Sea / Chordariaceae / *Myriogloea* / *Myriogloea pedicellata* sp. nov. / Phaeophyceae / Sultanate of Oman / taxonomy

Résumé — *Myriogloea pedicellata* sp. nov. (Chordariaceae, Phaeophyceae) au Sultanat d'Oman, nord de la Mer d'Arabie. *Myriogloea pedicellata*, nouvelle espèce d'algue brune, est décrite au Sultanat d'Oman, Péninsule d'Arabie. Les caractères remarquables de cette algue des substrats rocheux exposés du supralittoral sont le port non ramifié ou rarement ramifié, la taille (souvent jusqu'à un mètre) et le diamètre de plusieurs millimètres, la structure pseudoparenchymateuse et l'absence de vrais poils (« phéophycéens »). En ce qui concerne la construction du thalle, la nouvelle espèce est en conformité avec le genre *Myriogloea* (Chordariaceae, Ectocarpales). Les sporocystes uniloculaires naissent habituellement sur des pédicelles pluricellulaires à la base des filaments assimilateurs. Le caractère pluricellulaire des pédicelles distingue cette espèce dans le genre. (Traduit par la Rédaction)

Chordariaceae / Mer d'Arabie / *Myriogloea* / *Myriogloea pedicellata* sp. nov. / Phaeophyceae / Sultanat d'Oman / taxonomie

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INTRODUCTION

Over the period 1999-2002, marine algal specimens were collected from the Dhofar region of the Sultanate of Oman in connection with the Algal Biodiversity Project of Oman, funded by a grant from the British Government's Darwin Initiative. The project was managed by HTS Development, Ltd., U.K., working with the Natural History Museum of Muscat, Oman, and supported by the Herbarium of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and the Natural History Museum, London. A handbook that has been prepared from this work (Richards & Wynne, 2003) includes an unknown species of brown algae referred to as "*Myriogloea* aff.". This brown alga has been collected on several occasions on the southern coast of Oman. In habit it resembles the cordlike kelp *Chorda filum* (L.) Stackh., but in construction it is chordariacean. In the present paper, the alga is described as a new species of *Myriogloea*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The specimens cited in this paper were collected from rocky supralittoral habitats in Sept. 2000 and Sept. 2001 in Dhofar, Oman. Material was processed as herbarium mounts soon after collecting. Some specimens were preserved in 5 % Formalin/sea-water. Wet-preserved parts of thalli were hand-sectioned using a single-edged razor, and these sections were mounted on glass slides for observation with a standard Zeiss research microscope. Line-drawings were made with a camera lucida attached to the microscope. Digital images, using a Nikon D1 camera mounted on a photo-stand, were made with a camera-back attached to the same microscope. The digital images were then assembled into plates using Adobe Photoshop version 7.0. Co-ordinates were obtained in the field by using several GPS devices, primarily a model made by Garmin eTrex Summit (Garmin International Inc., 1200 E 151st St., Olathe, KS 66062). Herbarium abbreviations are according to Holmgren *et al.* (1990). Names of authors of plant taxa are according to Brummitt & Powell (1992).

RESULTS

Diagnosis

Myriogloea pedicellata M.J. Wynne sp. nov.

Aliis speciebus in genere combinatione secunda characterum distincta: altitudo thallorum 40-70 (-100) cm alti, atque diameter 4-6 mm; thallus plerumque simplex, interdum ramosus; textura moderate mucosa; cortex exterior filis assimilatis liberis 1.0 mm longis formatus; cortex interior filis ramosissimis aliquantum hyalinis, quae fila assimilantia et sporangia unilocularia facient; sporangia unilocularia ovoidea vel ellipsoidea, 60-84 μ m longa et 22-34 lata; sporangia pedicellata, plerumque terminalia in pedicellis 3-9-cellularum, raro in pedicellis 1-2 cellularum, rarior sessilia; sporangia plurilocularia ignota.

The epithet refers to the pedicellate nature of the unilocular sporangia, a trait distinguishing this species from others in the genus.

Holotype: Hatom Cove (16.96091° N, 54.82795° E), east of Mirbat, Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman; 8.ix.2001, *leg. M. Wynne 08092001-03-10*; attached to supra-littoral boulders; deposited in MICH.

Isotypes: deposited in BM, ON, PC, and US.

Additional collections: SULTANATE OF OMAN. Raaha (= Alto) Bay (16.95116° N, 54.81650° E), east of Mirbat, Dhofar: 6.ix.2001, *leg. M. Wynne 06092001-01-19* (BM, MICH, ON), attached to supra-littoral boulders. Western side of Wadi Zeid (Hoon's Bay) (16.94497° N, 54.80402° E), east of Mirbat, Dhofar: 10.ix.2000, *leg. M. Wynne 10092000-03-04* (BM, GENT, MICH, ON, and FI), attached to supra-littoral boulders; 17.ix.2001, *leg. M. Wynne 17092001-12-07* (BM, MICH, ON).

The new species occurred during the summertime monsoon season in the supralittoral zone on wave-exposed boulders, the axes hanging down from vertical faces. All of the specimens came from a rather limited stretch of the Omani coastline (Fig. 1) between Mirbat and Sadh, Dhofar. The thalli (Fig. 2) are usually around 40 to 70 cm long but may reach lengths of 1 m. They are mostly simple,

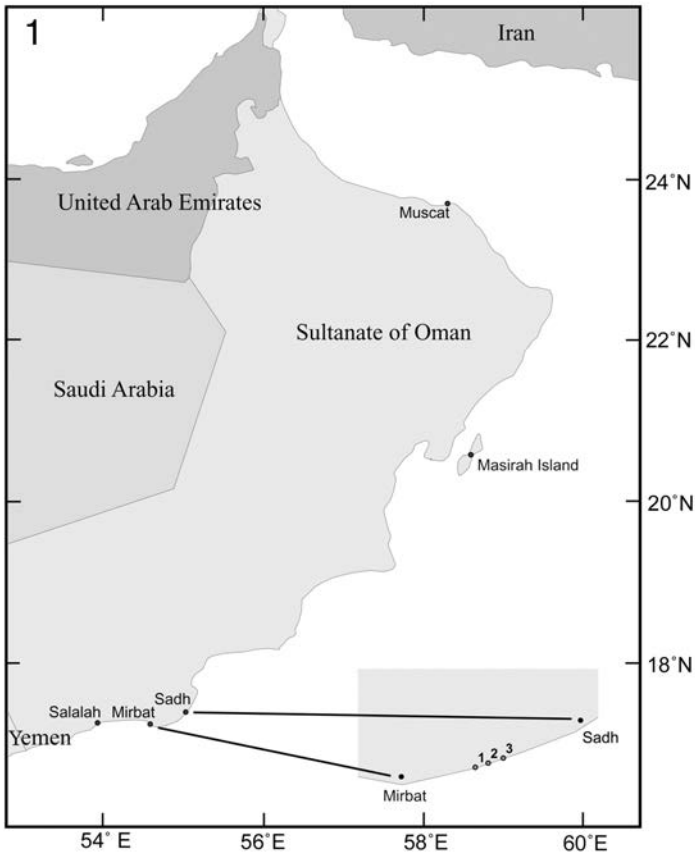


Fig. 1. Map of the Sultanate of Oman with inset of the coast of Dhofar with the three collections sites for *Myriogloea pedicellata*. 1: Hatom Cove; 2: Raaha (= Alto) Bay; 3: Western side of Wadi Zeid.

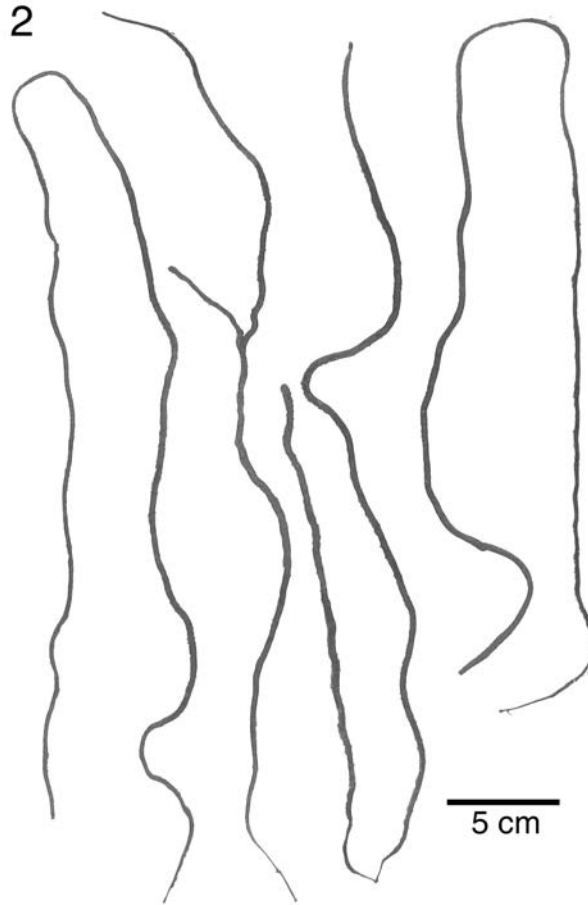
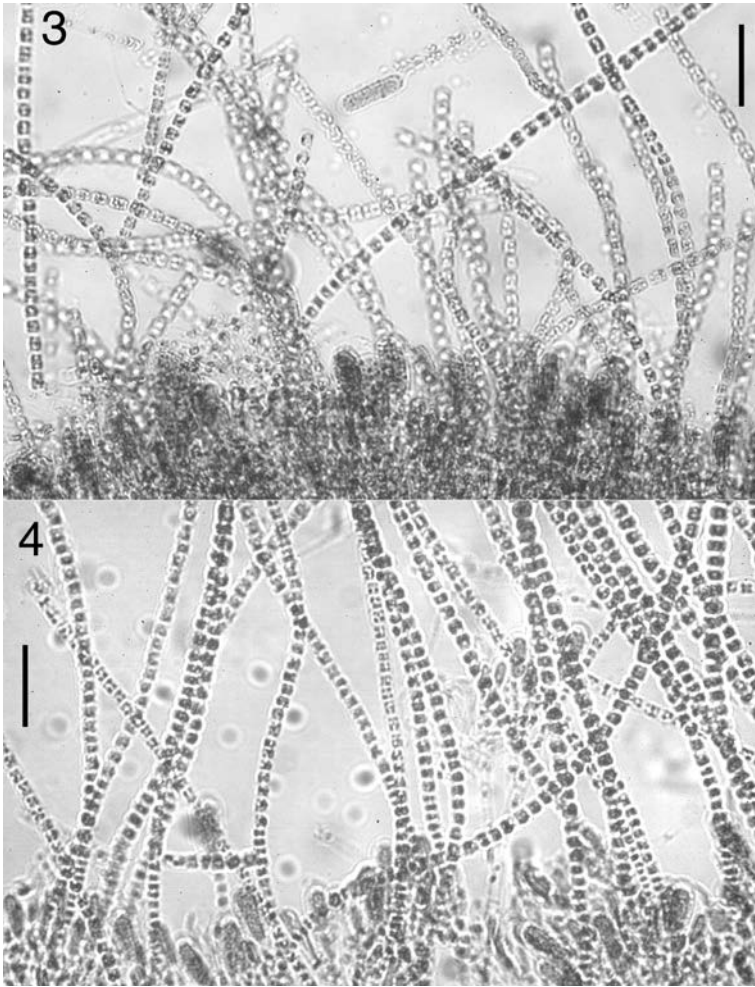


Fig. 2. *Myriogloea pedicellata*. Holotype collection.

but occasionally thalli are branched once or twice usually close to the base, more rarely from mid-thallus. The texture of the thalli in the field was only moderately slimy with a firm organization. Attachment to the rock substrate was made by a rather small, flat discoid base of 0.8-1.4 mm diameter.

Anatomy

Wet specimens are 4-6 mm in diameter. In transverse sections of axes, a solid, pseudoparenchymatous inner core (3-4 mm in diameter) is surrounded by a loosely shaggy covering of assimilatory filaments of about 1 mm in length. The inner solid core can be divided visually into a medulla and a subcortex, in that the latter region is deeply pigmented (orange). The outer cortex (Figs 3 & 4) is comprised of a single kind of free assimilatory filaments (Figs 5-7), which are branched only near their points of origin and collectively give the thallus its shaggy aspect. The assimilatory filaments have a meristematic region (Fig. 7) in their proximal portion and are about 40 to 65 cells, or about 1,400 to about 1,700 μm , in length.

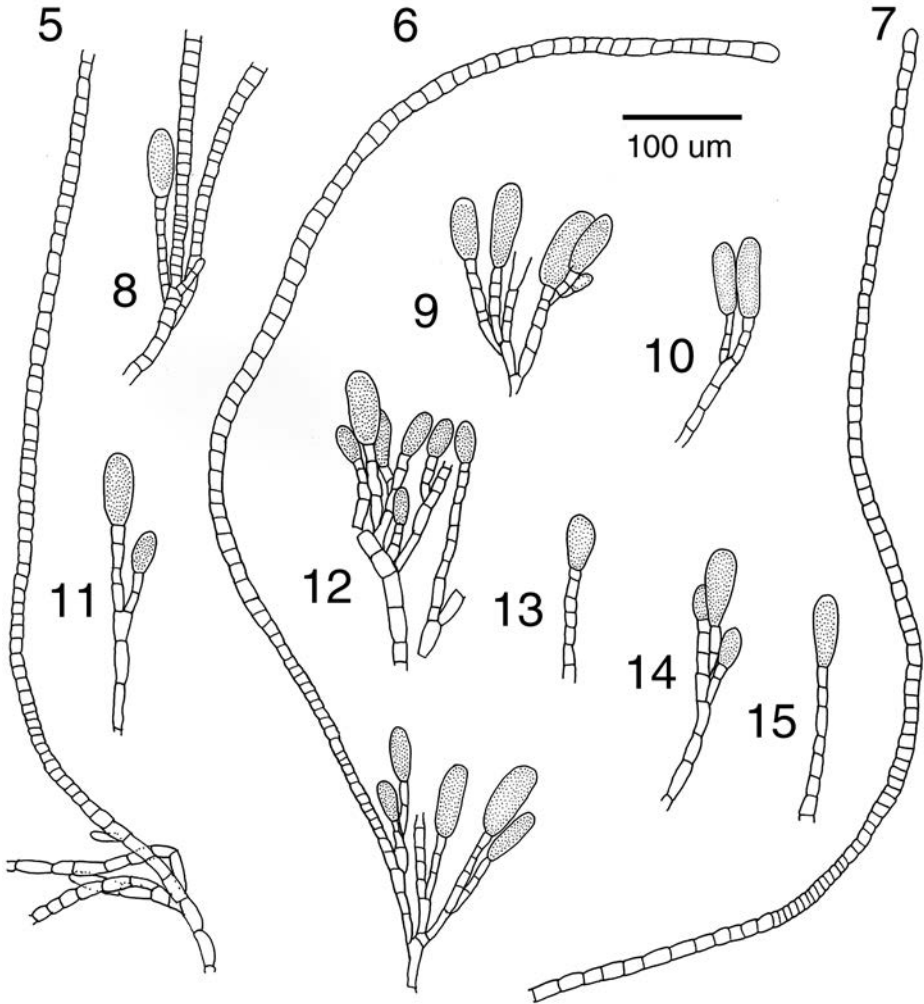


Figs 3-4. *Myriogloea pedicellata*. Cross-sections of axis, showing assimilatory filaments and unilocular sporangia arising from subcortex. Scale bar: 50 μ m.

Their width measures 8-10 μ m near their base and 10-14 μ m in the mid-region and at the distal end. The cells of the assimilatory filaments are densely filled with chloroplasts, each provided with a pyrenoid. Colourless (true or phaeophycean) hairs (for definitions, see Bold & Wynne, 1985) are entirely lacking. The inner cortex, or subcortex, is composed of thin, much branched filaments, 6-12 μ m in width, with meagre pigmented contents compared to the cells of the assimilatory filaments. It is these densely branched filaments that give rise to both the assimilatory filaments and the unilocular sporangia.

Reproduction

The only reproductive organs observed are unilocular sporangia, which are present in great abundance. They occur at the interface of the outer cortex and



Figs 5-15. *Myriogloea pedicellata*. Figs 5-7. Assimilatory filaments. Fig. 6. Assimilatory filament associated with unilocular sporangia arising on subcortical filaments. Figs 8-15. Individual and groups of unilocular sporangia on their pedicels.

the subcortex, that is, in the region of origin of the assimilatory filaments (Figs 3 & 4). The unilocular sporangia are ovoid or ellipsoid, 60-84 µm in length and 22-34 µm in width. Typically, they are borne terminally on 3-9-celled pedicels (Figs 8-15). Rarely, the pedicels are only 1 or 2 cells long, and even more rarely the sporangia are sessile. Plurilocular sporangia were not observed.

DISCUSSION

The expression of a simple, cordlike habit is a very common growth form in many unrelated genera of brown algae (Wynne, 1973). The Omani brown alga

with this form has several characteristics that suggest that it belongs to *Myriogloea* Kuck. ex Oltm. (1922). Several species of *Myriogloea* are recognized around the world, and they are often inhabitants of temperate surf-swept rocky coastlines similar to the Dhofar region of Oman. There appears to be a correlation of the branching pattern in Chordariaceae algae with the degree of wave exposure: the higher the degree of wave exposure, the higher the frequency of simple axes; the less degree of wave exposure, the more likely the axes are to be branched.

According to Kylin (1940) the salient features defining the genus *Myriogloea* include the following: the central axis is composed of many monopodially organized filaments with intercalary growth; the presence of a special transition zone with radial cells rows between the central axis and the assimilatory filaments; one kind of assimilatory filaments; the absence of phaeophycean hairs; and plurilocular sporangia, when present, formed by the modification of the upper parts of assimilatory filaments. Womersley (1987) referred to the presence of two types of assimilatory filaments making up the cortex: either determinate and lacking a basal meristem or a longer, indeterminate type with a basal meristem. However, other authors (e.g., Kylin, 1940; Nelson & Adams, 1983; and Stegenga *et al.*, 1997) have discussed only one type of assimilatory filament. Certainly *Myriogloea* lacks the markedly dimorphic assimilatory filaments that occur in such genera as *Papenfussiella*, *Mesogloia*, and *Haplogloia* (Kylin, 1940).

Currently, *Myriogloea* is thought to include eight species. A synoptic comparison of the currently recognized species of *Myriogloea* and the new species is presented in Table 1.

Myriogloea sciurus (Harv.) Kuck. ex Oltm. (1922), the lectotype of the genus (Levring, 1939), occurs in southern Australian waters (Harvey, 1858; Womersley, 1987). Congeners include *M. intestinalis* (Harv.) Lindauer, V.J. Chapm. *et al.* from New Zealand (Harvey, 1855, as *Mesogloia intestinalis*; Lindauer *et al.*, 1961); *M. chilensis* (Mont.) Llaña (1948) from Chile and Peru; *M. major* Asensi (1973) from Patagonia, Argentina [the same species soon after was described as *M. bonariensis* by Joly *et al.* (1974)]; *M. papenfussii* Kylin (1940) and *M. abbreviata* Kylin (1940) both from South Africa; *M. simplex* (Segawa *et al.*) Inagaki (1958) from Japan; and *M. ramosissima* (Zanardini) Papenf. (1968) from the Red Sea.

Several other described species have been reduced to synonymy. *Myriogloea grandis* (M. Howe) Levring (1939) [basionym: *Myriocladia grandis* M. Howe (1914)] has been regarded as conspecific with *M. chilensis* by Peters & Müller (1986) and Ramírez & Santelices (1991). *Myriogloia chilensis* Levring (1960) from southern Chile is a later homonym of *M. chilensis* (Mont.) Llaña (1948) and is regarded as a taxonomic synonym (Santelices, 1989). Nelson & Adams (1983) treated *M. chorda* (J. Agardh) Kuck. (1929) (J. Agardh, 1877, as *Myriocladia chorda*) and *M. lindaueri* Kylin (1940) as taxonomic synonyms of *M. intestinalis*. While recognizing both *M. abbreviata* and *M. papenfussii* from South Africa, Stegenga *et al.* (1997) expressed doubt that the distinguishing characters are sufficient to maintain them as distinct.

Børgesen (1934) and Wynne (2000) have pointed out that the coasts of the northern Arabian Sea and Japan share a high number of species. This fact caused me to consider the possibility that the Omani *Myriogloea* might be the Japanese *M. simplex*. That species, however, is of relatively small stature (to 15 cm) and bears clusters of usually sessile unilocular sporangia, rarely on a 1-2-celled stalk (Inagaki, 1958), quite distinct from these features in *M. pedicellata*.

Typically, unilocular sporangia in the Chordariaceae are located in a sessile position at the base of assimilatory filaments (Kuckuck, 1929; Kylin, 1940;

	<i>thallus height</i>	<i>thallus thickness</i>	<i>branching pattern</i>	<i>texture (sliminess)</i>	<i>assim. fil. length</i>	<i>position unil. spor.</i>	<i>shape/size unil. spor.</i>	<i>pluriloc. sporangia</i>	<i>references</i>
<i>M. abbreviata</i> (S. Africa)	7-14 cm	4-6 mm	simple or with some short branches	-	1 mm	sessile from basal cells of assimil filament	90-130 µm long; 40-60 µm wide	not seen	Kylin, 1940; Stegenga <i>et al.</i> 1997
<i>M. chilensis</i> (Chile; Peru)	14-20 cm; up to 65 cm	4-7 mm; 7-15 mm	variously branched	mucliginous	0.2-0.25 mm; 0.5-1 mm	sessile, or on 1-cell pedicel, or terminating short branch	obovoid or pyriform, 66-75 × 38-44 µm	not seen	Howe, 1914; Levring, 1939, 1960
<i>M. intestinalis</i> (New Zealand)	0.3-1.0 m	4-10 mm	simple or sparingly branched	slippery, lubricous, mucliginous	1-2 mm 2-3 mm 2-4 mm	sessile at base of assim. filament	ovoid, elliptical, 75-96 × 20-38 µm	intercalary transform. of assim. filaments	Lindauer <i>et al.</i> 1961; Nelson & Adams, 1983
<i>M. major</i> (Argentina)	16 cm - 1.3 m	to 10 mm	poorly branched from base	horny, slippery	980 µm 1.5-1.9 mm	sessile or at apex of few-celled branch	ellipsoid, 80-100 (-126) × 30-40 µm	not seen	Asensi, 1973; Joly <i>et al.</i> 1974
<i>M. papenfussii</i> (S. Africa)	40-80 cm	4-6 mm 4-7 mm	simple or with a few short branches	very mucliginous	1 mm; 1-1.5 mm	sessile, below meristem of assim filament	clavate, ovoid 120-180 × 60-80 µm	not seen	Kylin, 1940; Stegenga <i>et al.</i> 1997
<i>M. pedicellata</i> (Oman)	40-70 cm	4-6 mm	simple or sparingly branched	moderately slimy	1400-1700 µm	on (1-) 5-9 celled pedicel	ovoid, 60-84 µm × 22-34 µm	not seen	present paper
<i>M. ramosissima</i> (Red Sea)	15 cm	1.5 mm	much branched to several orders	-	-	sessile or rarely 1-celled pedicel	cylindrical, obtuse apex, 80 µm × 28 µm	Transform. of upper cells of assim filaments	Zanardini, 1858; Nasr, 1947
<i>M. sciurus</i> (Australia)	10-50 (-120) cm	3-5 (-10) mm	simple or long laterals from base	very mucooid	2 kinds: 200-400 µm; 1-2 mm	sessile, on outer subcortical cells	clavate to ovoid, 60-100 × 20-40 µm	rare; subdiv. of upper cells of determ. cortical fil.	Harvey, 1858; Womersley, 1987
<i>M. simplex</i> (Japan)	8-15 cm	5-13 mm	simple or sparingly branched	very lubricous	1-2 mm	sessile or on 1-2-celled pedicel at base of assim. fil.	ellipsoid, 40-100 × 25-60 µm	not seen	Inagaki, 1958; Segawa & Ohta, 1951

Hamel, 1935). Unilocular sporangia in *Myriogloea* have most often been depicted to be sessile at the base of assimilatory filaments (Levring, 1939; Lindauer *et al.*, 1961; Nelson & Adams, 1983) or sessile on outer subcortical cells (Womersley, 1987). In *M. pedicellata* the unilocular sporangia are located near the bases of assimilatory filaments, just above the subcortex, but often they are situated on several-celled stalks; very rarely are they sessile. The pedicellate condition of the unilocular sporangia is the most distinctive feature of the Omani *Myriogloea*. A unilocular sporangium on a stalk of 4 cells has been illustrated in *M. major* (Joly *et al.*, 1974; as *M. bonariensis*). But the unilocular sporangia in *M. major* have been described as sessile both by Asensi (1973) and by Joly *et al.* (1974) and as being significantly larger than those of the new species (see Table 1). Furthermore, Asensi (1973) and Joly *et al.* (1974) described the unilocular sporangia in *M. major* as occurring in series (on successive cells of the bearing filament) and also with often one, two, or three sporangia arising from the same cell, features that have never been observed in *M. pedicellata*. These differences distinguish *M. major* from *M. pedicellata*.

According to Hoffmann & Santelices (1997) unilocular sporangia in *Myriogloea chilensis* are “borne singly or in groups of 3 to 8 among the assimilatory filaments” and “usually with a unicellular pedicel”; that species, however, differs from *M. pedicellata* in being irregularly and frequently branched. In *M. simplex* unilocular sporangia are usually borne as sessile organs (Segawa & Ohta, 1951, as *Tinocladia simplex*) but may occur on two-celled stalks (Inagaki, 1958). The Omani alga is not as lubricous as *M. major* and *M. simplex*. It is significantly larger than *M. simplex* (Table 1).

The question arises whether this Omani alga might have been reported in the general region of the Arabian Sea under another name, that is, a misapplied name. There has been a report of *Myriogloea grandis* [considered above to be conspecific with *M. chilensis*] from Pakistan by Qasim & Barkati (1985). *Myriogloea chilensis* is known from Pacific South America from Peru (Howe, 1914; Taylor, 1947) through much of Chile (Ramírez & Santelices, 1991). Efforts made to track down voucher material of so-called “*M. grandis*” from Pakistan have not been successful. Prof. M. Shameel (email, 4.i.2004), University of Karachi, said that voucher specimens of “*M. grandis*” no longer exist. He thought that it may have been a mis-identification of *Levringia boergesenii*. But owing to the many shared species between the Omani and Pakistani marine floras, it is certainly possible that it represents *M. pedicellata*.

An initial report of *Myriogloea sciurus* from India by Børgesen (1932, as *Myriocladia sciurus*) was later treated by Kylin (1940) to represent a new species of *Levringia*, namely, *L. boergesenii*. Kylin’s (1940) “Myriogloea-Gruppe” of genera were those that lacked phaeophycean hairs. Kylin distinguished *Myriocladia* from *Levringia* by the plurilocular sporangia in the former genus arising by the modification of the upper parts of assimilatory filaments, but in the latter genus plurilocular sporangia are pod-shaped, pedicellate and arose from the upper cells of the transition zone between the central axis and the assimilatory filaments. Wynne & Jupp (1998) reported the occurrence of *Levringia boergesenii* from Al Ashkarah, Al Sharqiya, Oman. That material consists of erect axes reaching 18 cm in height, 2-3 mm in diameter, with some lateral branches, and bearing both unilocular sporangia and pod-shaped plurilocular sporangia. The assimilatory filaments are relatively short, 470-520 µm in length, and do not have the shaggy aspect characteristic of *Myriogloea pedicellata*.

Kylin (1940) did not refer to Børgesen’s (1934, 1937) later reports of “*M. sciurus*”, but it is likely that that material also belonged to *L. boergesenii*. Yet

a number of reports of *M. sciurus* have persisted for India, Pakistan, and Yemen (e.g., Shameel, 1987; Banaimoon, 1988; Silva *et al.*, 1996). Silva *et al.* (1996) continued to report the occurrence of *M. sciurus* from India, but if one examines at least one of these later reports (e.g., Srinivasan, 1969), one sees that it is merely a repetition of Børgesen's (1932) earlier account and thus clearly corresponds to *L. boergesenii*, not *M. sciurus*. The status of many of the other reports listed by Silva *et al.* (1996) would have to be checked out individually to determine whether they are merely a repeat of Børgesen's (1932) initial mis-identification. *Myriocladia sciurus* has been reported from the Khalf region of Yemen (Banaimoon, 1988; Ormond & Banaimoon, 1994). According to Shameel *et al.* (1996) the report of *Myriogloia sciurus* by Ahmad *et al.* (1994) for Pakistan was a misapplied name for *L. boergesenii*.

Myriogloea ramosissima, which is based on *Mesogloia ramosissima* Zanardini (1858) described from the Red Sea, is a heavily branched, smaller-statured species and obviously is very different from the Omani species. *Myriogloea ramossima* was not observed in collections made in the southern Red Sea (Lipkin & Silva, 2002).

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