

## Marine Plants – Ditch-grass

*Ruppia spp.* are aquatic vascular plants that can live underwater. They are commonly referred to as a type of intertidal seagrass, although it is a freshwater species with a high salt tolerance. There are two species of *Ruppia* found in British Columbia, *Ruppia maritima* and *Ruppia cirrhosa* that are commonly referred to as beaked ditch-grass and spiral ditch-grass, respectively. *Ruppia maritima* can be found in coastal areas such as tidal marshes and brackish ponds, whereas *Ruppia cirrhosa* is common to lakes, ponds and ditches and infrequently found in coastal areas. Both species are aquatic, perennial plants that are often difficult to identify due to their highly variable characteristics, especially the size and colour of fruit produced. Vascular marine plants and their associated communities play a vital role in the integrity of nearshore ecosystems in British Columbia; they provide vital habitat for many adult species, act as nurseries for juveniles, supply valuable organic detritus into marine food webs, produce oxygen, and sequester carbon.

This atlas page illustrates point locations of *Ruppia spp.* from various sources.



PHOTO: CURTIS BJORK



PHOTO: ALFRED BROUSSEAU, SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

### data sources

- Capital Regional District (CRD) – Harbours Atlas
- Cynthia Durance – *Ruppia* observations
- University of British Columbia Herbarium – *Ruppia* specimen records

### data resolution

- The data resolution varies by point dataset from locations collected with GPS units to locations obtained based on 2 kilometre x 2 kilometre grid squares.

### date collected

- 1982-2002

### date compiled

- 2009

### reviewers

- Cynthia Durance, Precision Identification

### reviewer comments

- There are many other locations that have yet to be identified.

### caveats of use

- Survey effort is not consistent across all planning units or across all areas of the coast and some species tend to be under-represented by some survey methods. Areas with no data may not have been surveyed and these data gaps are not necessarily indicative of an absence of *Ruppia*. Some locations may still be important but currently lack associated data to confirm their value.
- This feature is a compilation of data collected by many people, for different purposes, using different survey techniques with different methodologies within each technique and, therefore, considerable care must be taken when using the data. Please refer to the original metadata document for data limitations and usage.
- Recommended date of expiry for use of these data in a marine planning context: None provided.

### map, feature data and metadata access

- Visit [www.bcmca.ca/data](http://www.bcmca.ca/data) for more information.

### references

- Species description contains material from: University of British Columbia, Lab for Advanced Spatial Analysis, Department of Geography. E-Flora BC: Electronic Atlas of the Plants of British Columbia. 18 August 18, 2010. [www.eflora.bc.ca](http://www.eflora.bc.ca)

**BCMCA Atlas**  
**Marine Plants**  
**Ditch-grass**

**Legend**

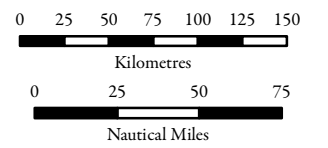
- Ditch-grass (*Ruppia spp.*)

**Data Sources:**  
 Capital Regional District,  
 Cynthia Durance,  
 University of British Columbia Herbarium

**Base Data:**  
 ESRI Base Data, GeoBase, GeoBC,  
 NOAA, Natural Resources Canada,  
 USGS, Washington State Government

**Thematic Data:**  
 For more information on data sources  
 and methods please refer to the  
 facing page to this map

**Projection:** BC Albers NAD83



1:4,250,000 \*  
 \* Written scales are approximate and  
 are based on a 11 x 17 inch paper size.

Prepared for:



Map template by Caslys Consulting Ltd.  
 August 18, 2010



Note: The inset has been provided to illustrate the level of detail available in the data. The inset is for illustrative purposes only and does not imply any significance to this region.