

A Note on the Genus *Marsilea* in the Canary Islands

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R e s u m e n

Confirmando la existencia de *Marsilea strigosa* en el Archipiélago de Azores, se comunica sobre material de *Marsilea* (helecho acuático) de Canarias (Gran Canaria: Arucas), preservado en el Museo Botánico de Copenhague. Se menciona literatura y citas correspondientes, determinando el material de Arucas como *Marsilea quadrifolia* L.

Considering the occasion of the discovery of *Marsilea strigosa* Willd. on the Azores*, statements concerning the occurrence of *Marsilea* in the Canary Islands have been checked up.

WEBB & BERTHELOT (1849) were the first botanists to mention *Marsilea quadrifolia* L. from Gran Canaria (collectors: Despréaux, without locality and date, and Bourgeau, Arucas, 30-3-1846). J. MILDE (1865) referred these finds to the species *M. diffusa* Leprieur, without any further explanation or documentation, and so did H. CHRIST (1888). P. TARD & PROUST (1908) returned to the species as *M. quadrifolia* L. and repeated the original citations. Both LINDINGER (1926) and BURCHARD (1929) mention *M. diffusa*, and

*) Isle of Terceira, abundant in mud-bottom of a small, temporary lake or pond near Pico de Bagacina (about 600 m.), 4-7-1972, leg. the author. From the Azores quite recently *Marsilea quadrifolia* L. has been recorded from just the same island, see "Atlas Florae Europaeae" part 1, map no. 143, 1972 (not mentioned in Flora Europaea 1, 1964 or in Palhinha: Catálogo das Plantas Vasculares dos Açores 1966); may very well be the same plant and the same locality, yet its identity as *M. strigosa* is quite clear!

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the latter adds that this plant most likely no longer exists on Gran Canaria as there are no longer any natural swamp areas left at Arucas. LEMS, in his "Checklist" (1960) also gives the species as *M. diffusa*, and makes the following remark: "Probably extinct - the true identity may be hard to settle".

KUNKEL (1966) says: "... wurde bisher (seit dem 19. Jahrhundert) nicht wiedergefunden. Die Art ist sicher aus künftigen Florenlisten zu streichen, zumal Fund und Bestimmung des Materials (Despréaux, Bourg.) nie als sicher galten und auch nicht nachgeprüft werden konnten". The same author (KUNKEL, 1971), in a later enumeration has referred to our plant as *M. minuta* L. (syn.: *M. diffusa* Leprieur and f. *canariensis* A. Br.), according to LAUNERT's new monograph of the genus (1968) and concludes that the species no longer exists on Gran Canaria.

This conclusion most likely is quite correct, but as to the identity of the plants from the Arucas-area it can be added that according to a herbarium-sheet preserved in the Botanical Museum of Copenhagen (Herb. C.), collected by the Danish botanist O. Gelert (Arucas, April 22th 1897) the true identity of the Arucas —*Marsilea* without no doubt is - -or was— *Marsilea quadrifolia* L. The Copenhagen-sheet may now be the only existing material of the former Arucas-population.

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