Fissidens enervis (Fissidentaceae; Bryophyta) new to Asia

Authors: Bruggeman-Nannenga, M. A., Manjula, K. M., and Manju, C. N.

Source: Lindbergia, 39(4) : 29-32

Published By: Dutch Bryological and Lichenological Society and Nordic Bryological Society

URL: https://doi.org/10.25227/linbg.01073
The Western Ghats, a 1600 km long chain of hills along the western coast of Peninsular India with a major discontinuity, the Palghat Gap, is the most influential geomorphic feature in the region. The geological history of the Indian Peninsula as an original part of Gondwanaland, followed by tectonic movement northwards and collision with the Asian continent, have shaped its diverse flora and fauna. Western Ghats is an abode of many unique elements such as the purple frog (Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis) (Biju and Bossuyt 2003), which points to the African connection. Paleotropical Fissidens species are *F. crispulus* Brid. (Bruggeman-Nannenga 1997), *F. planifrons* Besch. (Blockeel et al. 2003) and *F. punctulatus* Sande Lac. (Bruggeman-Nannenga and Arts 2010). *Fissidens crispulus* and *F. punctulatus* are wide-spread species. The distribution of *F. planifrons* and *F. enervis* is more restricted. The first is known from Tanzania, Madagascar, the Comoro Islands, La Réunion and Sri Lanka. *Fissidens enervis* is known only from South Africa and the Western Ghats. The present find from the Western Ghats is the first Asian record of the African *F. enervis*.

**Fissidens enervis** Sim, Trans. R. Soc. South Africa 15: 187, 1926. Type: Natal, Pietermaritzburg, Town Bush Valley, Sim 9899 (lectotype (designated by Magill 1981) PRE!)

*Fissidens enervis* is reported from the Western Ghats (India). This is the first Asian record.

**Fertile parts**

Perigonia terminal on small, ca 1.5 mm long plants; antheridia 230 μm long; perichaetial terminal, perichaetial leaves 1.1–1.3 mm long with proximally widened vaginant laminae; archegonia 140–160 μm long; Sporophyte: setae ± 4 mm long, smooth; capsule symmetrical, 0.50 × 0.25 mm, ± 32 columns of quadriat-oblong exothecial cells. Peristome scariosus-type, teeth ± 33.5 μm wide at base. Spores not seen.

---

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.
**Diagnosis and comparison**

*Fissidens enervis* is characterized by its cuspidate leaf apices, ecostate leaves and large laminal cells. Moreover, it frequently has rhizoids growing from the lamina. In India it may be confused with the also ecostate, limbate species *F. hyalinus* Wilson & Hook. (= *F. nymannii* Fleisch.) that is known from Mexico, USA, New Zealand, Australia, New Caledonia, Fiji, New Hebrides (Vanatu), the Philippines, Indonesia, India, China, Taiwan, Japan and Russia (Tän and Iwatsuki 1991, Iwatsuki and Suzuki 1995, 1996, Li and Iwatsuki 2001, Ignatov et al. 2007, Pursell 2007). It further resembles *F. dealbatus* Hook. f. & Wilson from New Zealand, Australia and New Caledonia (Beever et al. 2002). *Fissidens enervis* differs from both by its cuspidate leaf apex. *Fissidens hyalinus* is distinct from both *F. enervis* and *F. dealbatus* by its unistratose limbium (Iwatsuki and Suzuki 1995). *Fissidens dealbatus* Hook. f. & Wilson differs from the other two species in having 40 or more columns of exothecial cells.

**Remarks**

*Fissidens enervis* Sim, *F. dealbatus* and *F. hyalinus* belong to a remarkable group of *Fissidens* species that have subgenus *Aloma* sporophytes (hence they are classified in subgenus *Aloma* (Müll.Hal.) Kindb.), large laminal cells, ecostate to ± ecostate leaves and stems with lacking or weakly developed central strands (Pursell and Bruggeman-Nannenga 2004). Though occasionally ecostate species form dense mats they often grow sparsely scattered among other mosses. Unfortunately, all known collections of *F. enervis* are scanty.

Habitat and substrate: On land cuttings, exposed roots and soil in evergreen forest, associated with *F. crispus* Mont., *F. crispulus* and *Philonotis hastata* (Duby) Wijk & Margad. between 900 and 1200 m.

Distribution: South Africa, India, Western Ghats. Rare.

Examined specimens: India, Kerala, Palakkad District (Nelliyampathy, 900–1200 m), 10°53′54″N, 76°69′36″E, 12.07.2015, Manjula K M (ZGC 1093 c, 1098 b, 1138 b).

Illustration: Magill 1981, Fig. 8: 1–7

Acknowledgements – The authors are thankful to the Dept of Science and Technology (DST-SERB), New Delhi, for the financial support. We are also thankful to the authorities of the Zamorin’s Guruvayurappan College (ZGC), Kozhikode, for providing support and facilities. Thanks are also due to the officials of the Kerala Forest Department, for the permission and support extended during the field studies and to Dr. Maya C. Nair and Ms. Soumya of Department of Botany, Govt. Victoria College, Palakkad, for their help during the field trip. We are further obliged to the curator of PRE for the loan of the type specimen of *F. enervis*. 

![Figure 1. Fissidens enervis Sim (a) Perichaetial plant. (b) Small vegetative plant with rhizoids growing from the leaves. (c, d) Vegetative leaves. (e) Tran-section showing the libidium of the vaginant lamina. (f, g) Vegetative leave apices. (h) Leaf insertion, dorsal lamina on the right. (i) Tran-section of stem. ((b, d, h) from 1138b. (f) from type a, c, g, i from 1093c).](https://bioone.org/journals/Lindbergia)
References


Figure 2. Figure 1. *Fissidens enervis* Sim (a) Perichaetial plant. (b) Small vegetative plant with rhizoids growing from the leaves. (c, d) Vegetative leaves. (e) Perichaetal leaf. (f, g) Details perichaetal leaves. (h, i) Leaf apices. (k) Leaf insertion. (l) Tran-section of stem. (b, d, k from 1138b; j from type specimen; a, c, e–j, l from 1093c).


