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# *NEURYMENIA FRAXINIFOLIA* (MERT. EX TURN.) J. AG. — A NEW RECORD OF A MARINE RED ALGA FOR ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

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The earlier compilation on marine algae of India by Krishnamurthy and Joshi (1970), Untawale & al. (1983), Srivastava and Mehrotra (1990), Oza and Zaidi (2001) and Sahoo & al. (2001) shows the rich diversity of marine algae in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Further taxonomic accounts by Iyengar (1984), Rao (1988), Srivastava (1996), Desikachary & al. (1998), Rao and Tigga (1998, 2000), Rao and Rao (1999), and Rao (2000) provided additional information on some new and interesting algal species of these Islands. During the course of exploration to study marine algal flora of Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, South Andaman, a red alga *Neurymenia fraxinifolia* (Mert.ex Turn.) J. Ag. was found in the sea coast of Tarmugli Island, South Andaman. Present record is of special importance since the alga is reported for the first time from Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Identification of the specimen was conformed by referring to Desikachary & al. (1998).The collections were made following standard procedures and are preserved in PBL.

Among the recorded algae of 110 species, 35 species were belonging to green, 27 to brown, 38 species to red algae and 4 blue-green. *Neurymenia fraxinifolia* (Mert. ex Turn.) J. Ag. is reported for the first time from Andaman Nicobar Islands. Detailed description and photograph are given below :

## TAXONOMICAL DESCRIPTION

Class : Rhodophyceae. Order : Ceramiales. Family: Rhodomelaceae

**Neurymenia fraxinifolia** (Mert. ex Turn.) J. Ag.

Fronds simple linear-oblong, membranous, lamina in older plants decayed and the midrib serves as a stipe. Thallus deep red to purplish, turns reddish-brown on drying. Fronds, 8-15 cm obtuse at base, rounded at apices, undulated and serrated margins. Adventitious branches develop from the midrib of older lamina. Veins with short proliferations arising from both surfaces of lamina. Frond margins spinose with subulate and recurved ramuli; similar processes arising from veins and midrib also. Stem cylindrical, simple or branched thickened and denuded. Fructifications in secondary adventitious branchlets. Stichidia elongated, ovate or oblong, apex rounded, shortly stipitate, containing double rows of tetrasporangia. Tetrasporangia 80 100 µm long, 60 70 µm broad. Spermatangia cylindrical, 100 - 130 µm in diameter. Carposporophyte solitary, obovate, urn-shaped, 55 - 75 µm long, 50 - 65 µm broad.

The alga occurs in rocky area and well anchored on the protected by rocks. It is found in surf-zone on the vertical faces or inwardly scooped out portions of rocks, which are only strongly agitated by the swell and swift currents.



Fig. 1. *Neurymenia fraxinifolia* : Whole plant

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However, this species is reported from other places of India (Borgesen, 1933 & 1937; Srinivasan, 1969 and Krishnamurthy, 1980).

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