

DIVERSITY OF BLADED BANGIALES (RHODOPHYTA) IN WESTERN
MEDITERRANEAN: RECOGNITION OF THE GENUS *THEMIS* AND
DESCRIPTIONS OF *T. BALLESTEROSII* SP. NOV., *T. IBERICA* SP. NOV. AND
PYROPIA PARVA SP. NOV.

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ABSTRACT:

The diversity of the bladed species of the red algal order Bangiales from the Iberian Mediterranean shores has been reassessed after a detailed study of this region. Prior to this study, 11 bladed species of Bangiales had been reported from Mediterranean waters: *Porphyra atropurpurea*, *P. cordata*, *P. coriacea*, *P. dioica*, *P. linearis*, *P. purpurea*, *P. umbilicalis*, *Pyropia leucosticta*, *Py. koreana* (as *Py. olivii*), *Py. elongata* (as *P. rosenfurtii*) and *Py. suborbiculata*. A combined analysis of the nuclear nSSU and the plastid *rbcL* genes together with detailed morphological studies has confirmed the presence of species within the genera *Porphyra* and *Pyropia* and also revealed a third, undescribed genus, *Themis* gen. nov. *Porphyra linearis*, *Pyropia elongata* and the introduced *Pyropia koreana* had been previously listed for the Mediterranean and were recorded in the present study. An additional four species, including the introduced *Pyropia suborbiculata* and three new species: *Pyropia parva* sp. nov., *Themis ballesterosii* sp. nov. and *Themis iberica* sp. nov. were also observed. Hence, most of the *Porphyra* species traditionally reported along these shores were not reported in this survey. This new floristic Bangiales composition confirms the importance of the Mediterranean basin as a hotspot for biodiversity, possible endemics of ancient origin and high proportion of introductions. Our data also continue to confirm the extent of Bangiales diversity at regional and worldwide levels.

Key index words: Bangiales, Mediterranean, nSSU, *Porphyra*, *Pyropia*, *rbcL*, taxonomic revision, *Themis*