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## SM5

### *Spartina alterniflora* salt-marsh community *Spartinetum alterniflorae* Corillion 1955

*Spartina alterniflora* is a naturalised alien in Europe first recorded in Britain in 1829 from the river Itchen, Hampshire (Marchant & Goodman 1969b). By the turn of the century, it had spread to occupy extensive areas of Southampton Water and occurred as far east as Chichester Harbour in Sussex (Rankin in Tansley 1911, Marchant & Goodman 1969b). Since then it has declined, at least partly in response to land reclamation (Marchant 1967) though perhaps also as a result of invasion by *Spartina anglica*, the fertile amphidiploid which arose from hybridisation between *S. alterniflora* and *S. maritima*.

*S. alterniflora* now survives only at Marchwood, Hampshire, and as transplanted clumps in the *Spartina*

Garden in Poole Harbour, Dorset (Marchant & Goodman 1969b). The natural stand comprises a dense cover of *S. alterniflora* shoots with some *Spartina anglica*, *Puccinellia maritima* and *Aster tripolium* (Beefink & Géhu 1973, Géhu & Delzenne 1975). The association occurs in scattered localities down the Atlantic coast of western Europe and is characteristic of situations with a lower and more variable salinity than other *Spartina*-dominated communities (Beefink & Géhu 1973). The Marchwood stand has been placed in the sub-association *asteretosum tripolii* which has also been recorded from Brittany and Spain (Beefink & Géhu 1973, Géhu & Delzenne 1975, Kortekaas *et al.* 1976).