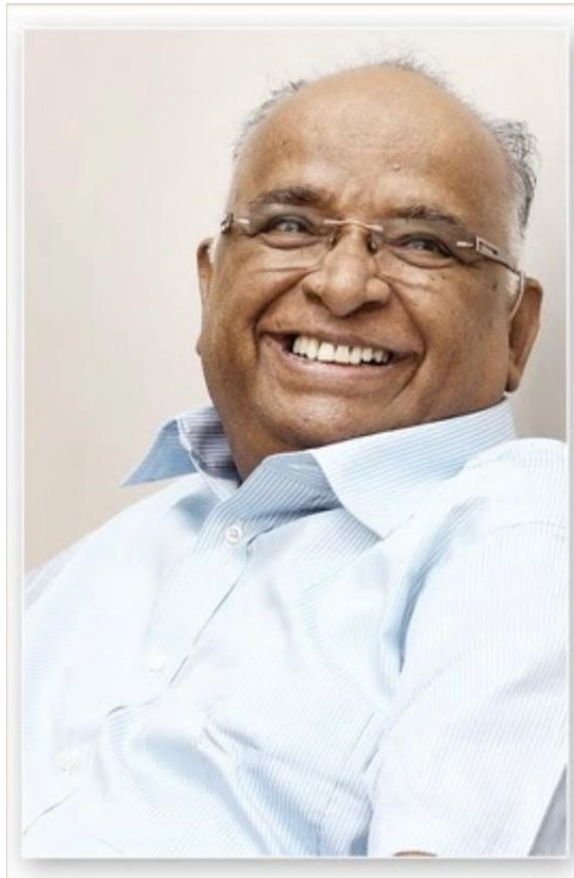


Obituary: Edayathumangalam Kandaswamy Ganesan (1938-2021)

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Edayathumangalam Kandaswamy Ganesan (1938-2021; above) was born on 19th August 1938 in the small village of Edayathumangalam from which his first name was derived (*Edayathu*: between two rivers; *Mangalam*: auspicious, goodness). It is near the capital city, Tiruchirappalli (Trichy), of the state of Tamil Nadu. His family is Brahmin, and his father was a distinguished lawyer who practiced in Erode.

Ganesan's secondary schooling was in Trichy, and he achieved a B.Sc. and M.Sc. degree at St. Joseph's College, a Jesuit College then affiliated to Madras University, in 1960. He did his Ph.D. (1960–1965) at the Department of Botany, University of Madras under the supervision of Professor Thamarapu Vedanta Desikachary (1919–2005), a distinguished specialist in phycology. Ganesan worked primarily on the taxonomy of articulate and crustose coralline red algae for his Ph.D.

In true Brahmin fashion, a traditional marriage was arranged with Kalyani on 19th January 1961. They had four children: their first son, Bhaskar was born in 1962, a second son, Krupashankar, in 1966, their first daughter, Bhuvana, in 1968 and a second daughter, Uma, in 1969. They all have had successful lives carrying his joy of life and work in India and in the USA.

Ganesan and his wife left India in October 1967 to do what he loved most, research and teaching, joining the Instituto Oceanográfico, Universidad de Oriente, Cumaná, Venezuela from 1967 to 1994 when he retired and returned to Chennai (Madras) in Tamil Nadu. Their sons stayed in Madras, but the two daughters were born in Cumaná.



For a sabbatical leave (1974–75) he came with his family (wife and two daughters) to the Department of Botany, University of California, Berkeley where we did culture studies on *Rhodophysemata elegans* (*Rhodophysemataceae*, *Palmariales*) and on the life history and developmental morphology of two *Gloiosiphonia* species (*Gloiosiphoniaceae*, *Gigartinales*). In 1988, he returned to UC Berkeley for 6 months to complete his catalogue “*Marine Algae of Venezuela*”.

At Cumaná, Ganesan had several students including Andres Lemus, Mirella Aponte-Díaz, V. D'Lacoste, Beatriz Vera Vegas and others. He and his students published 30 papers on marine and freshwater algae of Venezuela. In total, Ganesan published 51 papers with various colleagues globally.

Ganesan and I collected in 1991 many marine and some freshwater red algae around Venezuela that have proven very valuable for ecophysiology, culture life histories and molecular phylogeny. Perhaps the most striking are *Bostrychia moritziana* isolates from the rapidly moving freshwater stream Rio Guaire at about 100 m above sea level. In culture the two isolates have grown and reproduced (males, females, tetrasporophytes) very well at 5 ppt seawater for 30 years. Both are in a VZ molecular genome (26S rRNA and *rbcL* DNA) different from all other strains in the *B. radicans/moritziana* complex.

After 28 years at Universidad de Oriente, he retired in 1994 and returned to Chennai and lived with his wife Kalyani in an apartment complex. We continued our research activities in India collecting in mangrove habitats of Tamil Nadu for red algae (*Caloglossa* and *Bostrychia*), collecting freshwater reds in Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Nepal and Assam 2018, attended several conferences in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (three times), Kerala (twice), West Bengal (twice) (Visva-Bharati University, November 2013, University of Calcutta, December 2016). In February 2018, Ganesan organized a successful field trip to north-eastern India and eastern Nepal with the participation of Orlando Necchi Jr. (Brazil) and me, where we did taxonomic investigations on various Batrachospermales with another Indian colleague, Farishta Yasmin (Nowgong College, Assam) and a Nepalese colleague, Shiva Kumar Rai (Tribhuvan University, Nepal).

Our collaboration and publication with Indian, Nepali and Japanese colleagues of many specimens from the whole freshwater region of the Indian subcontinent, especially NE India and Nepal, have proven the rich biodiversity in the Batrachospermales. Orlando Necchi's skills in molecular methods have proven essential in all this. Ganesan had a special skill in approaching colleagues, particularly Indian and Nepalese, to start new collaborations, which have been essential in the study freshwater and resulted in several publications. He recognized the lack of molecular investigations in the whole region and encouraged Necchi and me to contribute to the whole enterprise. His early death from COVID on the 6th of May 2021 will make it most difficult to continue our work but his cheerful spirit will always encourage us.

Ganesan was very helpful and supportive to AlgaeBase and *Notulae Algarum*, in particular providing advice, books, reprints and scans of scarce Indian algal literature.

He represents a loss to everyone in phycology worldwide.

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