Title	LED spectral quality and NaCl salinity interact to affect growth, photosynthesis and phytochemical production of Mesembryanthemum crystallinum
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Summary

The edible halophyte *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* L. was grown with different NaCl salinities under different LED lightings. Interactions between LED ratio and salinity were detected for shoot biomass and leaf growth. All plants were all healthy with similar maximal efficiency of PS II photochemistry. However, grown with 100 and 250 mM NaCl under red/blue LED ratio of 0.9, *M. crystallinum* had higher light energy utilization compared to those growth with 500 mM NaCl. CAM was induced with much higher non-photochemical quenching in *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl. *M. crystallinum* grown with 250 and 500 mM NaCl had higher concentration of phytochemicals than those grown with 100 mM NaCl. Findings of this study suggest that both salinity and light quality affect productivity, photosynthetic light use efficiency and proline accumulation of *M. crystallinum*.

LED spectral quality and NaCl salinity interact to affect growth, photosynthesis and phytochemical production of *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*

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Running title:

LED and salinity on *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*

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Abstract

The edible halophyte *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* L. was grown with different NaCl salinities under different combined red and blue light-emitting diode (LED) light treatments. High salinity (500 mM NaCl) decreased biomass, leaf growth and leaf water content. Interactions between LED ratio and salinity were detected for shoot biomass and leaf growth. All plants had F_v/F_m ratios close to 0.8 in dark-adapted leaves, suggesting that they were all healthy with similar maximal efficiency of PS II photochemistry. However, measured under the actinic light near or above the growth light, the electron transport rate (ETR) and photochemical quenching (qP) of *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 and 250 mM NaCl were higher than with 500 mM NaCl. Grown under red/blue LED ratios of 0.9, *M. crystallinum* had higher ETR and qP across all salinities indicating higher light energy utilization. Crassulacean acid metabolism (CAM) was induced in *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl. CAM-induced leaves had much higher non-photochemical quenching (NPQ), suggesting that NPQ can be used to estimate CAM induction. *M. crystallinum* grown with 250 and 500 mM NaCl had higher total chlorophyll and carotenoids contents than with 100 mM NaCl. Proline, total soluble sugar, ascorbic acid and total phenolic compounds were higher in plants with 250 and 500 mM NaCl compared to those with 100 mM NaCl. Interaction between LED ratio and salinity was detected for proline content. Findings of this study suggest that both salinity and light quality affect productivity, photosynthetic light use efficiency and proline accumulation of *M. crystallinum*.

Additional keywords: leaf growth; photosynthetic light use efficiency; water relations

Introduction

Food production depends upon the availability of land and water. Singapore is one of the world's most land and water-constrained countries. Thus, Singapore imports more than 90 percent of the food it consumes. Maintaining food security, in terms of quantity and quality, is an increasing challenge for Singapore due to the increasing world population. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed unprecedented stresses on the global food supply chains. In March 2019, the Singapore government has thus launched plans such as the '30 by 30' goal to have 30% of Singapore's nutritional needs to be met locally by 2030 (Chang 2019). To step up food security within the constraints of limited land, the use of high-technology farming such as vertical farming under light-emitting diode (LED) lighting is growing in Singapore since 2012. Depleting fresh water resources also pose serious worldwide constraints to crop productivity. Agricultural yield can be enhanced by growing halophytic vegetables, in which seawater can be used instead of fresh water.

Salt-loving halophytes can tolerate a wide range of salinities even above seawater salinity (~500 mM NaCl) through compartmentalization, water use efficiency and ion selectivity (Waisel 1972), thus providing a basis to develop halophytes as gourmet vegetables (Yensen 2006; Castañeda-Loaiza *et al.* 2020). *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* L. (common ice plant) is native to Africa and naturalised in Australia, Mediterranean, the Americas and the Caribbean (Adams *et al*. 1998). According to El-Gawad *et al.* (2014), the leaves of *M. crystallinum* can be eaten raw, cooked as a spinach substitute or pickled. *M. crystallinum* has been successfully cultivated as a vegetable crop in Japan, India, California, Australia and New Zealand (Herppich *et al.* 2008; Agarie *et al.* 2009), including Singapore (He *et al.* 2017). *M. crystallinum* is also a potential source of bioactive compounds beneficial to human health (Agarie *et al.* 2009).

M. crystallinum possesses epidermal bladder cells that sequester Na^+ ions from metabolically active tissues (Shabala *et al.* 2014), act as water storage reservoirs and aid in ion

48 homeostasis (Agarie *et al.* 2007). *M. crystallinum* can perform crassulacean acid metabolism
49 (CAM) under stress conditions such as salinity stress (Cushman *et al.* 2008). However, under
50 well-watered conditions, *M. crystallinum* performs C_3 photosynthesis (Winter and Holtum
51 2005; He *et al.* 2017). Salinity perturbs plant water relations and photosynthetic performance
52 by reducing leaf gas exchange, the content of photosynthetic pigments, distorting chloroplast
53 ultrastructure and PSII system (Betzen *et al*. 2019; Pan *et al*. 2020). However, moderate salinity
54 stress can be beneficial as it induces production of secondary metabolites without adversely
55 affecting growth of *M. crystallinum* (Herppich *et al.* 2008; Atzori *et al.* 2017).
56 Under natural conditions, not only salinity but also the light level affects the physiological
57 performance of halophytes, such as seed germination and seedling growth (Lázaro-Lobo *et al.*
58 2020), stomatal and non-stomatal limitation of photosynthesis (Pan *et al*. 2020). Our recent
59 studies also showed that productivity and photosynthetic characteristics of *M. crystallinum*
60 grown indoors were affected by salinity (He and Qin 2020*b*), as well as LED spectral quality
61 when plants were grown with freshwater (He *et al*. 2017). Different LED spectra play different
62 roles in plant growth and photosynthesis. Biomass accumulation under red light was smaller
63 than red light supplemented with blue light (Dou *et al*. 2017; He *et al*. 2017; 2019). Red light
64 alone reduces photosynthetic rate while blue light maintains photosystem complexes and
65 increases Rubisco content (Muneer *et al.* 2014; He *et al*. 2017; 2019). Red- and blue-light
66 combinations can increase plant productivity (Sabzalian *et al*. 2014; Wang *et al.* 2016; He *et*
67 *al*. 2019). Red-light supplemented with optimal level of blue light also enhanced
68 photosynthetic performance including higher photosynthetic capacity, stomatal conductance,
69 photosystem II (PS II) photochemistry and photosynthetic pigments compared to red-light
70 alone (Hogewoning *et al.* 2010; Savvides *et al*. 2012; Hernández and Kubota 2016; Wang *et*
71 *al.* 2016; He *et al.* 2019).

Globally, there is a major paradigm shift of how we perceive food, from the traditional concept of carbohydrate, protein, fat and calories towards critical functional molecules such as the diverse variety of phytochemicals in vegetables. Phytochemicals such as chlorophyll (Chl), carotenoids (Car), phenolic compounds and ascorbic acid (ASC), are bioactive plant chemicals in vegetables and they have health promoting properties (Hounsome *et al*. 2008; Boestfleisch *et al*. 2014). To protect against oxidative stress caused by salinity, antioxidants such as phenolic compounds and ASC are produced (Dat *et al*. 2000). Salinity also causes hyperosmotic stress in halophytic plants. Osmolytes such as as proline and total soluble sugars (TSS) that can be utilized in functional food, are produced for protection against hyperosmotic stress (Hasegawa *et al*. 2000; Flowers and Colmer 2008; Agarie *et al.* 2009; Hsouna *et al*. 2020). LEDs which provide narrow-bandwidth light treatments, may modulate medicinal and crop plant metabolomes to enhance antioxidant properties (Carvalho *et al*. 2016; Holopainen *et al.* 2018). Our recent studies have shown that drought stress enhanced the concentrations of phytochemicals such as phenolic compounds, ASC and proline of *M. crystallinum* grown indoors under combination of red and blue-LED lighting (He *et al.* 2020). However, there is very little study on the effects of light quality on *M. crystallinum* grown under different saline conditions. Past studies only focused on a single factor, whereas both factors simultaneously influence plant growth of halophytes (Lázaro-Lobo *et al.* 2020; Pan *et al*. 2020). Thus, this project aimed to investigate how changes in both salinity and light quality affect growth, physiology and nutritional quality of *M. crystallinum* when grown indoors. The findings of this study could also help *M. crystallinum* growers to raise productivity and nutritional quality through optimal selections of LED lighting and salinity.

Materials and methods

Plant materials and experimental design

M. crystallinum seeds were germinated on filter paper before being inserted into polyurethane cubes and incubated under a photosynthetic photon flux density (PPFD) of 100 µmol m^{-2} s^{-1} provided by high-pressure sodium lamps for four to five weeks. Seedlings were then transplanted into an indoor hydroponic system. They were grown under three different LED lamps with red/blue (R/B) ratios of 0.9, 2.0 and 2.8 (defined as R/B 0.9, R/B 2.0 and R/B 2.8, Fig. S1, WR-16W, Beijing Lighting Valley Technology Co., Ltd., China) and exposed to the same level of PPFD of 300 µmol m^{-2} s^{-1}, 12 h photoperiod. Under each LED spectrum, plants were grown under three NaCl salinities by adding 100, 250 and 500 mM NaCl respectively, to a full-strength Netherlands Standard Composition with 2.2 ± 0.2 mS cm^{-1} conductivity and pH 6.0 ± 0.2. The room temperature and relative humidity were 24.5℃/23℃ and 56%/82% (day/night) respectively.

Measurements of productivity, leaf growth and leaf water status

Plants from each treatment were harvested 15 days after transplanting. Leaf number was recorded. Shoot and root were separated for fresh weight (FW) measurement. The youngest fully expanded leaves were also weighed separately before measuring their areas using a leaf area meter (WinDIAS3 Image Analysis system) to obtain total leaf area (TLA). Leaves and roots were then dried separately at 80°C for four days, before re-weighing them to obtain dry weight (DW). Specific leaf area (SLA) was determined as L_a/L_{DW} where L_a = leaf area (cm^2) and L_{DW} = leaf dry weight (g) (Hunt *et al.* 2002). Leaf succulence (LS) was estimated as L_{FW}/L_a where L_{FW} = leaf FW (Agarie *et al.* 2007). Leaf dry matter content (LDMC) was determined by L_{DW}/L_{FW} (Garnier *et al.* 2001). Leaf water content (LWC) was determined as $(L_{FW} - L_{DW})/L_{FW}$.

Analysis of Root morphology

10 days after transplanting, roots of each plant were placed in a tray of water and scanned with a WIN MAC RHIZO scanner. Total root length, total number of root tips and total root surface area were determined by WIN MAC RHIZO V3.9 programme.

Measurement of Chl fluorescence F_v/F_m ratio

Maximum photochemical efficiency of PS II was estimated in leaf samples adapted to darkness for 15 min by the F_v/F_m ratio during mid-photoperiod using the Plant Efficiency Analyser (Hansatech Instruments, UK). Plants cultivated for 15 days were used for the measurements of F_v/F_m ratio and all other parameters described in the following sections.

Measurement of CAM acidity

Leaf disks (1 cm diameter) were punched and placed in microtitre plate wells before the beginning and the end of photoperiod. The Milli-Q water (1 mL) was added to each well before heating in 95°C water bath for 15 min. The extracts in the wells were titrated against 0.005 M NaOH, using three drops of phenolphthalein for indicator until end-point was reached. Final volume of NaOH used to reach end-point was used to calculate CAM acidity as μmol H^+ g^{-1} FW (He and Teo 2007).

Measurements of Chl and Car

Fresh leaf disks of 0.1 g cut from the youngest fully expanded leaves were soaked in 5 ml of N,N-dimethylformamide (Sigma chemical co.) in the dark for 48 h at 4°C before measuring the absorptions at 647 nm, 664 nm and 480 nm respectively using a spectrophotometer (UV-2550 Shimadzu, Japan). Chl a, Chl b and Car concentrations were calculated according to Welburn (1994).

Measurements of electron transport rate (ETR), photochemical quenching (qP) and non-photochemical quenching (NPQ)

The youngest fully expanded leaves were harvested and ETR, qP and NPQ were determined at 25°C in the laboratory. Prior to measurements, the leaves were pre-darkened for 15 min. By using the IMAGING PAM MAXI (Walz, Effeltrich, Germany), images of fluorescence emission were digitized within the camera and transferred via ethernet interface (GigEVision®) to the PC for storage and analysis. Measurements and calculations of ETR, qP and NPQ were described previously (He *et al.* 2011).

Measurement of proline

It was measured as described by Bates *et al*. (1973) with modification. The youngest fully expanded leaf samples were rapidly frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored at –80°C. Frozen tissue of 0.5 g was ground with 6 mL of 3% sulfosalicylic acid and centrifuged at 9000 rpm for 10 min at 4°C. The supernatant (1 mL) was mixed with 1 mL of acid-ninhydrin and acetic acid and the mixture was heated in a water bath at 95℃ for an hour. The reaction was stopped by placing the mixture in ice. The reaction mixture was extracted with 2 mL of toluene, vortexed for 30 s. The absorbance was read at 520 nm using toluene as a blank (UV-2550 spectrophotometer, Shimadzu, Japan). The proline concentration was determined from a standard curve.

Measurement of total soluble sugar (TSS)

Dried tissue was used to determine TSS concentration by colorimetric method established by Dubois *et al.* (1956) and modified by He *et al.* (2020)

Measurement of ASC

Total ASC was assayed from 0.5 g of frozen leaves by the reduction of 2,6-dichlorophenolindophenol (DCPIP) according to Leipner *et al.* (1997) and modified by He *et*

al. (2020). The ASC concentration were spectrophotometrically assayed by measuring the absorbance at 524 nm using a spectrophotometer (UV-2550 Shimadzu, Japan). L-ascorbic acid was used as a standard. Results were expressed as µg of ASC per g of FW of leaves.

Measurements of total phenolic compounds

The concentration of total phenolic compounds was determined from 0.5g of fresh samples based on the Folin-Ciocalteu method according to Kang and Saltveit (2002), Ragee *et al.* (2006) with modification (He *et al*. 2020). The concentrations of total phenolic compounds were spectrophotometrically assayed by measuring the absorbance at 740 nm using a spectrophotometer (UV-2550 Shimadzu, Japan). Gallic acid was used as a standard. Total phenolic compounds of the samples were expressed as gallic acid equivalents in micrograms per gram of tissue.

Statistical Analysis

Data was first checked for homoscedasticity and data transformation was performed as necessary. Once data was confirmed to be homoscedastic, two-way ANOVA was performed to detect interaction between LED ratio and NaCl salinity for the different parameters studied (Table S1). For this paper, when interaction between LED ratios and NaCl concentration ([NaCl]) was found to be significant, *post-hoc* tests would not be performed but trends of those parameters would be discussed. If no statistically significant interaction between LED ratios and [NaCl] was detected, main effects were checked via one-way ANOVA for significant differences ($p < 0.05$) and Tukey's test was performed to discriminate the means among the levels of the corresponding factor. Statistical analysis was performed using Minitab (MINITAB, Inc., Release 17, 2013).

Results

Productivity, leaf growth and leaf water status

An interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] on shoot FW was significant (Table S1, $F_{4,27} = 3.62$, $p < 0.05$), indicating the effect of salinity on shoot FW was influenced by light quality. Shoot FW declined with increasing [NaCl] for each LED ratio (Fig. 1*a*). *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl had higher shoot FW than those grown with 250 and 500 mM NaCl. An interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was also detected for shoot DW (Table S1, $F_{4,27} = 5.30$, $p < 0.05$). Shoot DW (Fig. 1*d*) showed similar trends as shoot FW. For root FW (Fig. 1*b*), no interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was detected but only [NaCl] had a significant effect (Table S1, $F_{2,27} = 82.64$, $p < 0.05$). Root FW declined significantly with increasing [NaCl] for each LED ratio (Fig. 1*b*). Root FW of plants grown in the three [NaCl] conditions was significantly different from one another. Although root DW exhibited similar trends as those of root FW (Fig. 1*e*), an interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was found (Table S1, $F_{4,27} = 3.97$, $p < 0.05$). For shoot/root FW ratio, no interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] (Table S1) was detected but both main effects were significant ([NaCl] - $F_{2,27} = 27.90$, LED - $F_{2,27} = 3.38$, $p < 0.05$). Shoot/root FW ratio of *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl was significantly higher than with 250 mM and 500 mM NaCl (Fig. 1*c*). For plants grown in 250 mM NaCl, shoot/root FW ratio for plants under R/B 2.8 was significantly higher than under R/B 2.0. However, there were no significantly differences in shoot/root FW ratio between plants grown under R/B 0.9 and R/B2.8 with 250 mM [NaCl]. No interaction between LED ratios and [NaCl] for shoot/root DW ratio was detected (Table S1), but [NaCl] had a significant effect ($F_{2,27} = 18.65$, $p < 0.05$). Shoot/root DW ratio (Fig. 1*f*) showed a trend opposite to shoot/root FW ratio (Fig. 1*c*) with *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl being significantly higher than those grown with 100 mM and 250 mM NaCl.

For leaf number and TLA, interactions between LED ratio and [NaCl] were detected (Table S1, $F_{4,27} = 3.56$, $p < 0.05$ for leaf number and $F_{4,27} = 3.05$, $p < 0.05$ for TLA). *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl had the lowest leaf number while those grown with 100 mM NaCl had highest number (Fig. 2*a*). The downward trend seen in leaf number with increasing [NaCl] was also observed in TLA for all LED ratios (Fig. 2*b*). However, no interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was detected for SLA (Table S1). Both LED ratio and [NaCl] had significant effects on SLA (LED - $F_{2,27} = 3.50$, $p < 0.05$, [NaCl] - $F_{2,27} = 308.22$, $p < 0.05$). Under 100 mM NaCl, SLA of plants grown under R/B 0.9 was significantly lower than under R/B 2.0. Under 250 mM and 500 mM NaCl, there were no significant differences in SLA among the plants grown under the three LED ratios (Fig. 2*c*).

No interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was detected for LS, LDMC and LWC (Table S1). However, only [NaCl] had a significant effect on LS ($F_{2,27} = 23.10$, $p < 0.05$), LMDC ($F_{2,27} = 152.35$, $p < 0.05$) and LWC ($F_{2,27} = 152.35$, $p < 0.05$). *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM and 250 mM NaCl generally had similar LS values under all LED ratios (Fig. 2*d*) and were not significantly different from each other. Plants grown with 500 mM NaCl had significantly lower LS than those of plants grown with 100 mM and 250 mM NaCl. The trend for LWC (Fig. 2*f*) parallels that of LS (Fig. 2*d*). LWC of *M. crystallinum* significantly decreased with increasing [NaCl] and they were significantly different from one another. LDMC increased significantly with increasing [NaCl]. LDMC of plants in each of the three salinities were significantly different from one another (Fig. 2*e*).

F_v/F_m ratio and CAM acidity

There was an interaction detected for F_v/F_m ratio (Table S1, $F_{4,63} = 3.29$, $p < 0.05$). F_v/F_m ratios of *M. crystallinum* grown under different conditions were close to 0.8 except for those grown with 500 mM under R/B 0.9 and R/B 2.8 had F_v/F_m ratios slightly below 0.8 (Fig. 3*a*), indicating the plants were healthy. There was no interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] for

CAM acidity (Table S1), but [NaCl] had a significant effect on this parameter ($F_{2,18} = 87.89$, $p < 0.05$). CAM acidity rose significantly with increasing [NaCl] for all LED ratios (Fig. 3*b*). *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl was the lowest. CAM acidity of plants grown with 500 mM NaCl were four times higher than those with 100 mM NaCl.

Photosynthetic pigments

Table S1 shows that there is an interactive effect between LED ratio and [NaCl] for total Chl ($F_{4,18} = 6.20$, $p < 0.05$) and Chl a/b ratio ($F_{4,27} = 4.30$, $p < 0.05$). *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl had lower total Chl compared to those grown with 250 mM and 500 mM NaCl, regardless of LED ratio (Fig. 4*a*). When grown with 100 mM and 250 mM NaCl, total Chl under R/B 0.9 and 2.0 seemed to be higher than those under R/B 2.8. However, plants grown with 500 mM NaCl showed opposite results. No clear trend was observed for Chl a/b ratio among the different treatments (Fig. 4*b*). Total Car showed a similar trend as total Chl (Fig. 4*c*). However, no interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was detected for total Car (Table S1). Instead, only [NaCl] had a significant effect ($F_{2,27} = 16.08$, $p < 0.05$). *M. crystallinum* grown with 250 mM and 500 mM [NaCl] had significantly higher total Car than those grown with 100 mM NaCl (Fig. 4*c*). For Chl/Car ratio, no interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was detected (Table S1). Only [NaCl] had a significant effect ($F_{2,27} = 12.27$, $p < 0.05$). Although statistically, Chl/Car ratios *of M. crystallinum* were significantly higher with 100 and 500 mM than with 250 mM there were no large differences in Chl/Car ratios among *M. crystallinum* grown under the three [NaCl] conditions and LED (Fig. 4*d*).

ETR, qP and NPQ

The light response curves of *ETR, qP and NPQ* only showed for plants subjected to the extremes of each factor to demonstrate the effect of both factors on the overall responses (Fig. 5). ETR (Fig. 5*a*) and NPQ (Fig. 5*c*) increased while qP (Fig. 5*b*) decreased with increasing

PPFD for all plants. The light response curves of ETR and qP for *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl were generally below those with 100 mM NaCl. However, the light response curves of NPQ of *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl were above those grown with 100 mM NaCl, especially under R/B 0.9. Fig. 6 shows the mean values of ETR, qP and NPQ, measured at the actinic light which was near the growth light level. Interactions between LED ratio and [NaCl] were detected (Table S1) for ETR ($F_{4,27} = 5.18$, $p < 0.05$), qP ($F_{4,27} = 4.24$, $p < 0.05$) and NPQ ($F_{4,27} = 6.51$, $p < 0.05$). ETR of *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM and 250 mM NaCl seemed to be higher than with 500 mM NaCl, for all LED ratios (Fig. 6*a*). Within each [NaCl] condition, plants grown under R/B 0.9 had higher ETR values compared to those under R/B 2.0 or R/B 2.8. Plants grown under R/B 0.9 generally had higher qP values than those under R/B 2.0 or 2.8 for each [NaCl] condition (Fig. 6*b*). Plants grown with 500 mM NaCl displayed slightly lower qP values than those with 100 mM NaCl or 250 mM NaCl across all LED ratios. NPQ values of *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl were almost double of those with 100 mM or 250 mM NaCl, across all LED ratios (Fig. 6*c*).

Phytochemicals

An interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was detected for proline (Table S1, $F_{4,18} = 307.18$, $p < 0.05$). *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl had very low proline content compared to those of plants grown with 250 and 500 mM NaCl. Proline content in plants grown with 500 mM under R/B 0.9 and R/B 2.8 were at least three times higher than other plants (Fig. 7*a*). No interaction was detected for TSS (Table S1), but both [NaCl] and LED ratio had significant effects ([NaCl] - $F_{2,18} = 87.47$ $p < 0.05$, LED – $F_{2,18} = 9.50$, $p < 0.05$). For plants growth under each given LED ratio, TSS content rose significantly with increasing [NaCl]. Plants grown with 500 mM NaCl under R/B 0.9 had significantly higher TSS content than those under R/B 2.0 and 2.8 (Fig. 7*b*). No interactions between LED ratio and [NaCl] were detected for ascorbic acid and total phenolic compounds (Table S1), but only [NaCl] had

a significant effect on both parameters (ascorbic acid - $F_{2,45} = 16.84$, $p < 0.05$; total phenolic compounds - $F_{2,18} = 81.92$, $p < 0.05$). Ascorbic acid and total phenolic compounds were significantly lower in *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl than those grown with 250 mM and 500 mM NaCl. However, there were no significant differences in these phytochemical concentrations between plants grown with 250 mM and 500 mM NaCl (Fig. 7*c*, *d*). LED ratio had no significant impact on ascorbic acid and total phenolic compounds under each [NaCl] condition (Fig. 7*c*, *d*).

Discussion

Productivity, leaf growth and leaf water status

Most halophytes require saline conditions to attain optimal growth. *M. crystallinum* shows optimal growth within 50 to 250 mM NaCl (Flowers *et al.* 1986). Our previous study confirmed that *M. crystallinum* with 100 mM NaCl had the highest shoot FW and largest leaf area compared to those grown wirh 0 mM , 250 and 500 mM NaCl. However, *M. crystallinum* grown under 500 mM NaCl had the lowest shoot and leaf area (He and Qin 2020*b*). In this study, plants grown with 500 mM NaCl also had the lowest shoot and root shoot FW (Fig. 1*a*, *b*). Sub-optimal salinities negatively affect growth by decreasing carbon fixation or re-allocating energy and resources towards osmotic adjustment through synthesising osmolytes (Flowers and Colmer 2008; Flower *et al*. 2010; Hamed *et al*. 2013; Benjamin *et al*. 2019; Hsouna *et al*. 2020) such as proline and TSS (Fig. 7*a*, *b*). Different LED spectral quality may also affect biomass accumulation in *M. crystallinum*. We have recently reported that LED R:B ratio of 9:1 promoted highest growth for *M. crystallinum* (He *et al.* 2017). Enhanced growth under combined red and blue LED were also observed in spinach, radish and lettuce (Muneer *et al.* 2014; Wang *et al.* 2016). As both salinity and light quality can affect biomass, it was not surprising to find statistically significant interactions between LED ratio and [NaCl] for shoot FW and DW (Table S1, Fig. 1). This implies that light quality influences salinity effects on *M.*

309 *crystallinum* and vice versa. Thus, it appears necessary to control both factors in order to
310 optimise yield.

311 It has been reported that shoot biomass accumulation was due to increases in leaf number
312 and leaf area (Wang *et al.* 2016). The reductions of these two parameters (Fig. 2*a*, *b*) might
313 partly account for the lower biomass under higher salinity. As interactions between light
314 quality and salinity was detected for both parameters, the effect of light quality on both
315 parameters are possibly influenced by salinity. *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl had
316 the significantly higher SLA compared to those grown under 250 and 500 mM NaCl (Fig. 2*c*).
317 Although red- and blue-light combinations enhance leaf growth (Christophe *et al.* 2006; He *et*
318 *al*. 2019), light quality seemed to only impact SLA in this study where R/B 2.0 promote thinner
319 leaves compared to the other LED ratios. However, this appears restricted to only low salinity
320 conditions of 100 mM NaCl (Fig. 2*c*).

321 *M. crystallinum* accumulates Na^+ and Cl^- in the bladder cells of leaves and stems,
322 preventing their excessive accumulation in photosynthetic tissues (Agarie *et al*. 2007;
323 Castañeda-Loaiza *et al.* 2020). Leaf extension and water status might have been depressed by
324 bladder cells and vacuoles reaching maximum capacity and unable to sequester more Na^+,
325 resulting in excess Na accumulating in the leaves (Munns 1993). The LS of plants measured
326 on a leaf area basis was significantly lower when grown with 500 mM NaCl than with 100 mM
327 and 250 mM NaCl (Fig. 2*d*). This result suggests that there was less water in the leaves grown
328 under the highest salinity of 500 mM NaCl regardless of different leaf thickness measured by
329 SLA (Fig. 2c). This is further supported by the trends observed for LWC (Fig. 2*f*) which is
330 related to the maximum water content that can potentially be achieved by the leaf.

331 The depression of LS and LWC in *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl could be
332 attributed to the stunted root architecture which might have limited water uptake. For instance,

plants grown with 500 mM NaCl had the shortest total root length with smallest number of root tip and total root surface area while the greatest values of these parameters belonged to plants grown with 100 mM NaCl (Fig. S2). Herppich *et al.* (2008) reported no significant effect of salinity on LS and LWC when *M. crystallinum* grown with 150 mM NaCl and harvested at much later growth stage. It might be possible that reductions in LS and LWC observed in this study are early effects of salinity stress and are evident only at salinities >250 mM NaCl. LDMC is the growth trait which has been proposed as an indicator of plant resource use (Garnier *et al.* 2001). LDMC (mg g^{-1}) is the proportion of the leaf matter content without water related to the mass of the leaf with the maximum water content. In this study, LDMC was significantly higher in plants grown with 500 mM NaCl than with 100 mM and 250 mM NaCl (Fig. 2*e*), indicating the former accumulated more biomass for the same amount of FW. However, the higher LDMC at higher [NaCl] condition was more likely due to the low water content as biomass was clearly lower at higher salinities (Fig. 1). Lowest LWC (Fig. 2*f*) and highest LDMC (Fig. 2*e*) could explain why shoot/root FW ratio (Fig. 1*c*) and DW (Fig. 1*f*) were respectively the lowest and the highest in *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl.

Photosynthetic light use efficiency and photosynthetic pigments

F_v/F_m ratio is an early indicator of salt stress and provides important information on maximal (potential) efficiency of PS II photochemistry (Kalaji *et al.* 2011; Matsuoka *et al.* 2018). The F_v/F_m ratios in dark-adapted leaves among all plants were close to 0.8 (Fig. 3*a*), indicating that there were no evidence of damage to PS II (James *et al.* 2002; Barker *et al.* 2004; Broettoa *et al.* 2007). However, *M. crystallinum* grown with different [NaCl] exhibited different photochemical light use efficiency measured by ETR, qP and NPQ in light-adapted leaves (Fig. 5, 6). Measured under the actinic light which was either near (Fig. 6) or above (Fig. 5) their growth light, the ETR values of *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM NaCl were higher than with 500 mM NaCl. Broettoa *et al.* (2007) reported that the maximal quantum

efficiency of PS II, F_v/F_m measured at predawn always remaining at 0.8, showing that there was no acute photoinhibition, when *M. crystallinum* with 400 mM NaCl under both high light (1000 µmol m^{-2} s^{-1}, HLSA) and low light (200 µmol m^{-2} s^{-1}, LLSA) for 13 days. Broettoa *et al*. (2007) also found that ETR_{max} (ETR at saturated light) of *M. crystallinum* grown with 400 mM NaCl under both high light and low light declined during the daily courses. Furthermore, in the present study, plants grown under R/B 0.9 had higher ETR values across all salinities. *M. crystallinum* grown under higher blue light utilised more light energy indicated by the high ETR. The higher ETR could be due to higher cyclic electron transport around photosystem I to avoid photodamage (Shikanai 2007; Takahashi and Badger 2011). Different ETR for *M. crystallinum* grown under different light sources could also be due to the variability in the PSII/PSI stoichiometry. It is likely that photosystem stoichiometry was adjusted (Chow *et al*. 1990), leading to a change in light partitioning coefficient. This is a plausible strategy for plants to cope with the higher energy associated with blue light under R/B 0.9 than under R/B 2.0 or 2.8. This further explains why all plants were relatively healthy with F_v/F_m ratios around 0.8. qP, the proportion of PS II reaction centres that remained open, showed similar responses as those of ETR to LED quality (Fig. 6*b*). This result further supports that *M. crystallinum* grown under high blue light (R/B 0.9) exhibited higher photosynthetic light use efficiency compared to those grown under R/B 2.0 or 2.8. However, the light source for actinic light illumination when fluorescence kinetics were analysed was different from LED lights under which *M. crystallinum* were grown. Thus, the absorptance of *M. crystallinum* leaves to actinic light (fixed at 0.84) may not be the same due to light spectrum acclimation.

Blue light was reported to increase total Chl pool, leading to increases in ETR (Wang *et al.* 2016; He *et al*. 2017). Under salinity stress, total Chl might reduce due to increased Chl degradation and reduced Chl synthesis (Santos 2004). However, in this study, *M. crystallinum* grown with 250 and 500 mM NaCl had higher total Chl content compared to those grown with

100 mM (Fig. 4*a*). Similarly, in the study with two obligate halophytes, *Sesuvium portulacastrum* and *Tecticornia indica,* Rabhi *et al*. (2012) reported that under saline conditions (200 mM and 400 mM NaCl) , total Chl content was significantly enhanced in both species. The aforementioned studies only investigated the effects of light quality or salinity separately. In this study, the interactions between the two factors were statistically significant (Table S1) for both total Chl and ETR (Table S1, Fig. 6), the effect of salinity on photosynthetic light use efficiency of light-adapted leaves are possibly influenced by light quality under which they were grown. Li *et al*. (2020) reported Hybrid *Pennisetum* grown under NaCl salinity condition had lower Chl a/b ratio compared to those grown without NaCl. Rabhi *et al*. (2012) found that Chl a/b ratio was slightly modified by salinity and, in both *S. portulacastrum* and *T. indicia* only with 400 mM NaCl, it was found that Chl a/b ratio increased in *S. portulacastrum* and decreased in *T. indica*. However, in this study, there were no obvious difference in Chl a/b ratio among all *M. crystallinum* (Fig. 4*b*). Matsuoka *et al*. (2018) also found that during the course of a 2-week grown with 500 mM NaCl, *M. crystallinum* had little variation in Chl a/b ratio, suggesting a constant antenna size.

NPQ values of *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl were close to 2 while those with 100 mM or 250 mM NaCl were around 1 to 1.08, across all LED ratios (Fig. 6*c*), indicating an increase in the thermal dissipation of excess energy via the xanthophyll cycle that involves Car under higher [NaCl] (Koyro 2006; Broetto et al. 2007; Jahns *et al.* 2012). This was supported by the fact that total Car of plants grown with 500 mM NaCl, across the LED ratios, were significantly higher than with 100 mM (Fig. 4*c*). However, it was also noted that total Car content was similar for plants grown with 250 mM NaCl and 500 mM NaCl (Fig. 4*c*) while NPQ was much higher in plants grown with 500 mM NaCl than with 250 mM NaCl (Fig. 6*c*). Therefore, there is no clear relationship between NPQ and Car in the present study. Similar to the total Chl content, Rabhi *et al.* (2012) found that higher total Car content in both *S.*

portulacastrum and *T. indica* grown with 200 and 400 mM NaCl. Koyro (2006) reported that salt-induced increase of the Car content in leaves of halophyte, *Plantago coronopus* (L.), could function to dissipate the excess energy in the PSI and PSII. In this study, although interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was not detected (Table S1) for Chl/Car ratio only [NaCl] had a significant effect on Chl/Car ratios among *M. crystallinum* grown under the three [NaCl] conditions. However, the impacts of LED on Chl/Car ration did not vary greatly (Fig. 4*d*).

CAM acidity

M. crystallinum has been demonstrated a substantial reversion to C_3 photosynthesis following the removal of stress (Winter and Holtum 2014; He *et al*. 2017; He and Qin 2020*b*). In our recent studies, *M. crystallinum* grown indoors with fresh water had high light-saturated CO_2 assimilation rate (A_{sat}) and stomatal conductance ($g_{s\ sat}$) but very low CAM acidity during light period (He *et al*. 2017). We have also found that simulating drought stress causes water deficit of *M. crystallinum* but does not induce CAM (He *et al*. 2020). According to Cushman *et al*. (2008), CAM acidity levels of at least 40 μmol H^+ g^{-1} FW were deemed to be performing CAM under saline conditions. In this study, *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl was most likely engaging CAM as all plants under 500 mM NaCl had CAM acidity of > 40 μmol H^+ g^{-1} FW (Fig. 3*b*), indicating the mode of photosynthesis was switched from C_3 to crassulacean acid metabolism (CAM) upon high salt stress. Matsuoka *et al*. (2018) reported that high salinity induced CAM photosynthesis in *M. crystallinum*, which apparently resulted in photoinhibition measured by the decreased F_v/F_m ratio during the first 3 days of CAM induction. However, in this study, F_v/F_m ratio were close to 0.8 in all plants. Matsuoka *et al*. (2018) also found that F_v/F_m ratios of CAM-induced leaves did not change diurnally but NPQ showed a clear diurnal change. Under actinic illumination near the growth light level, NPQ values of CAM-induced leaves in the dark period gradually increased during CAM

induction. Based on the study of Matsuoka *et al*. (2018), there was no close relationship between F_v/F_m ratio and the induction of CAM photosynthesis under salt stress. However, many researchers (Keiller *et al*. 1994; Broetto *et al*. 2007; Niewiadomska *et al*. 2011; Matsuoka *et al*. 2018) reported that in the CAM-inducible *M. crystalline* under high salt stress, lower qP and higher NPQ were observed during the dark period than during the light period, under the same actinic light. Thus, NPQ can be used to estimate the degree of CAM induction. Higher NPQ in *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl was also observed in the present study when chlorophyll fluorescence parameters were analysed under an actinic light which is near the growth light level in the middle of light period (Fig. 6*c*) . However, for *M. crystallinum* grown with 100 mM and 250 mM NaCl, CAM induction doesn't seem to occur (Fig. 3*b*) and their NPQ values were much lower than those of plants grown with 500 mM NaCl across all LED ratios (Fig. 6*c*). It has been reported that blue light induces higher NPQ (Hemming, 2011; He *et al*., 2015; 2017; Hamdani *et al*. 2019). In our previous study, it was found that higher blue-LEDs resulted in higher NPQ in *M. crystallinum* grown with freshwater (He *et al*. 2017). However, this was not observed in the present study with *M. crystallinum* grown with saline water when the measurements were carried out under the actinic light which is near the growth light (Fig. 6*c*). There is an interaction between LED quality and salinity for NPQ (Tabel S1), the results of NPQ could be the impact of one factor depending on the level of the other factor. In other words, the effect of blue light on NPQ was attenuated under saline conditions. However, when measured under higher actinic lights, NPQ of *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl was much higher under R/B 0.9 (higher blue-LED) than under R/B 2.8 (Fig. 5*c*). The induction of CAM when *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl could potentially account for its low biomass accumulation (Fig. 1) as CAM is an energetically expensive process. CAM requires a ready supply of organic intermediates and to pump malate across the tonoplast, all of which require high amounts of ATP. As the interaction between

light quality and salinity was not significant for CAM acidity (Table S1), it seemed that changing salinity would be sufficient to induce CAM in *M. crystallinum*.

Phytochemicals

Proline and TSS are well-known osmolytes that enable plants to avoid the consequences of hyperosmotic stress caused by high salinity (Ashraf and Harris 2004; Flowers and Colmer 2008; Agarie *et al.* 2009; Hamed *et al*. 2013; Benjamin *et al*. 2019; Hsouna *et al*. 2020). Our study also showed that high proline and TSS accumulation were observed in *M. crystallinum* grown with 250 mM and 500 mM NaCl (Fig. 7*a*, *b*). Sanadhya *et al*. (2015) also reported the similar results which proline, total amino acids and TSS increased with increasing salt concentrations in halophyte *Aeluropus lagopoides* (L.) Thwaites. In the perennial halophyte, *Sesuvium portulacastrum* (L.), Nikalje *et al*. (2018) revealed an increase in the proline content in its leaves and roots subjected to both low and high salt treatments. Thus, the increased proline and TSS content could be one of the strategies for halophyte to prevent salt-induced damage. In the present study, *M. crystallinum* grown with 250 and 500 mM had significantly lower LWC compared to those grown under 100 mM NaCl (Fig. 2*f*). This result indicates that accumulation of proline and TSS could also be one of the strategies for *M. crystallinum* grown under higher salinities to prevent the effects of water deficit on its physiological process (Paul and Cockburn 1989; Lokhande and Suprasanna 2012; Kumari *et al*. 2015; He *et al*. 2020). Paul and Cockburn (1989) reported that CAM was induced in *M. crystallinum* plants grown with 400 mM NaCl, which was accompanied by the accumulation of proline and pinitol to constitute 71% of the soluble carbohydrate. Kumari *et al*. (2015) suggested that proline is the important metabolite involved in salt tolerance of halophytes. In our previous study, we found that grown under simulated drought stress, *M. crystallinum* accumulated much higher amounts of proline and TSS compared to well-watered plants (He *et al*. 2020).

Proline accumulation was also associated with light when plants subjected to salt stress (Goas *et al*. 1982; Hayashi *et al.* 2000). Proline content of *Arabidopsis* increased in light and decreased in darkness (Hayashi *et al.* 2000). However, there is very little work published on the effect of light quality on proline accumulation. In this study, light quality seemed to affect proline similarly to salinity stress but its effects cannot be considered without salinity and vice versa (Table S1). While no interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] was detected for TSS, both salinity and light quality affected TSS levels separately. Light quality affects photosynthetic rate (Muneer *et al.* 2014; He *et al.* 2017), which affects sugar production with R/B 0.9 promoting high TSS accumulation under high salinity conditions. Muneer *et al.* (2014) reported that photosynthetic performance of lettuce leaves increased with an increasing light intensity under blue LED illumination. In the study with *M. crystallinum* grown with freshwater, we previously demonstrated that blue LED enhance photosynthetic CO_2 assimilation rate (He *et al*. 2017). In the present study, *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl had high CAM acidity across all LED ratios (Fig. 3*c*). High TSS accumulation in *M. crystallinum* grown under R/B 0.9 with 500 mM NaCl is very unlikely due to its high photosynthetic rate. Hyperosmotic stress may have occurred in *M. crystallinum* grown with 500 mM NaCl and thus it is likely that high blue promoted TSS accumulation for protection against hyperosmotic stress (Hasegawa *et al*. 2000; Flowers and Colmer 2008; Agarie *et al.* 2009; Hsouna *et al*. 2020).

Salinity and drought stress usually induce oxidative damage, forming reactive oxygen species (ROS) in both glycophytes and halophytes (Chaparzadeh *et al*. 2004; Bose *et al*. 2014; Wang *et al.* 2014). Apart from the accumulation of proline which has antioxidant functions (Bose *et al.* 2014), halophytes are also able to synthesize certain natural antioxidants such as ascorbic acid and total phenolic compounds under saline and drought conditions (Ksouri *et al.* 2007; Dat *et al*. 2000; He *et al*. 2020). Ascorbic acid is involved in the Mehler reaction

(Smirnoff 1996) which scavenges ROS. Phenolic compounds possess antioxidative properties and confer various physiological responses to stresses in plants (Cheynier *et al.* 2013). As salt stress induced oxidative stress (Ozgur *et al.* 2013), accumulation of both compounds was expected. Hsouna *et al*. (2020) reported that both phenolic contents and the antioxidant activity of leaves of the halophyte *Lobularia maritima* were increased under the 200 mM salinity stress. Although the antioxidant activity was not determined in this study, ascorbic acid and total phenolic compounds of *M. crystallinum* were similarly and significantly higher when grown with 250 mM and 500 mM NaCl than with 100 mM NaCl (Fig. 7*c*, *d*), suggesting that levels of these substances can be controlled by adjusting salinity levels. Separately, red- and blue-light combinations also promote ascorbic acid and phenolic compounds (Holopainen *et al.* 2018). However, this could be species-dependent since there were no significant differences in the two compounds among the three LED ratios in this study.

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the interactive effects between salinity and light quality on growth, photosynthesis and phytochemical production of *M. crystallinum***.** The results revealed a highly complex picture as there were no distinct patterns in which interactions were found for the parameters studied. However, the findings did show that *M. crystallinum* grown with high salinity of 500 mM NaCl was unfavourable although higher accumulations of phytochemicals such as proline, TSS, ascorbic acid and total phenolic compounds were observed in those plants. The findings of this study provide the *M. crystallinum* growers with information to enhance productivity and nutritional quality through optimal selections of LED lighting and salinity. It would be feasible to first grow *M. crystallinum* under low salinity such as 100 mM NaCl to achieve high biomass before transferring to high salinity conditions to enhance phytochemical production. Furthermore, the interaction between salinity and light quality may depend on the light intensity, which merits further study.

Acknowledgements

This research project is supported by the Ministry of Education, Singapore, under its Academic Research Fund Tier 1 (2018-T1-001-008) and teaching materials' vote of National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. We are also indebted to Professor Fred Wah Soon Chow, Australian National University, for the opportunities he widely made available to establish and refine a system to effectively study the efficiency of photosynthetic light utilization under different LED spectral quality.

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Author contribution

JH initiated and funded the expenses for the project, carried out some parts of the experiments. JH and LQ planned the experiments. DKJQ carried out most measurements, analysed the data and plotted the graphs under supervision of JH and LQ. JH and DKJQ wrote the 1st draft of the manuscript. JH and LQ revised the manuscript.

Figure Captions

Fig. 1. Shoot FW (*a*), root FW (*b*), shoot/root FW ratio (*c*), shoot DW (*d*), root DW (*e*) and shoot/root DW ratio (*f*) of *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED ratios and salinities for 15 days. Values are means (±S.E. n=4) where different letters indicate significant differences ($p < 0.05$).

Fig. 2. Leaf number (*a*), total leaf area, TLA (*b*), specific leaf area, SLA (*c*), leaf succulence, LS (*d*), leaf dry matter content, LDMC (*e*), leaf water content, LWC (*f*) of *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED light ratios and salinities for 15 days. Values are means (±S.E., n=4) where different letters indicate significant differences ($p < 0.05$).

Fig. 3. F_v/F_m ratio (*a*) and CAM acidity (*b*) of *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED light ratios and salinities for 15 days. Values are means (±S.E., n=4) where different letters indicate significant differences ($p < 0.05$).

Fig. 4. Total Chl (*a*), Chl a/b ratio (*b*), total Car (*c*) and Chl/Car ratio (*d*) of *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED ratios and salinities for 15 days. Values are means (±S.E., n=4) where different letters indicate significant differences ($p < 0.05$).

797 Fig. 5. Light response curves of ETR (*a*), qP (*b*) NPQ a(*c*) of *M. crystallinum* grown under
798 different LED ratios and salinities for 15 days. Values are means (±S.E., n=4).

799 Fig. 6. ETR (*a*), qP (*b*) and NPQ (*c*) were measured at the actinic light of 281 µmol photons
800 m^{-2} s^{-1} which was similar to their growth PPFD for *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED
801 ratios and salinities for 15 days. Values are means (±S.E., n=4).

802 Fig. 7. Proline content (*a*), TSS (*b*), ascorbic acid content (*c*) and total phenolic compounds
803 content (*d*) of *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED light ratios and salinity treatments
804 for 15 days. Values are means (±S.E.) where different letters indicate significant differences (p
805 < 0.05) of three replicates.

806

807 Fig. S1. Light spectra of 0.9, 2.0 and 2.8 red- and blue- (R/B) light ratio conditions. Spectral
808 scans were recorded every 0.5 nm with a spectroradiometer (PS300, Apogee Instruments,
809 USA).

810 Fig. S2 Total root length (A), total number of root tips (B) and total root surface area (C) of
811 *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED light ratios and salinities for 15 days. Interaction
812 between LED ratio and [NaCl] were detected for total root length ($F_{4,27} = 6.96$, $p < 0.05$); total
813 number of root ($F_{4,27} = 7.79$, $p < 0.05$) and total root surface area ($F_{4,27} = 6.66$, $p < 0.05$).

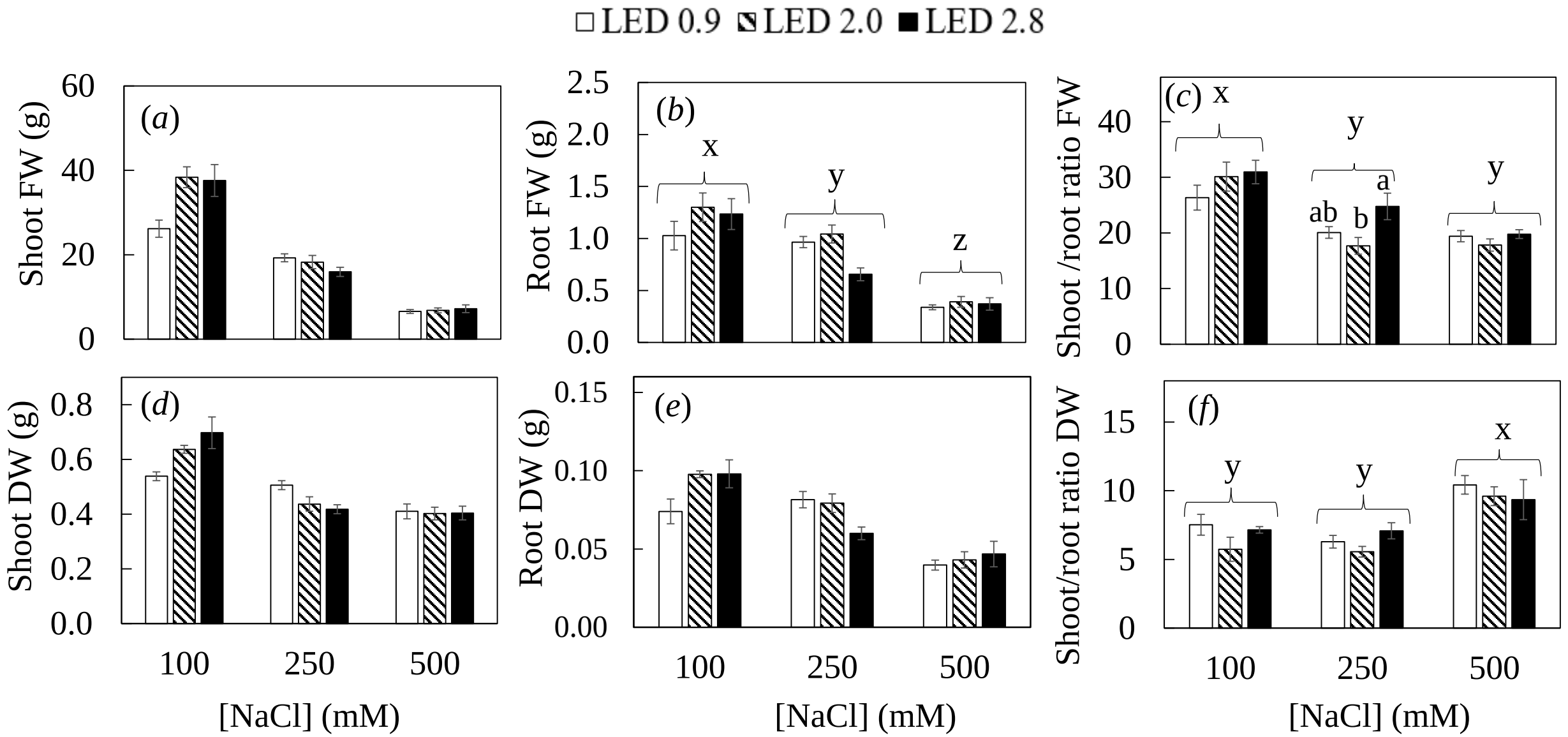
LED 0.9
LED 2.0
LED 2.8
(a)
Shoot FW (g)
60
40
20
0
(b)
Root FW (g)
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
x
y
z
(c)
Shoot /root ratio FW
40
30
20
10
0
x
y
ab
b
a
y
(d)
Shoot DW (g)
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
(e)
Root DW (g)
0.15
0.10
0.05
0.00
(f)
Shoot/root ratio DW
15
10
5
0
y
y
x
100
250
500
[NaCl] (mM)

Fig. 1.

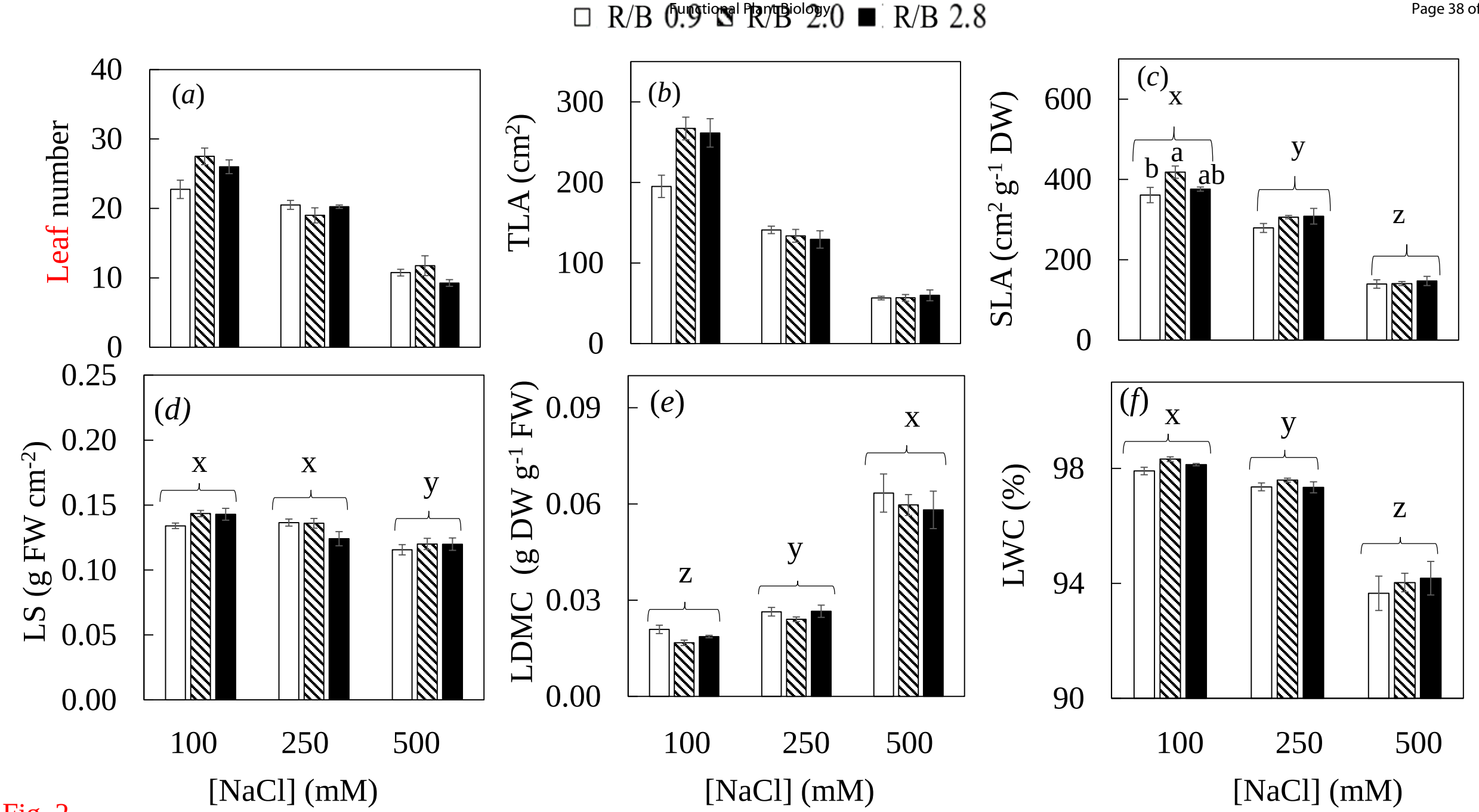
R/B 0.9
R/B 2.0
R/B 2.8
(a)
Leaf number
(b)
TLA (cm²)
(c)
SLA (cm² g⁻¹ DW)
x
a
b
ab
y
z
(d)
LS (g FW cm⁻²)
(e)
LDMC (g DW g⁻¹ FW)
(f)
LWC (%)
100
250
500
[NaCl] (mM)

Fig. 2.

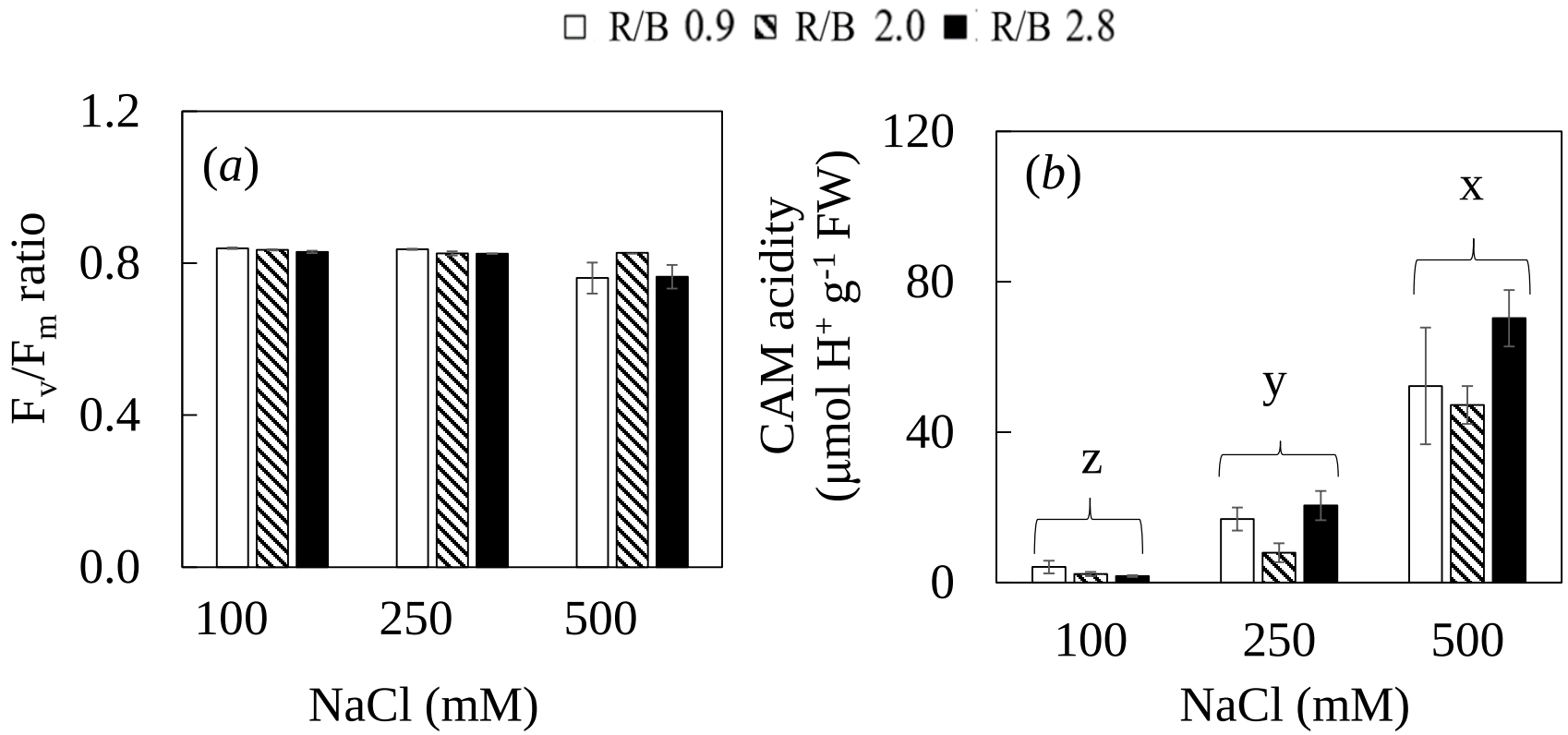
R/B 0.9
R/B 2.0
R/B 2.8
(a)
1.2
0.8
0.4
0.0
F_v/F_m ratio
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(b)
120
80
40
0
CAM acidity
(μmol H^+ g^{-1} FW)
z
y
x
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)

Fig. 3.

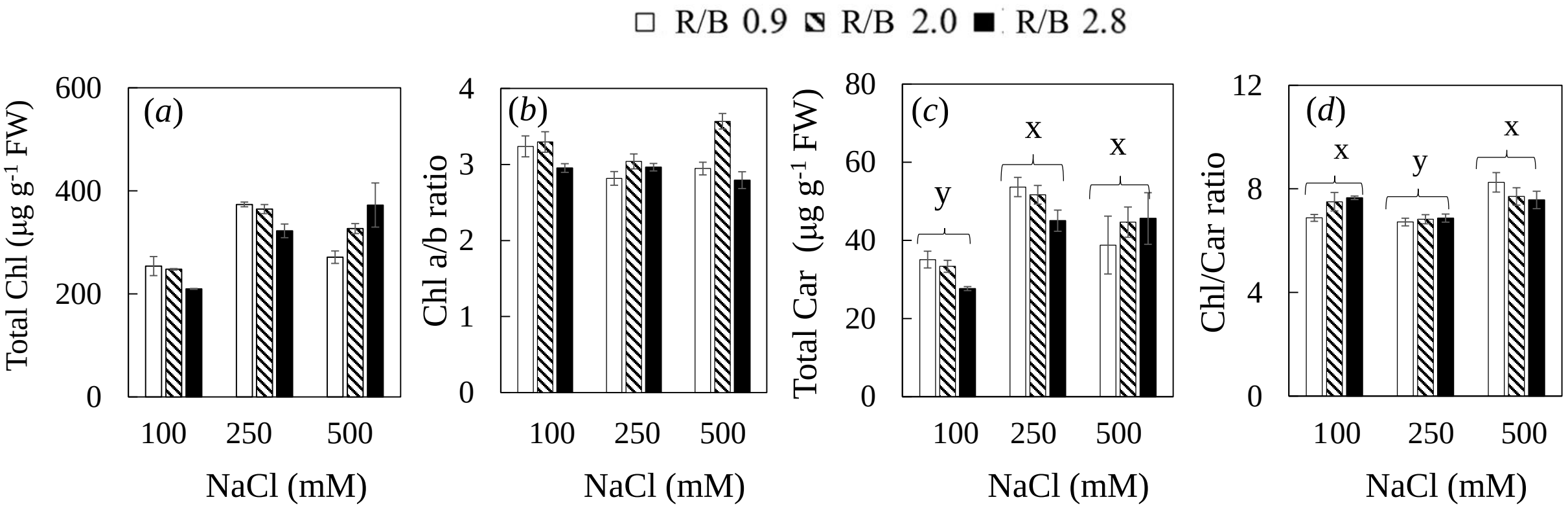
R/B 0.9
R/B 2.0
R/B 2.8
(a)
Total Chl (μg g-1 FW)
600
400
200
0
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(b)
Chl a/b ratio
4
3
2
1
0
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(c)
Total Car (μg g-1 FW)
80
60
40
20
0
y
x
x
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(d)
Chl/Car ratio
12
8
4
0
x
y
x
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)

Fig. 4.

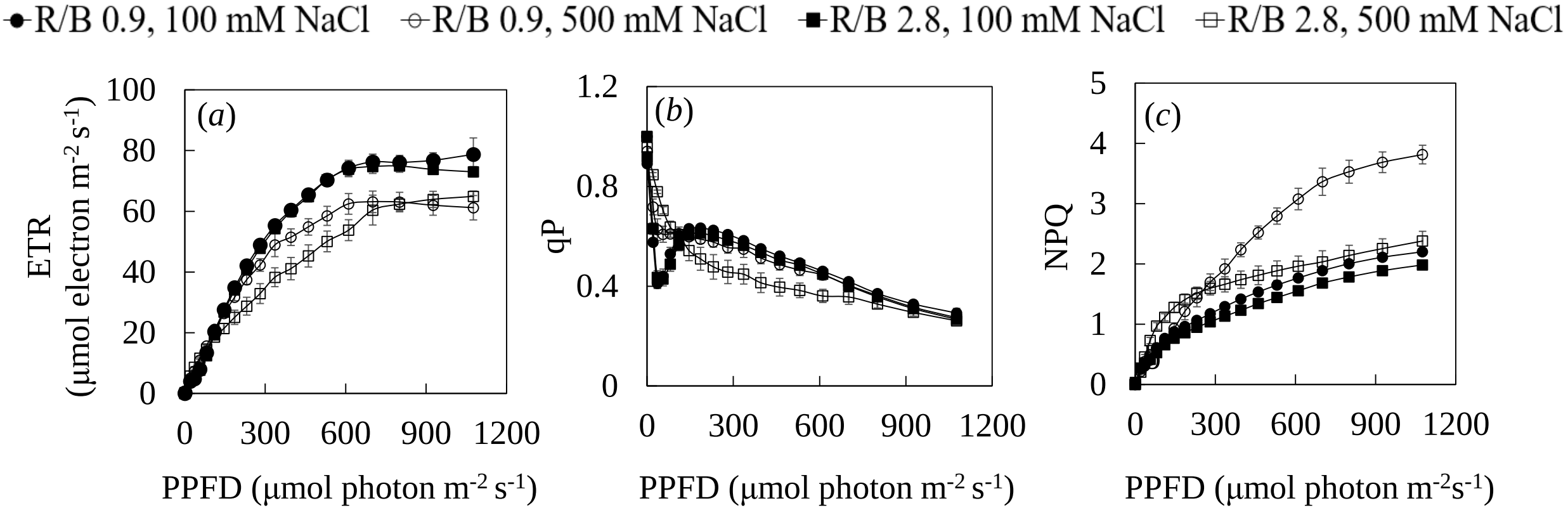
R/B 0.9, 100 mM NaCl
R/B 0.9, 500 mM NaCl
R/B 2.8, 100 mM NaCl
R/B 2.8, 500 mM NaCl
(a)
ETR (µmol electron m-2 s-1)
PPFD (µmol photon m-2 s-1)
(b)
qP
PPFD (µmol photon m-2 s-1)
(c)
NPQ
PPFD (µmol photon m-2s-1)

Fig. 5.

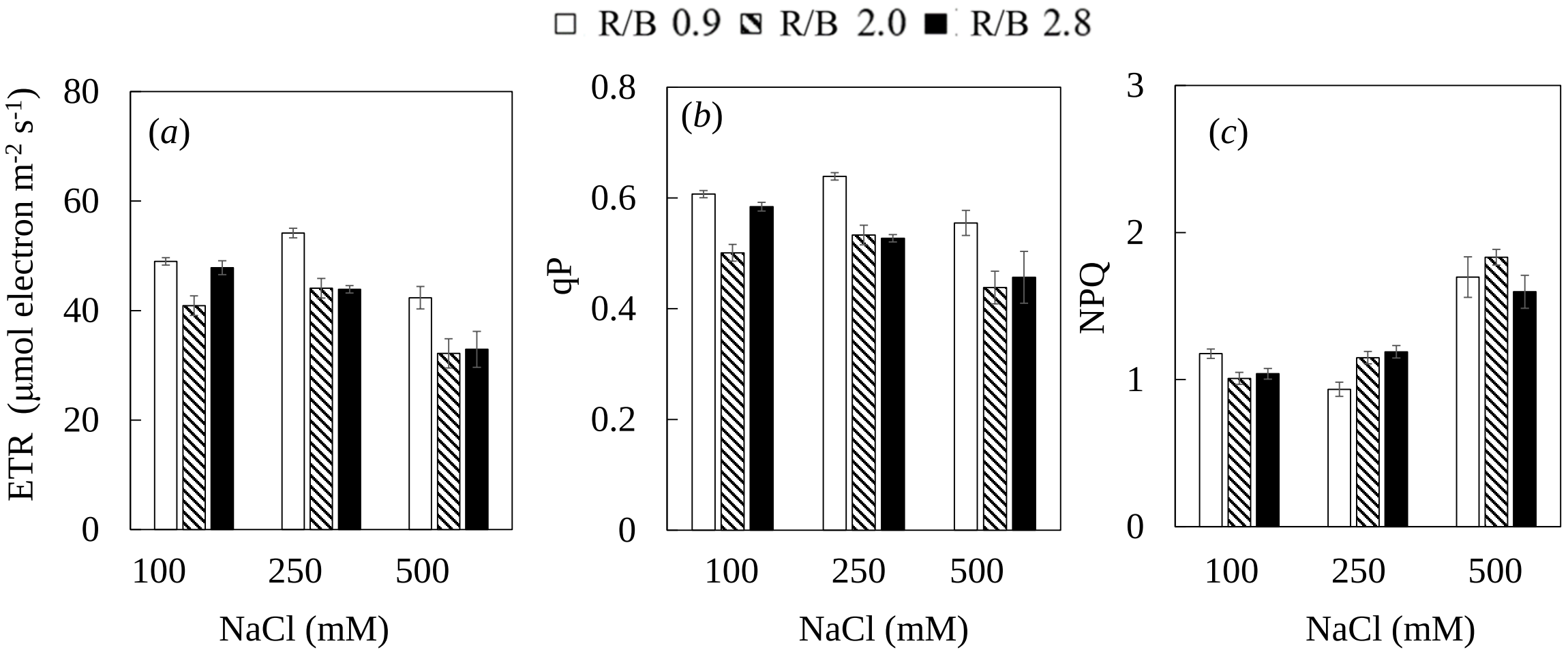
R/B 0.9
R/B 2.0
R/B 2.8
(a)
ETR (µmol electron m-2 s-1)
80
60
40
20
0
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(b)
qP
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(c)
NPQ
3
2
1
0
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)

Fig. 6.

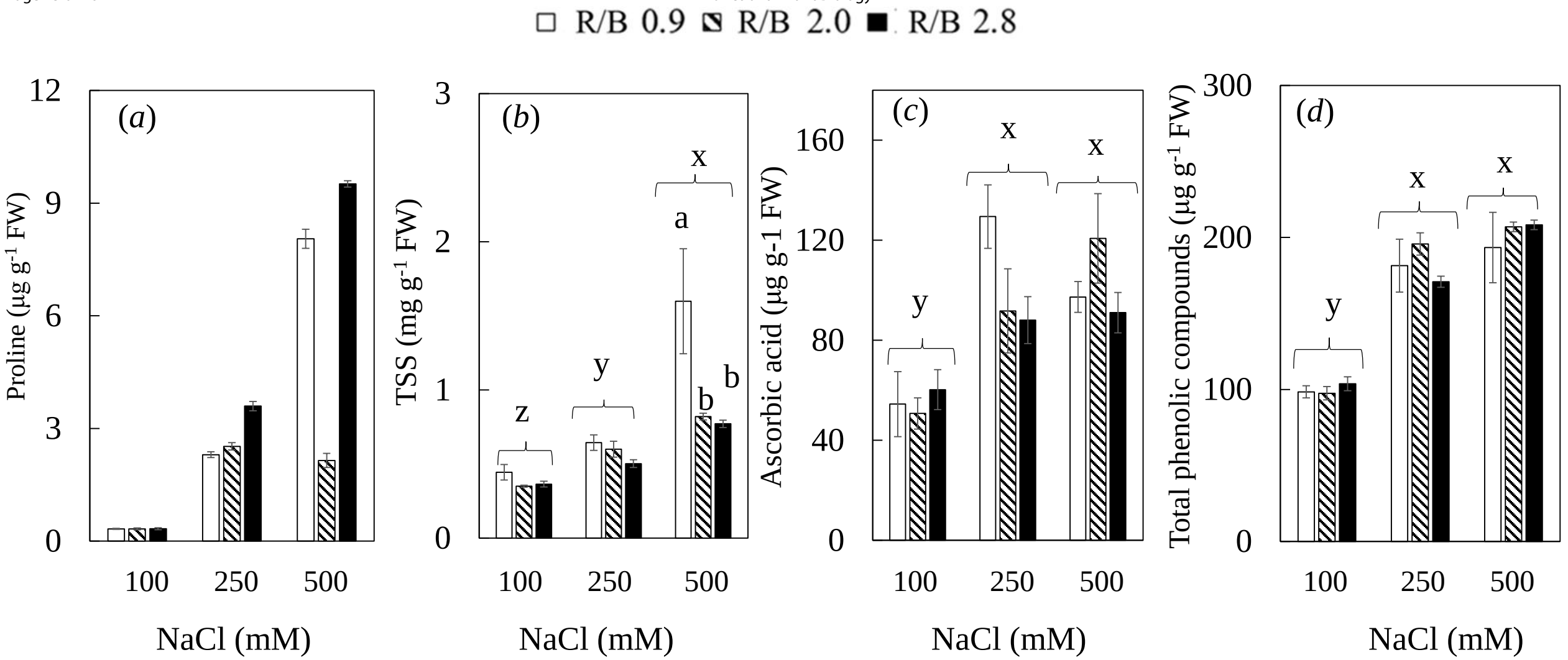
R/B 0.9
R/B 2.0
R/B 2.8
(a)
Proline (µg g-1 FW)
12
9
6
3
0
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(b)
TSS (mg g-1 FW)
3
2
1
0
z
y
x
a
b
b
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(c)
Ascorbic acid (µg g-1 FW)
160
120
80
40
0
y
x
x
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)
(d)
Total phenolic compounds (µg g-1 FW)
300
200
100
0
y
x
x
100
250
500
NaCl (mM)

Fig. 7

Table S1 Two-way analysis of variance of shoot and root productivity, leaf water status, CAM acidity, pigments, photosynthetic performance and phytochemicals with *p* values shown for each main effect and their interaction.

Parameters	LED ratio	[NaCl]	LED ratio x [NaCl]
Shoot FW	0.183	< 0.001	0.017
Shoot DW	0.629	< 0.001	0.003
Root FW	0.106	< 0.001	0.114
Root DW	0.259	< 0.001	0.012
Shoot/root ratio FW	0.049	< 0.001	0.226
Shoot/root ratio DW	0.319	< 0.001	0.678
Leaf number	0.206	< 0.001	0.019
TLA	0.221	< 0.001	0.034
SLA	0.031	< 0.001	0.167
LS	0.324	< 0.001	0.110
LDMC	0.403	< 0.001	0.925
LWC	0.403	< 0.001	0.925
CAM acidity	0.152	< 0.001	0.225
Total Chl	0.598	< 0.001	0.003
Chl a/b ratio	0	0.031	0.008
Total Car	0.465	< 0.001	0.338
Chl/Car ratio	0.923	< 0.001	0.089
F_v/F_m ratio	0.001	< 0.001	0.016
ETR (Fig. 8)	0	< 0.001	0.003
qP (Fig. 8)	0	< 0.001	0.009
NPQ (Fig. 8)	0.508	< 0.001	0.001
Proline	0	< 0.001	< 0.001
TSS	0.002	< 0.001	0.535
Ascorbic acid	0.348	< 0.001	0.067
Total phenolic compounds	0.575	< 0.001	0.546

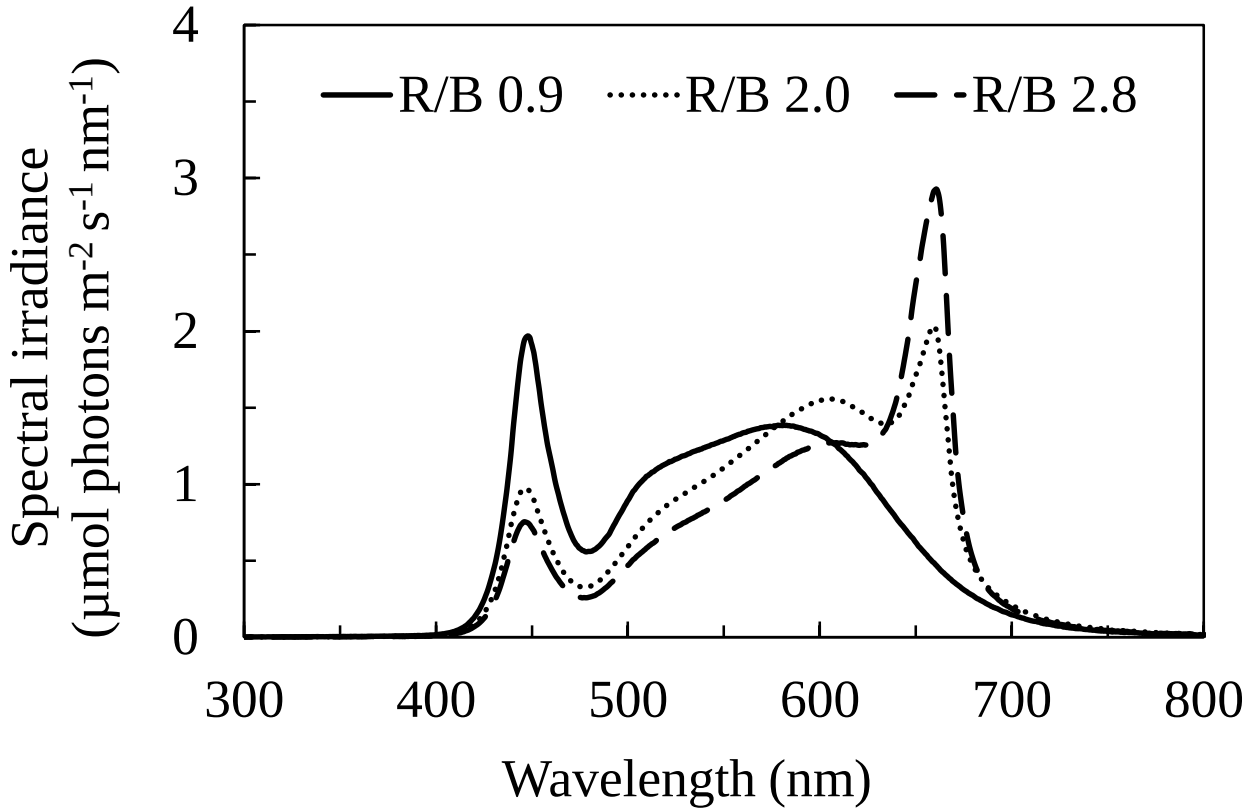

Fig. S1 Light spectra of 0.9, 2.0 and 2.8 red- and blue- (R/B) light ratio conditions. Spectral scans were recorded every 0.5 nm with a spectroradiometer (PS300, Apogee Instruments, USA).

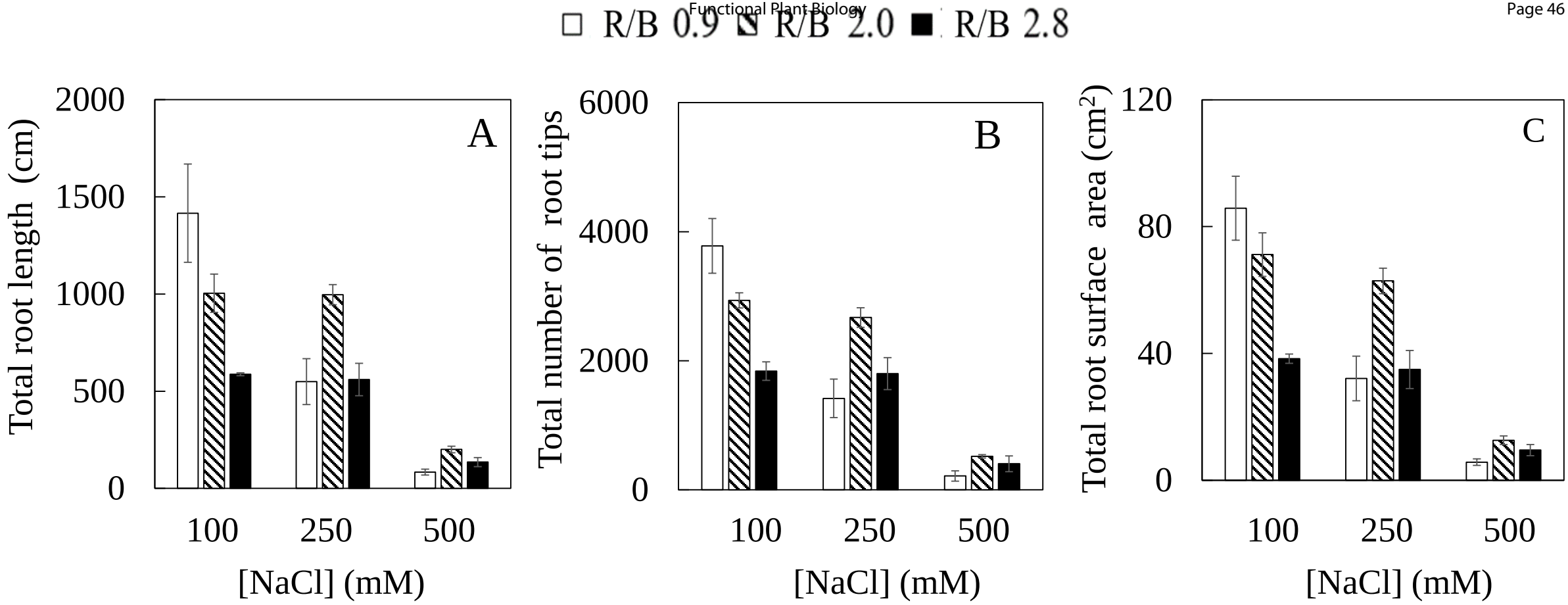

Fig. S2 Total root length (A), total number of root tips (B) and total root surface area (C) of *M. crystallinum* grown under different LED light ratios and salinities for 15 days. Interaction between LED ratio and [NaCl] were detected for total root length ($F_{4,27} = 6.96$, $p < 0.05$); total number of root ($F_{4,27} = 7.79$, $p < 0.05$) and total root surface area ($F_{4,27} = 6.66$, $p < 0.05$).