Lecanora wrightiana and Rhizocarpon inimicum, rare lichens new to Turkey and the Middle East

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Abstract — During a recent excursion in Iğdır region (Turkey), we sampled lichens from two localities, among which Lecanora wrightiana and Rhizocarpon inimicum were determined as new to Turkey and the Middle East. Geographic distribution, substrate, chemistry, and comparisons with morphologically similar taxa are presented.

Key words — Ascomycetes, biodiversity, parasitic

Introduction

Compared to other countries, not many lichen studies have been conducted in Turkey, so the lichen flora of Turkey remains poorly known. Recently, many lichen taxa have been recorded for Turkey (Yazici et al. 2010a,b,c, Candan & Halici 2009, Candan et al. 2010, Kinalioğlu & Aptroot 2010, Kinalioğlu 2010a,b), but more studies are needed to form a complete lichen flora. No lichenized fungi have previously been reported for Iğdır region.

To date, 27 Rhizocarpon species and 95 Lecanora taxa have been reported from Turkey. At least 18 parasitic Rhizocarpon species are known from Europe (Poelt & Hafellner 1983, Poelt & Vězda 1984, Timdal 1986), but only one parasitic species (Rhizocarpon epispilum on Pertusaria rupicola) has been found from Turkey (Breuss & John 2004).

Material & methods

Iğdır, one of the poorest forested areas in Turkey, is dominated by steppe. Rich grassy plants cover the surface of the province. Mountain Zordağ (Iğdır: Center) is a well-lit, very high, windswept, open treeless area with gently sloped terrain with streams, grass and rocks. Prunus, Pyrus, and Populus trees are dominant in Üçkaya village (Iğdır: Tuzluca) with Salix and Elaeagnus occasionally present (Baytop & Denizci 1963). The
climatic characteristics are characterized by hot and dry summers with moderate precipitation, and cold, snowy winters with high precipitation. Mean annual temperature is 11.6°C. The mean annual rainfall is about 257.6 mm. Mean annual humidity is 63%. (Akman 1999).

The lichen specimens were collected from Iğdır region on 13–14 June 2010. Air-dried samples were examined with Nikon SMZ1500 stereomicroscope and a Nikon Eclipse 80i light microscope. Identifications were determined by consulting keys (Guderley & Lumbsch 1999, Miyawaki 1988, Poelt 1990, Poelt & Vězda 1984, Upreti 1997). Vouchers are stored in the herbarium of the Biology Department, Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey (KTUB).

Species recorded

Lecanora wrightiana Zahlbr., Catalogus Lichenum Univeralis 5: 600. 1928  
nom. illegit., non Müll. Arg. 1879.

Thallus corticolous, to 1 cm diam., thin, continuous or rimose–areolate to verruculose, slightly yellow-grey, ±cream-white, to slightly greenish–grey, epruinose. Soredia absent. Apothecia sessile to slightly constricted at the base, circular to irregular, 0.2–0.7 mm diam., disc dark red-brown, bright red–brown when wet, epruinose; margin smooth, concolorous with thallus, mostly cream-white, entire. Cortex hyaline, gelatinous, with small crystals. Amphithecium campestris-type with small crystals. Parathecium hyaline, without crystals, 15 µm thick. Epihymenium glabrata-type, without crystals, red-brown, egranulose. Paraphyses apically ±reticulate and slightly thickened. Asci cylindric-clavate, 12-spored. Ascospores ellipsoid, 13–15 × 7–8 µm. Thallus and margin of apothecium contains atranorin and chloroatranorin. K+ yellow, C−, KC−, P ± yellow.

Specimen examined: TURKEY. Iğdır: Tuzluca, Üçkaya village, 39°58’13.11”N, 43°38’44.08”E, on Populus sp., 1456m, 14.06.2010, KTUB–2018.

Remarks—By its campestris-type amphithecium, L. wrightiana is similar to L. elaphia, which, however, contains eight spores per ascus and produces triterpenoids.

Lecanora wrightiana occurs mainly on bark and more rarely on rocks in mountain regions. Previously known from Japan and India, it seems to be especially common in Japan (Miyawaki 1988, Guderley & Lumbsch 1999). New to Turkey and the Middle East.


Thallus to 3.5 mm in diam., develops its ascomata, disappears at maturity, areolate and parasitic on Lecanora rupicola, black-grey, flat at first, soon with massive curved areolae; areolae 0.5–1.5 mm diam., plane at first, later convex; apothecia in small groups, 0.2–0.7(–1) mm; discs dark-brown; proper margin
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black, slightly ± crenulate, curly-raised, ± pruinose, areolate initially, superficial, sessile, immarginate, later moderately marginate in rough, soon concave; hypothecium irregularly, brown; hymenium 120–150 µm high; epihymenium black-brown; hypothecium brown; amphithectium discrete, black-brown, cellular. Asci clavate, ascospores 19–26 × 10–14 µm, ellipsoid, wavering in the middle or constricted, grey-brown to black-brown, 1-septate at first, vertical to crosswise septa later, 4-celled at maturity, photobiont trebouxioid, hypothallus indistinct, pycnidia absent. Thallus K–, C–, KC–, P–. Medulla I ± violet.

Specimens examined: TURKEY. Iğdıı: Center, Zordağ, 39°45′49.05″N, 43°53′20.13″E, on Lecanora rupicola, 2400m, 13.06.2010, KTUB–2020.

Remarks—Rhizocarpon species with dark brown or grey-green ascospores placed in subg. Phaeothallus — R. advenulum, R. epispilum, R. inimicum, R. santessonii and R. schedomyces — have 1-septate to submuriform spores (Poelt & Hafellner 1983, Poelt & Vězda 1984), but R. santessonii has the smallest ones (Poelt & Vězda 1981). Rhizocarpon epispilum does not have an amyloid medulla or vegetative hyphae (Timdal 1986) and produces 2-septate spores, while R. inimicum has 1-septate spores with vertical to crosswise septa. Rhizocarpon advenulum, R. epispilum, and R. schedomyces grow on Pertusaria spp.; R. santessonii grows on Tremolecia atrata; and R. inimicum grows on Lecanora rupicola.

Rhizocarpon inimicum grows parasitically on Lecanora rupicola (Poelt and Vězda 1984). Not many parasitic Rhizocarpon species have been reported in Turkey, probably because little lichenological research has been performed. If studies on the lichen flora of Turkey are continued, we hope that the number of recorded Rhizocarpon species can be increased. Previously known from Spain and Portugal. New to Turkey and Asia.
Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Dr. Paolo Giordani and Dr. Javier Etayo for revision of and helpful comments on an earlier draft of this manuscript. This study was supported by TUBITAK (108T566 coded project).

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