

An *Entyloma* (Ustilaginales) on *Crepis capillaris* in Britain (NBR 181)

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Recently, a collection of rosette leaves of *Crepis capillaris* bearing conspicuous, dark grey-brown leaf spots was made from a cemetery site at West Molesey in north Surrey. Infected plants were found only in a very limited area of about 2 x 2 m, although the species occurs abundantly throughout much of the c. 2 ha site. On closer examination, the leaf spots, which are 1 - 3 mm diam., roughly circular in outline and slightly thickened, were found to contain ustilospores of a species of *Entyloma*. This proves to be an interesting and indeed surprising discovery as it appears that no species of *Entyloma* has been previously recorded from this host.

Collections of *Entyloma* forming sori in leaves of members of Compositae have in the past commonly been referred to *E. compositarum* s.l. However, this is now recognised as a species-aggregate involving a range of distinct, host-restricted taxa (see Vánky, 1994) and does not offer an appropriate name for the present collection. The lectotype is a north American fungus occurring on *Aster*. In Europe, on *Crepis* and related genera of Cichorieae at least twelve species of *Entyloma* are currently recognised (Vánky, 1994), although these are often difficult to distinguish in the absence of an accurate host identification. Of these species, only *E. hieracii* Syd. & P. Syd. ex Cif., a rare smut occurring on various species of *Hieracium* (Mordue & Ainsworth, 1984; Vánky, 1994), is yet known from the British Isles.

Entyloma on *Crepis* was revised by Vánky (1990) who recognised three species, *E. crepidis-rubrae* (Jaap) Liro on *C. rubra* and *E. zacintha* Vánky on *C. zacintha*, both of which form leaf spots, and *E. crepidicola* Trotter on *C. bulbosa*, which forms galls on roots. Reports of other species on *Crepis*, such as *E. picridis* Rostr. (see Brandenberger, 1985) were shown to be errors due

to misidentification of host plants. *Entyloma crepidis-rubrae* and *E. zacintha* are both known hitherto from only a single host species. They differ in thickness of the leaf spots they cause, the size and wall thickness of the ustilospores, and whether or not these cluster into groups (Vánky, 1990, 1994). Identification of the present collections on *C. capillaris* remains uncertain but, following the revision by Vánky (1990), they seem best referred to *E. crepidis-rubrae*. They are tentatively referred there, and represent a new host for this species and a new British record (NBR 181). The following description is based on the cited specimens examined:

Sori in leaves, forming conspicuous spots closely scattered over the entire leaf blade. Leaf spots dark grey-brown, circular to irregular in outline, 0.5 - 3 mm diam., slightly thickened. Ustilospores clustered, somewhat angular in outline, yellow-brown to brown, 11 - 18 x (9 -) 10 - 14 µm, wall (1 -) 2 - 4 µm thick, smooth.

Specimens examined: Surrey, West Molesey, Elmbridge Cemetary, in leaf spots of rosette leaves of *Crepis capillaris*, 18 Jun. 2000, B. M. Spooner, K(M) 77997; same locality & host, 9 July 2000, B. M. Spooner, K(M) 78052.

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