

Short Communication

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NEW HOSTS FOR HENDERSONULA TORULOIDEA

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Branch wilt caused by *Hendersonula toruloidea* Nat. was observed for the first time in Mosul, Iraq on trees of almond (*Prunus amygdalus*), Beefwood (*Casuarina*), Cypress (*Cupressus*), Gum-Tree (*Eucalyptus*), Kaki (*Diospyres kaki*), peach (*Prunus persica*), during summer and autumn, 1977 and 1978. Infected trees of almond, peach and plum were found in the orchard of the College of Agriculture and Forestry, Hammam Al-Alil, where Cypress trees were lining the orchard. The disease was also encountered on Beefwood, Cypress and Gum-tree in the forests of Mosul. The infected trees of Kaki were found in special gardens. The fungus was confirmed by Commonwealth Mycological Institute. (C.M.I. No. 183257).

H. toruloidea was first recorded on apples, peaches and apricots⁷ from Egypt, on walnut (*Juglans regia*),^{12,14} citrus,³ poplar (*Populus*)⁹ fig (*Ficus carica*)¹¹ and madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)⁴ from U.S.A., on grapes¹³ from India, on banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*)⁵ from Sudan, and on lemon (*Citrus limon*)⁶ from Lebanon. In Iraq, the disease was recorded on grapes,⁸ apple,² mulberry (*Morus alba* and *M. nigra*), pear (*Pyrus communis*) and wild pear (*Pyrus calaryana*).¹

In the present recording, it appears that almond, peach and plum are new in Iraq, but Beefwood, Cypress, Gum-Tree and Kaki are new not only to Iraq but elsewhere as far as the available literature is concerned.

Infected trees appeared to collapse with almost all their branches wilted and their leaves withered and shed. The most characteristic symptoms of the disease appeared on branches of all sizes. The main trunk was occasionally affected. The bark was entirely dry, cracked and peeled off to expose a black, powdery spore layer beneath.

It is most likely that the fungus has a much wider host range and it is expected to find other hosts not hitherto reported. The disease is spreading widely and threatening seriously the forest and orchard trees. The

hot, sunny conditions prevailing during spring, summer and fall in Mosul may result in causing cracks in the branches. The causal pathogen forms millions of air-borne spores at that period. These factors would provide the most favourable conditions for the fungus to invade large number of trees. Sunburning was reported^{10,12} to be essential for field infection of walnut and this would hold true for other trees.

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