

## Taxonomy of Lichenicolous Fungi Isolated from Selected Lichen Species in Belihuloya

D.H.M. Dangalla<sup>1\*</sup>, R.G.U. Jayalal<sup>1</sup>, and N.N. Wijayawardene<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Natural Resources, Faculty of Applied Science,  
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka.

<sup>2</sup>Center for Yunnan Plateau Biological Resources Protection and Utilization,  
Quijing Normal University, Quijing, China.

\*[hasankadangalla@gamil.com](mailto:hasankadangalla@gamil.com)

Lichenicolous fungi are the parasitic fungi that only lives on the lichen thallus. Sometime these lichenicolous fungi can reduce the relative growth rates of the lichen thallus. In this study, lichenicolous fungi were isolated and identified from selected lichen species in Belihuloya area. Wangedigala and Paraviyangala are the sample collecting areas which have identical climatic features for lichen growth. Both Wangedigala and Paraviyangala forest areas were mostly covered with *Pinus* vegetation. So almost all the lichen samples were collected from bark of the *Pinus* trees and from the rock surfaces. Most of the collected lichen samples were *Parmotrema sp.* and crustose lichens. Oddly color spots, Discolorations of the thallus and gall like structures were helped to identify lichenicolous fungi on the lichens in the field. Potato Dextrose Agar was used as a culture media and direct plate method were used to inoculate the fungi fruiting bodies and fungal hyphae. When using fungal hyphae, sterilized needle was used to inoculate with the help of dissecting microscope. Before using fungal fruiting bodies for inoculation, surface sterilization was done with 70% ethanol solution. Macro morphological characters of the fungal colonies were used for species identification of lichenicolous fungi. Fifteen different species of lichenicolous fungi were identified from the collected lichen samples based on colony characters, indicating they are very successful in Belihuloya area. All species of fungi are slow growers in the culture media and these parasitic fungi has degraded some host lichen species to a level that lichen was unidentifiable.

Keywords: Parasitic Fungi, Potato Dextrose Agar, Host Lichen, Direct Plate Method