Lichen records from Northern Cyprus

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Eighty-two taxa of lichenized fungi (lichenes) are reported from Northern Cyprus (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus), mostly from the Beşparmak Mountains. Of these, thirty-four taxa are new for the northern part of the island, and 14 are new for the whole island. The large number of widespread species among the new records suggests that many more widespread species may show up. An unusual substrate, calcareous rock, is reported for Buellia tesserata, Rhizocarpon macrosporum and Xanthoparmelia attica. Pertusaria rhodiensis was found for the first time outside the Aegean Sea region.

Key words: Ascomycota, biodiversity, distribution, Eastern Mediterranean, ecology, lichenized fungi.

Introduction

Cyprus is a very promising island for lichen diversity. Measuring almost 1000 km², it is the largest island in the eastern Mediterranean. Its varied geology started during the Alpidic folding, which was accompanied by volcanic activities resulting in the deposition of siliceous plutonites and volcanites. During the Tertiary large calcareous formations developed on the sea floor. About 20 MY ago the central Tróodos mountains were raised, followed by the more northerly Kerýneia chain, the current Beşparmak (Pentadaktylos) Mountains. Between both mountain chains in the current Mesarya (Mesaoria) plain sediments accumulated. Around 3 MY ago the island was raised to the current level. For details see Schmidt (1960) and Braun (2013). The highest elevation in the Tróodos Mountains reaches close to 2000 m, and in the Beşparmak Mountains to 1000 m. The mountains cause increased precipitation, which results in abundant trees and forest. All these factors, the great geological age, the wide variation in rock types, the elevational range, the increased humidity sites and the abundant trees, are favorable for a high lichen diversity.

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