



SIGHTING OF *CLAVARIA MINIATA* FUNGUS, FAMILY CLAVARIACEAE, ORDER AGARICALES, IN UBHESHWAR RESERVE FOREST, UDAIPUR DISTRICT, RAJASTHAN

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ABSTRACT

Brilliant orange colored colonies of a fungus *Clavaria miniata* were observed under the thickets of *Dendrocalamus* in Ubheshwar reserve forest which is a new record from Rajasthan.

On August 10, 2014, while studying the biodiversity of Ubheshwar (or Ubeshwar) Reserve Forest Block, 20 km away from Udaipur city in the western direction on Udaipur-Dodawali Road, we observed a patch of brilliant orange coloured fungus, growing under the thickets of Bamboo (*Dendrocalamus strictus*). Their appearance was just like an aquatic coral. The fungus has been identified and confirmed as *Clavaria miniata*.

Ubheshwar Reserve Forest is named after the famous temple Ubeshwar Mahadev. The forest block is a part of southern Aravallis. It comes under the jurisdiction of Udaipur (East) Range of Udaipur (North) Forest Division. Hills of Ubheshwar have towering height up to 1200 m above MSL. Thick growth of *Acacia catechu*, *Albizia odoratissima*, *Bridelia retusa*, *Butea monosperma*, *Syzygium heyneanum*, *Terminalia bellerica*, *Wrightia tinctoria*, *Anogeissus latifolia*, *Lannea grandis*, *Mitragyna parviflora*, *Grewia tenax* and *Helicteres isora* can be seen there. Where openness is more, grasses like *Apluda mutica*, *Heteropogon contortus* and *Sehima nurvosum* are common. Invasive exotic weed *Lantana camara* is penetrating fast in the landscape. A low lying area is present towards upper reaches, where a perennial stream is flowing. Thick deposition of soil is present here and there in the low lying area which has good growth of *Dendrocalamus strictus*. Besides its natural occurrence, *D. strictus* has also been planted there in the open blanks by the Forest Department. Few old *Eucalyptus* trees, planted a few years back by the Department, are also present towards northern edge of the bamboo patches. Presently well developed clumps of bamboo can be seen in the valleys (Swami et al.

2010). During rainy season, the area becomes lush green and wet and clouds move touching the high hills.

Being a deciduous forest, leaf fall is a regular process in this patch of the forest. Decaying leaves and twigs can be seen on the entire forest floor. High rainfall (650 mm/yr) and decaying organic material provide congenial habitat for fungal growth during rainy season. Many species of fungi can be seen in the forest of Ubheshwar and surrounding areas during rainy season (Sharma, 2007 a & b).

Clavaria miniata is a beautiful fungus commonly known as the flame fungus, which has been growing below the bamboo clumps in the Ubheshwar Reserve Forest, where soil is rich in litter and humus. It grows singly or in sparse groups. The small spike like growth generally remains simple but occasionally branching is also seen. Spikes of different length are seen on the forest floor. The whole aerial body part of this fungus is uniformly pinkish or bright red, during the peak of monsoon which remains visible but with the departure of monsoon it becomes blackish and disappear (Photo 1 & 2).

Sharma (2007 a & b) has studied fungi of Phulwari Wildlife Sanctuary, an area very close to Ubheshwar Reserve Forest, but he has not reported *C. miniata* from there. Dube (2011) has studied the biodiversity of Jaisamand Wildlife Sanctuary, an important protected area of southern Aravallis, close to Ubheshwar, but he has also not recorded this fungus from there.

Many workers like Agarwal et al. (2011), Dube (2011), Jain & Sharma (2011, 2012), Jasuja et al. (2013), Khokhar et al. (2011), Mishra et al. (2014), Momsia and Momsia (2013), Prasad et al. (1962), Sharma (2007 a & b),



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Shekhawat et al. (2010 & 2013), Singh (2012), Swami et al. (2010) have studied various aspects of the fungi of Rajasthan but none has reported this species from the state. Since this is been the first record of *Clavaria miniata* fungus in the confines of the Rajasthan, hence it is worth placing on the records.

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