

**Oviascoma, a new genus of Otideaceae**

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A new genus *Oviascoma* is proposed to accommodate the fungus previously described as *Lamprospora crechqueraulii var. paludosa*. The genus is characterized by ovoid apothecia which are attached to the substratum at a narrow base, have a strongly convex hymenium, excipulum consisting of globose to subglobose cells and lacking a distinct margin. The operculum ascus with iodine negative reaction justifies its position in the *Otideaceae*.

In their account of *Ramsbothomia* W. D. Buckley, Benkert & Schumacher (1985) listed *Lamprospora crechqueraulii var. paludosa* Dennis as a doubtful species because the type collection no longer bears apothecia. They stated that the type material is fragmentary and considered that the species involved could be *Boudiera walkerae* Seaver. However, investigation of the type packet in K reveals more than 20 apothecia in good condition. Examination of this material shows that it represents a species distinct from *Lamprospora crechqueraulii* (P. Crouan & H. Boud.) and that there is no appropriate genus in which it can be placed. Therefore, a new genus is proposed here to accommodate this species. A full description of the species is also given.

The methods employed in this investigation are those given in Yao & Spooner (1995).

**Oviascoma Y. J. Yao & Spooner, gen. nov.**

Etym.: *ovi-* Latin, egg; *ascoma* Latin, ascus-containing structure; referring to the egg-shaped apothecium of the type species.


Species typica: *Lamprospora crechqueraulii var. paludosa* Dennis (syn. *Oviascoma paludosum* (Dennis) Y. J. Yao & Spooner).

Apothecia solitary or gregarious; whitish when fresh, brownish-orange to brown after drying; cylindric at first, becoming ovoid or obvoid to almost globose. Disc strongly convex, smooth. *Receptacle* emarginate, deeply cupulate, outer surface glabrous, attached to the substratum at a narrow base. *Excipulum* a textura globulosa, cells thin-walled, broadly ellipsoid to subglobose, marginal cells slightly elongate or clavate. *Asci* operculate, cylindrici, 1-310-350 μm diam.; spores uniseriate. *Ascospores* unicellulares, colourless, globose to subglobose, spinis ornatae. *Paraphyses* filiformes, septatae, colourless, 4-6 μm long, 1-2 μm broad at the base.


This species resembles members of *Lamprospora* De Not. and *Ramsbothomia* in having globose to subglobose, ornamented...
Figs 1–3. Photomicrograph of *Oviascoma paludosum* from the holotype. Fig. 1. Apothecia. Bar = 0.3 mm. Fig. 2. Vertical section of apothecium. Bar = 65 μm. Fig. 3. Enlargement of the structure in the excipulum near the margin. Bar = 50 μm.

spores. However, it is distinct in several respects. The apothecia in *O. paludosum* are emarginate, egg-shaped, taller than broad, and attached by a narrow base; the hymenium is strongly convex, even in dried material; and the excipulum consists of globose to subglobose cells. The apothecia of species of *Ramsbottomia* and those of *Lamprospora* are disc-shaped or cupulate with distinct margin, hymenium flat or concave when dried, and excipulum near the margin consisting of elongate cells. Moreover, the substratum of these fungi is also different. *Oviascoma paludosum* occurs on rotting vegetation, whilst *Lamprospora* and *Ramsbottomia* species are directly on bare soil or are associated with mosses.

From our examination of the type material, this species differs from *Boudiera walkerae* (Seaver, 1939) in apothecial shape and spore size. *Oviascoma* may be confused with *Boudiera* Cooke as both include species with globose asco-spores having echinulate ornament. However, the ascus wall of *Boudiera* stains blue in iodine, a crucial character which distinguishes Otideaceae from Pezizaceae. Ecology may, also, serve to distinguish these two genera, as species of *Boudiera* grow directly on soil (Dissing & Schumacher, 1979).

We wish to thank Dr R.W.G. Dennis for valuable discussion and permission to reproduce here his original drawings of apothecium and spores, and for reading the manuscript.
Oviascoma gen. nov.

Fig. 4. Photomicrograph of Oviascoma paludosum from the holotype. Enlargement of asci and ascospores. An abnormal ascus with four degenerating spores is indicated by an arrow. Bar = 40 μm.

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REFERENCES


