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A First Ascomycete Genus (*Picoa* sp.) Record for the Fungi Flora of Iran

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Abstract: In this research, according to macroscopic and microscopic characteristics *Picoa* sp. a member of Ascomycete was recorded for the first time from Iran.

Key words: Ascomycete, *Picoa* sp., Iranian mycoflora

INTRODUCTION

Desert truffles (Fig. 1a) are mycorrhizal hypogeous fungi, among which several species of the genera

Picoa, *Tuber*, *Tirmania* and *Terfezia* are included. A specimen of macrofungi collected in desert of Taron region in Zanjan province of Iran during 2006. The Taron region is close to the cities of Foman and Manjil in the north-west of Iran to the north of Zanjan and between Gilan and Zanjan provinces. It is a particularly productive region and therefore it was chosen as the main study area.

The description of taxa: A brownish species of Iranian desert truffles grows solitary or assembled of 2-5 ascocarps in the surface soil, is about the size of a Hazel fruit and has white texture. This species forms 0.5-1 cm below the soil surface and is brownish inside. The truffles that had been collected from studied areas in Taron region (Zanjan province) were investigated in laboratories. The microscopic examination showed that each ascus contains 8 ascospores. Measure the diameter of ascus is about 90-100 μm and ascospores is about 30 μm (Fig. 1C). According to macroscopic and microscopic characteristics and using literature on ascomycetous macrofungi (Breitenbach and Kranzlin, 1984; Ershad, 1995; Philips, 1981) this fungi was identified as *Picoa* sp. (Fig. 1B). This is first report from Iranian mycoflora (Ershad, 1995).

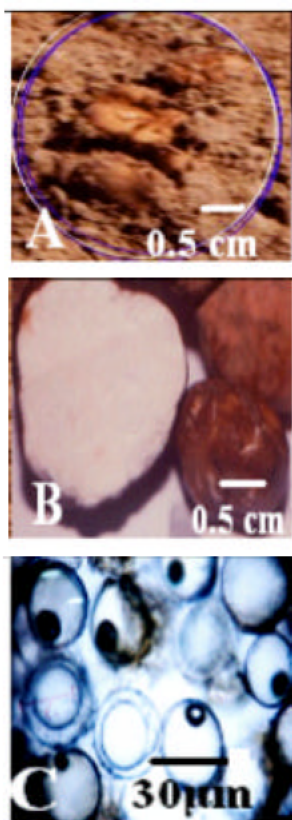


Fig. 1: The appearance of desert truffle *Picoa* sp. (A). The morphology of *Picoa* sp. (B). Every ascus has 8 ascospores and ascus membrane disappeared after maturation. The ascus is about 90-100 μm and ascospores is about 30 μm (C)

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