

**LEAF SPOT DISEASE OF *OPHIOPOGON JAPONICUS*  
CAUSED BY *PHYLLOSTICTA SP.***

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*Ophiopogon* is a perennial ornamental foliage plant, which belongs to family Liliaceae. This plant has a high demand in the local and export industry for its ornamental value due to the presence of attractive white-green strips. However, their ornamental value and appearance are highly affected by several diseases namely leaf spots. Studies on leaf diseases in *O. japonicus* so far include anthracnose disease caused by fungal pathogens *Colletotrichum dematium*, *C. gloeosporioides* and *C. liliacearum* and leaf spot to severe blight disease caused by *Phyllosticta ophiopogonis*. The objective of this study was to observe further, leaf spot disease in *O. japonicus* and identify the causative agent(s) of the disease. Leaves of *O. japonicus* showing disease symptoms were collected during March - May 2013 from the Department of Botany, Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya premises. The leaves were carefully observed and symptoms were recorded. Scrapings were observed under the light microscope and spore characters were recorded. Fungal pathogens were isolated on Potato Dextrose Agar medium and pathogenicity was subsequently confirmed by Koch's postulates.

Leaf spot diseases of *O. japonicus* were observed in both leaf lamina and leaf tip. Minute leaf spots gradually developed into larger lesions (diameter 0.5 cm) with a rusty brown border. Center of the lesion consisted of black colour pycnidia. Hyaline, single celled, globose, spores were observed under the light microscope. This study agrees with a previous record of *Phyllosticta sp.* associated with leaf spot in *O. japonicus*. However, the identification of the causative fungus of the current study to the species level remains to be done. As photosynthetic efficiency of the plant, as well as its visual appeal is reduced due to the leaf spot disease, control of this disease is essential in commercial scale cultivation.

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