

Taxonomic consideration and Ecological Characteristics of Xylariaceae

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The Xylariaceae Tul. & C. Tul is a family of sphaeriaceous genera with obscure but apparently common ancestry (Rogers, 1979). A central core of genera - *Xylaria*, *Hypoxylon*, *Rosellinia*, *Poronia*, *Podosordaria*, *Hypocopra*, *Daldinia*, *Biscogniauxia*, *Kretzschmaria*, *Camillea*, *Penzigia* - are obviously related, regardless of the fact that the generic limits are arguable (Rogers, 1979; Barr, 1990; Eriksson & Hawksworth, 1991; Laessoe, 1994). In general, the family Xylariaceae is primarily defined as a group of stromatic pyrenomycetes with unitunicate asci characterized by a typical apical apparatus and pigmented ascospores having a germ slit (Rogers, 1979). Since Winter (1887) circumscribed the family to include Pyrenomycetes with predominately a dark stroma, dark unveiled spores containing 5 genera: *Nummularia* Tul. & C. Tul., *Hypoxylon* Bull., *Ustulina* Tul. & C.Tul., *Poronia* Willd. and *Xylaria*Hill ex Schrank, many more genera has been added to the family (Dennis, 1961; Eriksson & Hawksworth, 1993; Whalley, 1996). In the absence of a clear circumscription of the family (Rogers, 1994) the agreed number of accepted genera is governed by individual views and there are therefore difference between the proposals for the ascomycetes recognized 35 genera and indicated a further 3 which might belong there. Laessoe reviewed the family and included 37 genera but a few of these were listed as uncertain (Laessoe, 1994). In the most recent accounts Whalley (1996) listed 41 genera but again a number of these were considered uncertain and Ju and Rogers (1996) accepted 39 genera in their interpretation of the family. Since Laessoe (1994) merged *Daldinia* and *Versomyces* with *Hypoxylon* and Ju and Rogers (1996) combined *Astrocystis* with *Rosellinia* and *Helicogermis*lita, which can be argued strongly against, it is likely that a realistic number of genera will be close to 40 (Whalley, 1996; Table 1).