12 dorsal spines. Reproductive females less than 1.5 mm. Maximum adult size 2.2 mm.

Male with anteriorly projecting helmet, rostrum absent; dorsal margin of head and body with spines. Antennules well-developed and movable; flagellum in the antennules not well-developed. Eye moderately large and the ocellus inconspicuous. Ventral margin or carapace convex. Tail long (figure 1). The first leg modified to form a prehensile organ and each terminates in a long seta which protrudes beyond the shell to the exterior. Postabdomen with 10 to 12 dorsal spines, dorsal margin without processes. Maximum size 1 mm.

The present species can be considered as rare in the tropical region.

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BLOSSOM BLIGHT OF GLADIOLUS CAUSED BY CURVULARIA ERAGROSTIDIS

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GLADIOLUS (Gladiolus sp.) is an important ornamental crop and is cultivated mainly for its much sought cut flowers. Incidence of a severe blossom blight disease of gladiolus varieties has been consistently observed during the monsoon months in the experimental farm of the Institute. The incidence of the disease was more serious in the cv. "Friendship". Initial symptoms are noticed on the calyx of young buds in the form of water-soaked patches. These soon enlarge in size and turn brown to black in colour with the onset of sporulation of the pathogen (figures 1, 2).

Figures 1 & 2. Infection symptoms on gladiolus cv. "Friendship" 1. Infected flowers showing typical symptoms (× \(\frac{1}{3}\) nat. size) 2. Enlarged lesions on partially opened flower and young bud (× 1).

Infected buds shrivel, fail to open and rot. The development of bud rot is faster during moist warm weather. Sometimes, partially opened flowers are also infected; the individual petals become brown, shrivel and subsequently decay.
The pathogen was isolated from infected flower buds on potato dextrose agar (PDA) and later purified by single conidial transfer. On PDA the colonies were effuse and brown to black in colour. Conidiophores arise in small groups of 3–8, are simple, smooth, straight to flexuous, often bent at several points, dark brown, bearing solitary conidia. The conidiophores measure 70–122.5 (93.25) × 3.75–7.5 (5) μm in size. Conidia are solitary, simple, smooth, clavate to ellipsoidal, some obovoid or pyriform in shape, middle cell distinctly bent, dark brown with 2–3 transverse septa. The end cells are paler than other cells. In most of the conidia the middle septa are more thick and darker. Conidia measure 25–35 (29.75) × 12.5–16.25 (13.75) μm in size.

Pathogenicity tests were carried out by atomising conidial suspension on young buds and freshly opened flowers of cv. “Friendship”. Typical symptoms developed after 5–7 days of inoculation. Reisolation from induced lesions established identity with the original isolate. Control plants remained healthy. Morphology and other diagnostic characters indicated identity of the pathogen with Curvularia eragrostidis (P. Henn.) J. A. Meyer, to which it is referred. Subculture of the fungus has been deposited at the Commonwealth Mycological Institute, Kew, England under I.M.I. No. 271156.

The only species of Curvularia reported so far on gladioli is Curvularia trifoli var. gladioli Parmeelee and Luttrell, which was first described by Magie and subsequently by Parmeelee from Canada and later from India. This species causes leaf spot, blossom blight and corm rot. However, the present species is distinct from the former in morphology and other diagnostic characters and also in its preferential affinity to parasitise only flowers. Parasitism of Curvularia eragrostidis on gladiolus has been hitherto unreported from India or elsewhere and therefore constitutes the first record.

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