

Cordyceps and Related Fungi from Nigeria

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Abstract : Cordyceps are members of the fungi family Cordycepitaceae which are formally in Clavicipitaceae. They parasitize the larvae and adults of different susceptible arthropods. They are highly priced and have been reported to be highly medicinal. Cordyceps have been used for centuries in traditional medicine in China and other Asian countries. Survey studies were carried out to determine the presence of Cordyceps and another entomopathogenic fungal floral in North Central Nigeria for two consecutive years. Thirty samples were collected, twenty-eight were identified, and two were unidentified. Most identified species belong to Ophiocordyceps species (20samples), Cordyceps species (4samples) and Isaria species (4samples). The species identified were: Cordyceps pseudomilitaris, Cordyceps tuberculata, Cordyceps cylindrical, Ophiocordyceps nutans, O. criminals, O. oxycephala, O. kniphofioides and Isaria sinclairii. The morphological and microscopic features of the collected and identified species were similar to those reported in other countries. This is the first official report on the presence of Cordyceps species in Nigeria. Further collections from different ecological regions of Nigeria will show the richness of the floral diversity of these entomopathogenic and medicinal mushrooms in Nigeria.

Keywords : cordyceps, entomopathogenic, medicinal, North Central, Nigeria

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