

ON A VERY RARE CORAL FUNGUS

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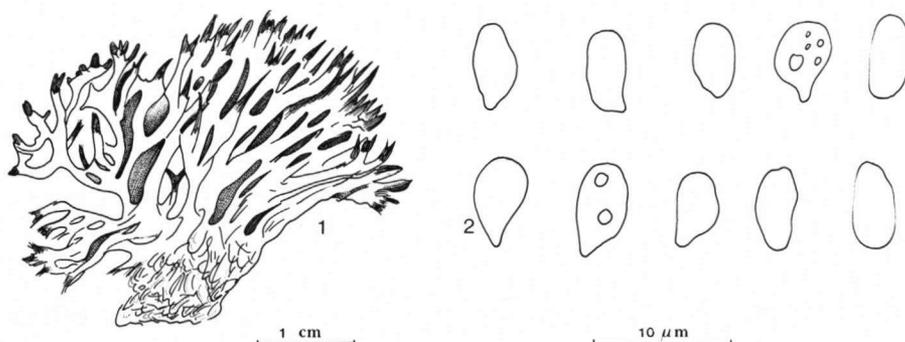
The apparently everywhere very rare coral fungus *Multiclavula delicata* was found in south-eastern Belgium and is redescribed.

During a foray of the Netherlands' Mycological Society in the Belgian Ardennes in September 1985 a beautiful, pteruloid fungus was found by Dr. G. A. de Vries. Only one specimen was present. This was handed over to the author for further investigation and identification.

The fruit-body (Fig. 1) measuring 30 × 30 mm, is composed of eight to ten, crowded, short, grey stems, 1.5 mm thick and about 8 mm long, growing out of the substratum and upwards branching dichotomously. The colour of the divaricate branches was greyish white, later greyish-yellowish (Séguy 259) at their base, but upwards darker yellow with a grey-blue tinge (S. 240). The acute tips were dark brown (S. 701). Later on the fungus got paler to almost white. The whole fruit-body is very firm.

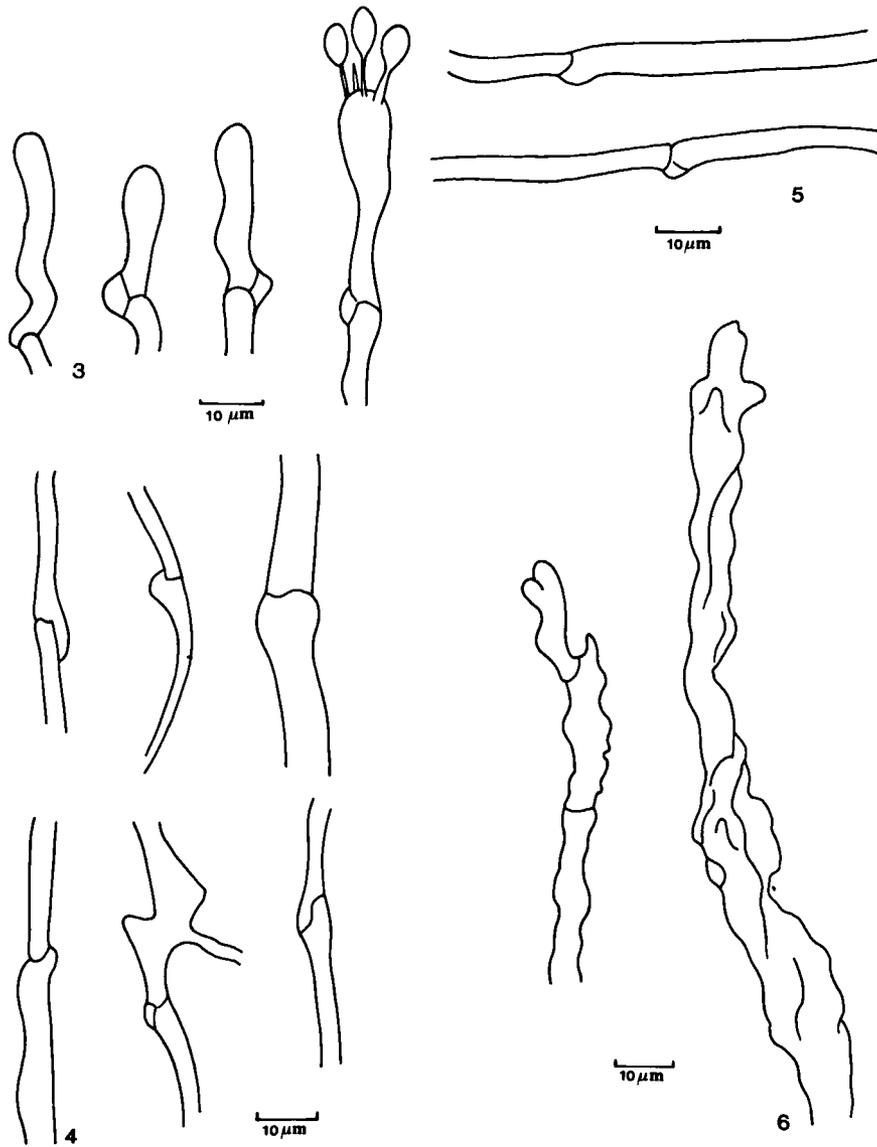
The spores (Fig. 5) measure 5–6.5 × 2.5–3 μm and vary in shape from subcylindrical to oblong, have no oil drops, are thin-walled, smooth, and amyloid. The basidia (Fig. 3) measure 16–24 × 4–5 μm, have clamp-connections and have four, about 5 μm long sterigmata. The context is monomitic. The hyphae at the centre of the branches (Fig. 4) are 10–13 μm wide. All hyphae have clamp-connections. The stems are covered by long, brown, thin-walled, cystidioid cells (Fig. 6) measuring 70–150 × 10–15 μm and with a very irregularly nodulose surface. (The author never saw such cells in clavarioid fungi before.) Parts of the branches that are not covered by basidia show the same type of cells.

HABITAT. — On humus and needles under *Picea*, at the border of a forest-road.



Figs. 1–2. *Multiclavula delicata*. — 1. Fruitbody. — 2. Spores.

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Figs. 3–6. *Multiclavula delicata*. — 3. Basidia. — 4. Hyphae. — 5. Hyphae of pith. — 6. Cystidioid hairs on stipe.

COLLECTION EXAMINED. — BELGIUM, prov. L u x e m b o u r g, Buzenol, 'Le Cron', 22 September 1985, G.A. de Vries (L).

It is obvious that the species concerned does not belong to the genera *Ramaria* and *Pterula*. Prof. Dr. R.H. Petersen (Knoxville, U.S.A.) was found willing to study this interesting collection and kindly informed the author that it represents the very rare *Multiclavula delicata* (Fr.: Fr.) Petersen (Petersen, 1967: 211–212).

This species has been discovered by Fries, who described it under the name *Clavaria delicata* (1821: 475). Coker (1923: 106) mentioned this species and thought it related to *Clavaria rufipes* Atk. Corner (1950: 441) described it under the name *Lentaria delicata* (Fr.: Fr.) Corner and wrote that after Fries, Quélet (1888: 463) was the only author who described this fungus, but under the name *Ramaria delicata* (Fr.: Fr.) Quélet. Favre (1953: 177) wrote that he had found a two-spored variant with 2–2.5 μm wide hairs in the hymenium. Apart from that, his description agrees with the Belgian collection. Favre himself indicated that the fruit-body drawing he published is less ramified than it was in reality.

None of the authors cited above reported that the spores of *Multiclavula delicata* are amyloid.

Prof. Petersen stressed the extreme rarity of the species, of which only three or four finds have been reported, and consequently the need for careful preservation of the Belgian collection, which is therefore deposited in the Rijksherbarium, Leiden.

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