

Outlineoffungi.org - Note 644 *Allocordyceps*

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Allocordyceps Poinar in Poinar & Maltier 2021 (Fossil)

The monotypic fossil genus *Allocordyceps* was introduced to accommodate *A. baltica* (Poinar & Maltier 2021). This fungus was found attached as a parasite to *Camptonotus*, an ant genus (*Formicidae*, *Hymenoptera*), which is presently found all over the world (Poinar & Maltier 2021). Such ants usually make their nests in trees, rotting logs and stumps (Poinar & Maltier 2021). The host and the fungus were recovered from the Baltic amber, Central European Russia (Poinar & Maltier 2021). The type species is *Allocordyceps baltica* (Poinar & Maltier 2021), which is the oldest known fossil fungus (50 Mya old) of an ant (Poinar & Maltier 2021). This is the first fossil record of a member of the *Hypocreales* emerging from the body of an ant (Poinar & Maltier 2021). *Allocordyceps* is characterized by an orange, stalked, cup-shaped, partially immersed, perithecial ascoma that emerges from the rectum of the ant, two separate stromata with septate mycelium that emerge from the base of the neck and the abdomen of the ant, respectively, and free-standing putative perithecia bearing putative asci with putative multicellular ascospores fragmented into one-celled partspores (Poinar & Maltier 2021). This fossil fungus could represent a precursor of *Ophiocordyceps*, which at present is the only fungal lineage parasitizing ants of the genus *Camponotus* (Poinar & Maltier 2021). However, *Allocordyceps baltica* could not be placed in *Ophiocordyceps* because ascomata in those fungi usually come out the neck or head of an ant and not the rectum (Poinar & Maltier 2021). All of the stages, those are attached to the ant and the freestanding ones, are of the same species (Poinar & Maltier 2021). This fossil taxon may belong to *Clavicipitaceae* (*Hypocreales*, *Sordariomycetes*)

Reference

Poinar G., Maltier Y.-M. 2021 – *Allocordyceps baltica* gen. et sp. nov. (*Hypocreales*: *Clavicipitaceae*), an ancient fungal parasite of an ant in Baltic amber. *Fungal Biology* 125(11): 886–890. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.funbio.2021.06.002>

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