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Steccherinum albidum: a new species from southern England

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The hydnoid, corticioid fungus *Steccherinum albidum* (Basidiomycota) is described as new from West Sussex in southern England. Basidiomes are whitish when fresh, resupinate to pileate, and are microscopically distinct in having unusally small, suballantoid basidiospores.

Key words: England, *Steccherinum*, taxonomy.

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Je popisován nový druh *Steccherinum albidum* (Basidiomycota) z hrabství Západní Sussex v jižní Anglii, který patří mezi hydnoidní a korticioidní houby. Plodnice jsou za čerstva bělavé, resupinátní až kloboukaté a mikroskopicky je druh význačný malými téměř alantoidními basidiosporami.

The following specimen was collected on a mossy, fallen, beech trunk at Ebernoe Common, West Sussex, England, and appears to be new and undescribed.

Steccherinum albidum Legon et P. Roberts, sp. nov. Fig. 1

Basidiomata resupinata vel effuso-reflexa, pileis usque 20 × 10 × 5 mm, albida in sicco ochracea. Hymenium hydnoideum, spinis ad 3 mm longis. Systema hypharum dimiticum; hyphae generatoriae 2–5 μm latae, fibulatae, tenuitunicatae; hyphae skeletales 2–5 μm latae, efibulatae, crassitunicatae. Basidia plus minusve clavata, 12–18 × 3–4 μm. Cystidia numerosa, incrustata, 80–90 × 6–9 μm. Basidiosporae plus minusve allantoideae, 3–3.5 (–4) × 1.5 μm.

Basidiomes resupinate to effused-reflexed; pileate areas tough and pliable, with pilei (surface slightly fibrillose) up to 20 × 10 × 5 mm, whitish when fresh, drying pale ochraceous to pallid orange-brown. Resupinate portions with a wide, sterile margin (up to 3 mm wide) which remains white on drying. Hymenium hydnoid, 5–6 spines per mm, each 2–3 mm long, cylindric with slightly pointed to penicillate apex, whitish when fresh, drying slightly ochraceous. Hyphal system dimitic; generative hyphae with thin to slightly refractive walls,

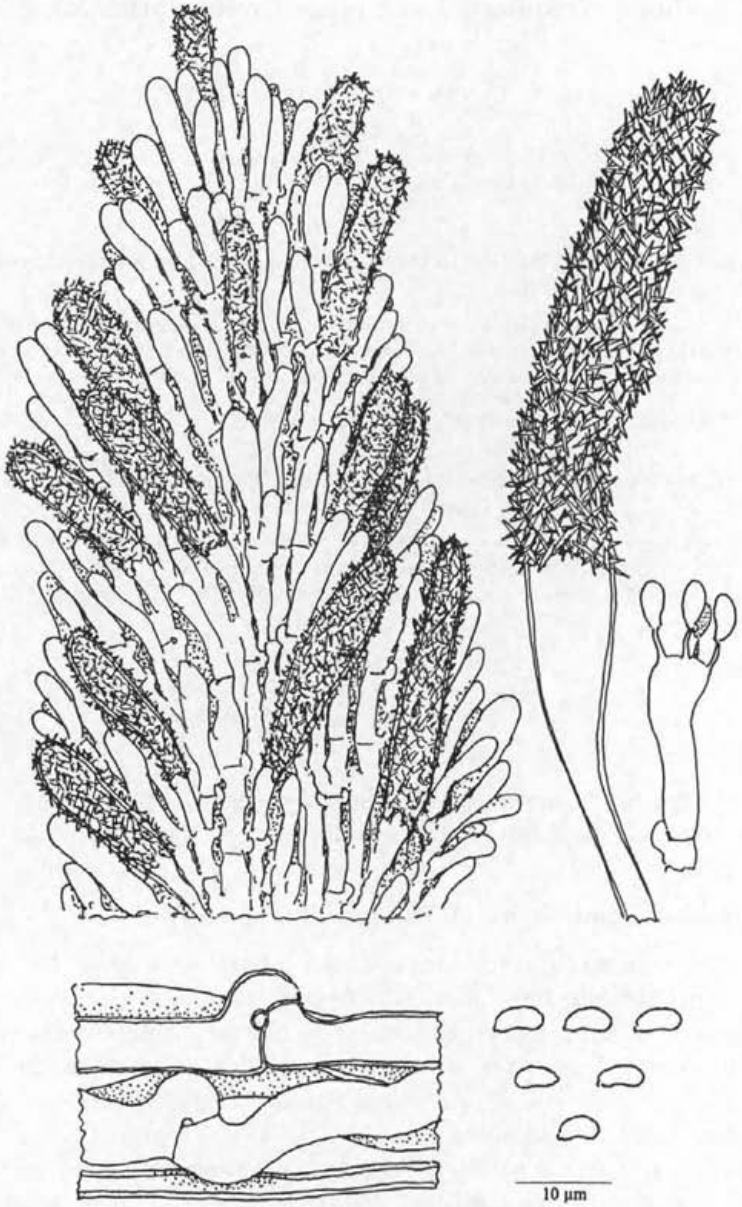

Fig. 1. *Steccherinum albidum*. Cross-section of spine, showing encrusted cystidia (not to scale); cystidium and basidum; thin and thick-walled hyphae; basidiospores.

2–5 μm wide, with clamp-connexions; skeletal hyphae tortuous, thick-walled, 2–5 μm wide. Basidia weakly clavate, 12–18 × 3–4 μm. Cystidia numerous, mostly tubular, encrusted with spiculate mineral crystals, 80–90 × 6–9 μm. Basidiospores cylindrical (Q = 2.0–2.6), weakly allantoid, 3–3.5 (- 4) × 1.5 μm, smooth, thin-walled, negative in Melzer's reagent.

Holotype: ENGLAND: West Sussex, Ebernoe Common, on mossy, fallen, *Fagus* trunk, 13 Sept. 1997, N. W. Legon, K(M) 54968.

Steccherinum albidum is distinguished macroscopically by its effused-reflexed basidiomes, which are whitish when fresh, and microscopically by its small, suballantoid basidiospores (Fig. 1). No comparable species was known to Maas Geesteranus (1974) in his world monograph, nor in subsequent treatments of the genus (including Maas Geesteranus & Lanquetin, 1975; Saliba & David, 1988). The closest species is perhaps *S. ochraceum* (Pers.) Gray, but *S. ochraceum* typically has more deeply coloured, ochraceous to salmon basidiomes and ellipsoid, non-allantoid basidiospores (Q = c. 1.5), well illustrated in Eriksson *et al.* (1984). Additional material of *Steccherinum pallidum* may well be discovered if whitish to pale specimens of "*S. ochraceum*" are systematically searched for and examined microscopically.

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