

## **BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF *LAURERA* (TRYPETHELIACEAE, PYRENYLALES) IN NORTH AND NORTHERN PARTS OF THAILAND**

Kajonsak Vongshewarat,\* Pachara Mongkolsuk, Kansri Boonpragob

Lichen Research Unit, Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Ramkhamheang University, Hua Mark, Bangkok, Bangkok 10240, Thailand.

\*e-mail: kvongshewarat@hotmail.com

**Abstract:** The crustose lichen genus *Laurera* (Pyrenulales; Ascomycota) belongs to the family Trypetheliaceae. This genus produces yellow to orange or black pseudostromata which are embedded in well developed thalli. This genus also contains clavate asci, muriform ascospores with hyaline. Some crustose lichen species has been reported to produce antifungal compounds and secondary photoprotective products. The purpose of this study was to explore biodiversity and ecology of *Laurera* species and then to conserve the diversity as well as to bring about sustainable uses. We have performed field study in 18 sites with 6 difference habitats; moist evergreen forest, dry evergreen forest, hill evergreen forest, dry dipterocarp forest, mix deciduous forest and plantations, at the elevation 10-1,555 meters above sea levels. A total of 200 specimens were identified consisting of 2 genera and 10 species, *Laurera benguelensis*, *Bathelium madreporiformis*, *L. keralensis*, *L. megasperma*, *L. meristospora*, *L. meristosporoides*, *L. phaeomelodes*, *L. subsphaeroides*, *L. benguelensis* and *L. tuberculosa*. Distribution of the common species, *L. benguelensis*, was explicated in most dry dipterocarp forest and plantation areas of Thailand.

### **References:**

1. Awasthi, D.D. (1991) *Biblio. Lichenologica*. **40**. 360p.
2. Harris, R.C. (1984) *Acta Amazonica Manaus* **14(1/2)**. 55-80.
3. Makhija, U.; Patwardhan, P.G. (1988) *Mycotaxon* **31**. 565-590.
4. Vongshewarat, K.; McCarthy, P.M.; Mongkolsuk, P.; Boonpragob, K. (1999) *Mycotaxon*. **70**. 227-236.

**Acknowledgements:** The authors would like to thank the Thai Government for their support of this study. We would like to thank all of the members in the lichen research team at Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Ramkhamhaeng University.

**Keywords:** *Laurera*, lichen, Trypetheliaceae, biodiversity, Thailand