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Zonate eyespot of wheat — a new report

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During the survey of the wheat field in 2003-04 (Jan-Feb), typical symptoms of zonate eyespot, caused by *Drechslera gigantea* (Heald & Wolf) Ito, was observed along with spot blotch symptom

Fig. 1 : Conidia of *H. giganteum* (at low magnification)

(*Bipolaris sorokiniana*). The disease incidence varied from 15-20%. The symptoms appeared as numerous small, circular to oval, grey-brown eye shaped spots on green leaves. The centers of the spot soon fade, becoming light grey to straw coloured with distinct dark brown margins. They remained small, but the tissue between them became bleached. Similar symptoms were observed on the spikelets at the later stages of crop growth.

The conidiophores are dark brown, 3-6 septate, 180-350 × 10 µm in size ; conidia are straight, cylindrical with rounded ends, sub-hyaline, measure 330-490 × 15-20 µm, 6-8 septate with the middle cells larger than the terminal ones. The conidia are sensitive to dessication and loose their germinability after few days of drying.

Pathogenicity of the fungus was confirmed by spraying the wheat field with spores of the fungus collected from infected leaves. It is the first report of *Drechslera gigantea* (Heald & Wolf) Ito, causing zonate eyespot of wheat from India. The specimen has been deposited at the Herbarium Cryptogrammiae Indiane Orientalis as HCIO No. 45506.

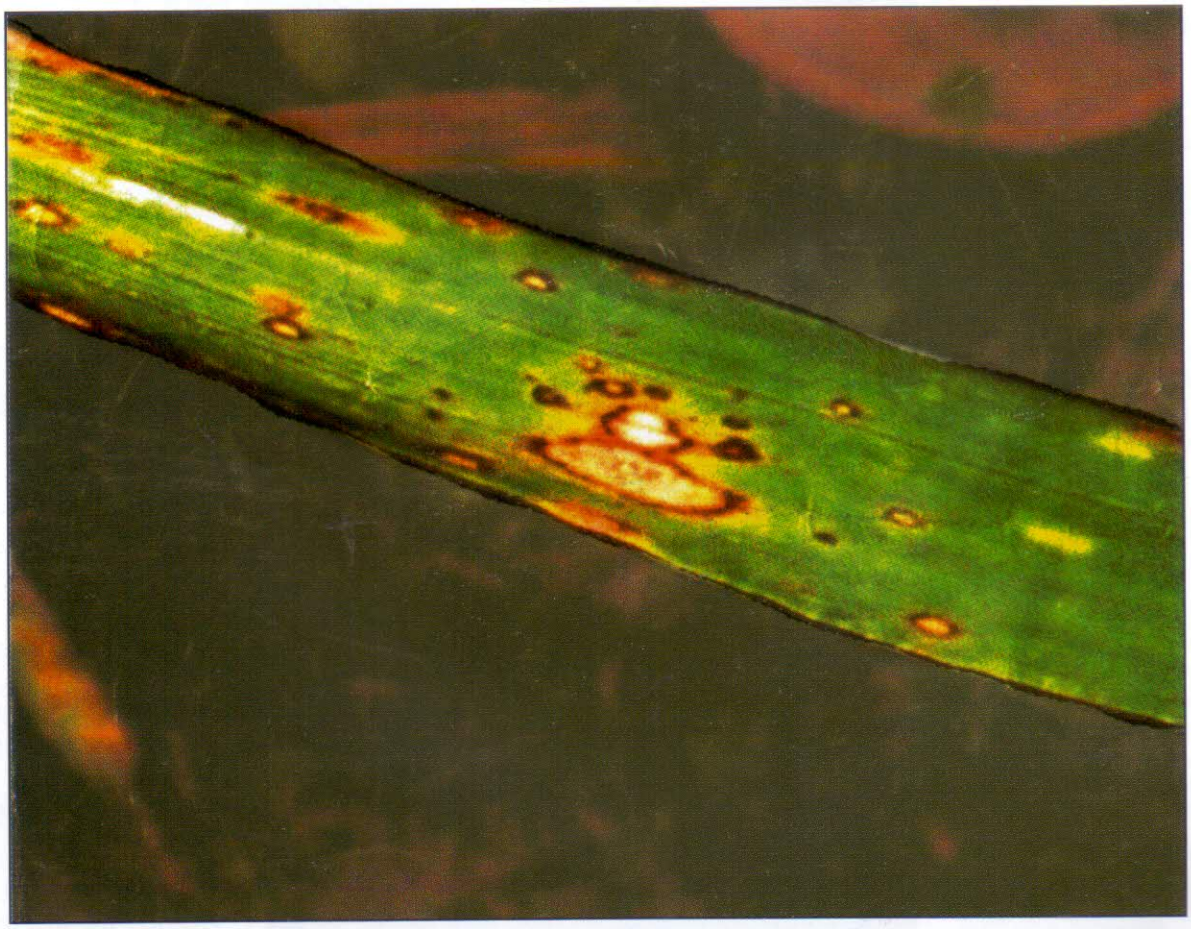

Fig. 2 : Helminthosporium giganteum infection

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