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TYPHULA JUNCEA IN IOWA

MARY LOUISE GRUMBEIN

So far as is known, no species of *Typhula* has heretofore been reported from Iowa. It is of interest, therefore, to record the occurrence of a striking species of this genus. On the rainy afternoon of October 4, 1941, it was discovered fruiting in great abundance on fallen oak leaves in a wooded ravine between North Liberty and Lake Macbride. The pale yellow clubs, 10-12 cm. tall, were developing over an area a hundred feet or more in length and twenty or thirty feet in width in such profusion that in places they suggested patches of yellow grass blades.

A second trip to the same locality was made a week later, but few specimens were found and these were old and withered and would scarcely have been noted had it not been for the earlier collection. It is not unlikely that the fungus appears only during rainy weather late in the season, and that this may account for the lack of previous collections.

The species proved to be *Typhula juncea* (Fries) Karst. of Coker's (1923) treatment. Coker cites specimens from New York, New Hampshire, West Virginia and California. Burt (1922), using the older name *Clavaria juncea* Fries, gives the distribution as from New England to Michigan and Missouri, mentioning its abundance in the vicinity of St. Louis. Remsberg (1940), in a recent study of the genus *Typhula* based largely on laboratory cultures, reduces *T. juncea* to synonymy with *T. phacorrhiza*, which she designates as the neo-type of the genus. She makes the presence of sclerotia diagnostic for the genus. Coker separates *T. juncea* from *T. phacorrhiza* largely on the absence of sclerotia in the former species and their presence in the latter. Remsberg admits that the basidiocarps of the forms she includes in *T. phacorrhiza* may sometimes arise directly from the mycelium, but the implication is that this is exceptional.

Careful examination of the abundant material of the Iowa collection reveals no trace whatsoever of a sclerotium and the inference is that it does not occur in this form as it grows naturally, although it is of course possible that sclerotia might be formed in culture. Under the circumstances it seems desirable to refer the specimens to *T. juncea* and to regard the supposed synonymy of

that species with *T. phacorrhiza* as doubtful until further evidence is submitted.

Burt speaks of the acrid taste of his specimens. This was not apparent in the Iowa material.

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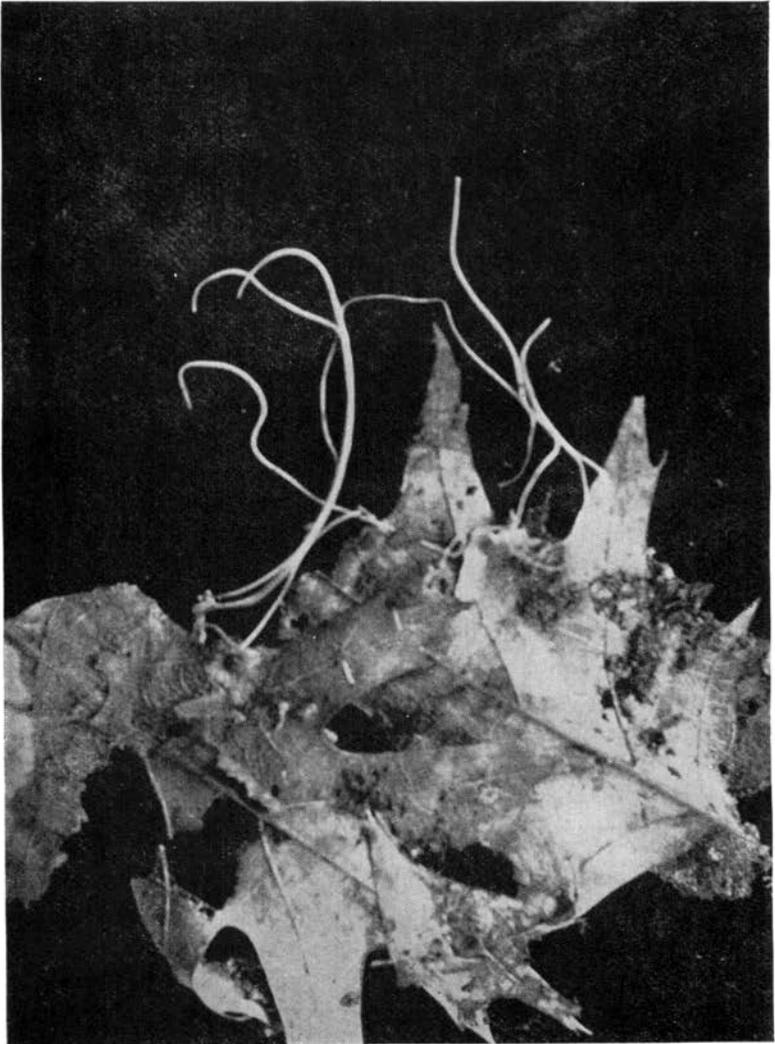


Fig. 1. *Typhula juncea* on oak leaves.

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