

The photographs show *Stethorus pusillus* (Herbst, 1797) (Coccinellidae) infected with the fungus *Hesperomyces coccinelloides* (Thaxt.) Thaxt. (Laboulbeniaceae) beaten from Apple (*Malus domestica* Borkh.) on 21/07/2023 and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna* L.) on 12/05/2022 at Ham Lands South, Richmond, Surrey VC17 (TQ 165719 and TQ165723 respectively). An infected beetle was also beaten from Oak (*Quercus robur* L.) on 29/09/2023 at Royal Park Gate, Kingston, Surrey, VC17 (TQ 174712).

Hesperomyces coccinelloides is a member of the Laboulbeniales, a large group of specialised fungi which are ectoparasites or commensals on invertebrates particularly Coleoptera. The fungus is reported from Coccinellidae of the subfamily Scymninae and produces vegetative structures (thalli) on the outside of the beetles.

The finding of *H.coccinelloides* on *Stethorus pusillus* would appear to be the first report of this fungus in the UK. In Europe, the fungus has been reported from Denmark, Spain, Belgium, and Poland (Santamaria & Pedersen 2021). The related *Hesperomyces virescens* Thaxt. is reported from a wide range of ladybird genera and species particularly the Harlequin Ladybird (*Harmonia axyridis* (Pallas, 1773)) and has been found on this species in the UK.

The number of species of Laboulbeniales reported from the UK is much lower than from Spain, Italy, Denmark, Poland and France (Santamaria & Pedersen 2021), suggesting there is plenty of opportunity to add new ones to the British list.

Reference

Santamaria S. & Pedersen J. 2021. Laboulbeniomycetes (Fungi, Ascomycota) of Denmark. *European Journal of Taxonomy* 781: 1–425.
<https://doi.org/10.5852/ejt.2021.781.1583>

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