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BOXWOOD BLIGHT CONFIRMED ON PACHYSANDRA IN A CONNECTICUT LANDSCAPE

A natural infection of pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*) in the landscape by *Cylindrocladium pseudonaviculatum* (*Calonectria pseudonaviculata*), the boxwood blight fungus, was confirmed by plant pathologists at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) on 29 June 2012. The pachysandra sample had been collected by a CAES plant inspector while visiting a residential property in Fairfield County that had installed balled-and-burlapped boxwood plants in May 2012. These plants had been confirmed by CAES to be infected with boxwood blight one week prior to the visit. The inspector noticed that an established bed of pachysandra adjacent to the infected boxwood had unusual, foliar symptoms, so he collected a sample to bring to the *Plant Disease Information Office* of CAES on 27 June 2012 for examination. Symptoms included small (1-3 mm diameter) (Figures 1-2) to larger (~10 mm diameter) (Figures 3-4) necrotic lesions with well-delineated margins on the leaves. All of the necrotic lesions had distinct, diffuse yellow haloes. At this stage of the infection process, no lesions were observed on the stems and no defoliation had occurred. The overall color of the pachysandra leaves was normal and dark green. No fungal activity was observed upon examination, so samples were incubated in moist chambers.



Figure 1. Numerous small, necrotic lesions with yellow haloes.



Figure 2. Small, necrotic lesion with yellow halo.



Figure 3. Larger necrotic lesions on upper leaf surface. Note that yellow haloes are still present.



Figure 4. View of larger necrotic spots on the lower leaf surface.

After 48 hours incubation, diagnostic fungal fruiting structures were observed, primarily in the larger lesions. The fungus was identified as *Cy. pseudonaviculatum*, based on morphological characteristics (Figures 5-6).



Figure 5. Spores and vesicles of *Cy. pseudonaviculatum*.



Figure 6. Two-celled spores of *Cy. pseudonaviculatum*.

To our knowledge, this is the first report of a natural infection of pachysandra in the landscape by *Cy. pseudonaviculatum*. This follows the first report of pachysandra as a host of boxwood blight by CAES (1), which involved experimental inoculations conducted in the laboratory and greenhouse.

- (1) LaMondia, J. A., D. W. Li, S. M. Douglas, and R. E. Marra. 2012. First report of pachysandra as a host of boxwood blight, caused by *Cylindrocladium pseudonaviculatum*. *Plant Disease* 96: 1069. doi.org/10.1094/PDIS-03-12-0235-PDN.

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