

FUNGAL INVASIVE SPECIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY LOSS: THE CASE OF FAVOLASCHIA
CALOCERA R. HEIM EX R. HEIM

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The invasive organisms (especially, plants and animal species) are considered one of the main causes of global biodiversity loss. Up to day, few papers deal with the spreading of fungi.

This study presents the case of *Favolaschia calocera* R. Heim ex R. Heim (*Agaricales*, *Basidiomycetes*), a paleotropical species native to Madagascar, that was successively observed in 1969 in New Zealand (more precisely at Auckland), where today it is recorded in more than 200 stands, spread over all the country. New observations were advertised by mycologists from Australia, Thailand, China, Kenya, and Reunion Island. *Favolaschia calocera* was found in Liguria (Italy) in 1999: this record represents the first (and sole) observations in Europe. Nowadays, this fungi species was collected in 6 stands located in Liguria. *F.calocera* is a saprotrophic lignicolous polyphagous species, which grows on vascular plant debris (Pteridophytes, Conifers, Monocotyledons and Dicotyledons). It is continuously spreading and for this reason it is carefully monitored. One of the main goal of our research is the risk assessment involved in a possible competition (already occurred in New Zealand), which could arise with the other native autochthon lignicolous species and, in turn, that could affect the overall biodiversity. Future works about this concern foresee molecular phylogeographic analysis in order to discover the origin of Italian strains.