

BRIEF COMMUNICATION

STEMONITOPSIS HYPEROPTA (MEYLAN) NAN.-BREM. VAR. LANDEWALDII NOV. VAR. (STEMONITACEAE, MYXOGASTRALES)

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Diagnosis: sporis maioribus nam 6–9 μm vice 5–7 μm diam., sporangiis altioribus nam 7–9 mm vice 2,5–5 mm altis, gracilibus, pullis (Rayner inter 9: umbrinus et 106: griseo-sepiaceus, vel Munsell 7, 5YR3/2–3: atrobrunneus), fasciculat-isque a typo differens.

This variety differs from the type by the larger spores (6–9 μm diam. instead of 5–7 μm) and by the larger (7–9 mm instead of 2,5–5 mm), slender and dark brown (between Rayner 9: umber and 106: Greyish sepia, or Munsell 7,5YR3/2–3: dark brown) sporangia growing in tufts. Holotypus: Belgium, province of Limburg, Zonhoven, nature reserve “Slangebeekbron”: in a damp environment at the edge of a peat-bog, on a fallen, decorticated branch under birch-trees, 14 VII 1983. *Holotypus:* Bosselaers MY38 (private collection). *Isotypus:* Bosselaers MY38 (BR) and Nannenga-Bremekamp 13931.

The new variety is named after the reverend Landewald Janssen o.f.m. (°1902), who devoted most of his life to the conservation and protection of nature in Limburg, the region where the type specimen was found.

Nannenga-Bremekamp studied the material and holds the view that it belongs to a new taxon, which would have to be placed in the genus *Stemonitopsis* because of the fibrous structure of the stipe. She further comments that this taxon resembles *Stemonitis virginensis* in the slender, tufted sporangia possessing a well developed, finely meshed capillitium surface net with small, outward projecting spines (*plate 1: 1, 2, 5*). The material differs from *S. virginensis* in the larger size and the darker colour of the sporangia, in the slightly larger and weakly ornamented spores (*plate 1: 3*) and in the structure of the stalk.

Apart from being larger, the spores of the new variety are very much like those of typical *Stemonitopsis hyperopta*: they are unbordered and ornamented with very fine ridges enclosing some rather irregular small meshes which are interconnected by larger ones. The ridges may be locally thickened, but there are no conspicuous spines on the spore wall. In fact, after studying the material Rammeloo considered it to be an aberrant form of *S. hyperopta*, still falling within the variation range of that species.

In my opinion, the specimen, which is large and well developed and which

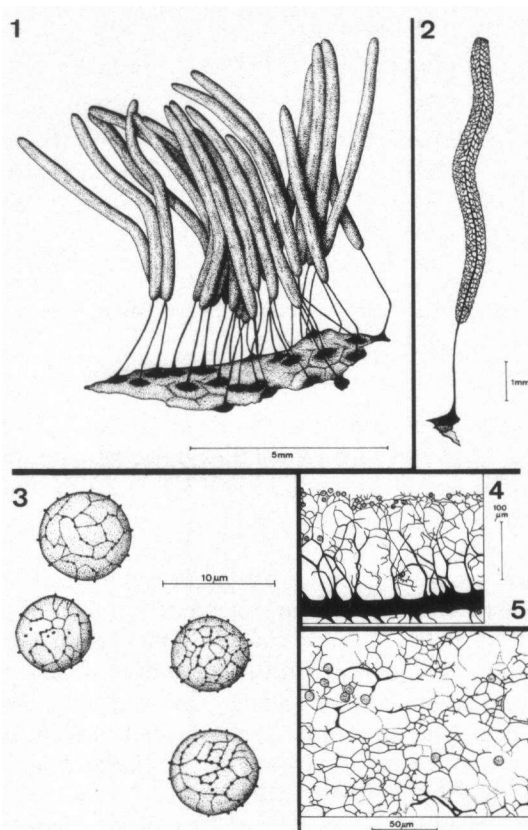


Plate 1. *Stemonitopsis hyperopta* (Meylan) Nann.-Brem. var. *landewaldii* nov. var. 1: habitus; 2: a single sporangium with the spores blown out; 3: spores; 4: detail of columella and capillitium; 5: detail of capillitium surface net.

shows no signs of disturbance during maturation, is indeed very close to *S. hyperopta* because of the ornamentation of its spores. On the other hand the tufted habit and the very dark brown, slender, oblong-cylindrical sporangia which, at first sight, do not suggest *S. hyperopta*, justify the description of the specimen as a new variety.

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