Exophiala encephalarti
**Exophiala encephalarti** Crous, *sp. nov.*

*Exophialae placitae similis, sed conidiis minoribus, (3–)4–5(–6) × (2–)2.5(–3) μm, discernitur.

**Etymology.** Named after the host from which it was collected, *Encephalartos*.

*Mycelium* consisting of smooth, septate, brown, branched, 2–3 μm diam hyphae. *Conidiophores* mostly reduced to conidiogenous cells, or with a supporting cell. *Conidiogenous cells* pale brown, smooth, reduced to conidiogenous loci, 0.5 μm wide, or ampulliform to doliiform, 5–7 × 1.5–2.5 μm; proliferating 1–2 times percurrently near apex. *Conidia* aseptate, (3–)4–5(–6) × (2–)2.5(–3) μm, ellipsoid, hyaline, smooth, guttulate, widest in middle, apex obtuse, tapering to a subtruncate base, 0.5 μm wide.

Culture characteristics — (in the dark, 25 °C, after 1 mo): Colonies on oatmeal agar slimy, lacking aerial mycelium, with diffuse margins, greyish-sepia. On potato-dextrose agar flat, spreading, with sparse aerial mycelium and feathery margins; surface olivaceous-grey with iron-grey margins; reverse iron-grey; colonies reaching 15 mm diam.


**Notes.** Based on the LSU sequence of *Exophiala encephalarti*, a megablast search of the NCBI’s GenBank nucleotide database reveals the closest neighbours to be *Brycekenrickomyces acaciae* (GenBank FJ839641; Identities = 852/880 (97 %), Gaps = 10/880 (1 %)), *Exophiala placitae* (GenBank EU040215; Identities = 845/885 (96 %), Gaps = 16/885 (1 %)) and *Sarcinomyces petricola* (GenBank FJ358249; Identities = 814/854 (96 %), Gaps = 16/854 (1 %)), all in *Chaetothyriales*. Morphologically it resembles other species of *Exophiala*, though phylogenetically, it appears to represent a distinct lineage.

**Colour illustrations.** *Encephalartos* plants growing in Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden; hyphae with conidiogenous cells giving rise to conidia. Scale bar = 10 μm.