Phyllosticta ericarum
**Phyllosticta ericarum** Crous, sp. nov.

**Etymology.** Named after the host genus from which it was isolated, Erica.

**Disease symptoms** associated with leaf tip blight. **Conidiomata** pycnidial, solitary, black, erumpent, globose, exuding colourless to opaque conidial masses; **pycnidia** up to 180 µm diam; pycnidial wall of several layers of **textura angularis**, up to 30 µm thick; inner wall of hyaline **textura angularis**, up to 30 µm thick; **ostiole** central, up to 20 µm diam. **Conidiophores** subcylindrical to ampulliform, reduced to conidiogenous cells, or with 1–2 supporting cells, at times branches at base, 20–40 × 4–6 µm. **Conidiogenous cells** terminal, subcylindrical, hyaline, smooth, coated in a mucoid layer, enclosed in a thin, persistent mucoid sheath, 3–4 µm thick, and bearing a hyaline, apical mucoid appendage, (5–)8–10(–12) × 1.5(–2) µm, flexible, unbranched, tapering towards an acutely rounded tip. **Conidia** (8–)9–10(–12) × (6–)7 µm, solitary, hyaline, aseptate, thin and smooth walled, coarsely guttulate, or with a single large central guttule, ellipsoid or obovoid, tapering towards a narrow truncate base, 2–3 µm diam, enclosed in a thin, persistent mucoid sheath, 3–4 µm thick, and bearing a hyaline, apical mucoid appendage, (5–)8–10(–12) × 1.5(–2) µm, flexible, unbranched, tapering towards an acutely rounded tip.

**Culture characteristics** — (in the dark, 25 °C after 3 wk): Colonies erumpent, spreading, with moderate aerial mycelium and feathery margins, reaching 60 mm diam. On MEA surface olivaceous grey, reverse iron-grey; on OA iron-grey; on PDA iron-grey on surface and reverse.

**Typus.** **SOUTH AFRICA**, Western Cape Province, Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch Botanical Garden, on leaves of *Erica gracilis* (Ericaceae), 18 Aug. 2011, **P.W. Crous & C.L. Lennox**, holotype CBS H-20961, cultures ex-type CPC 19745, 19744 = CBS 132534, ITS sequence GenBank JX069865 and LSU sequence GenBank JX069849, MycoBank MB800377.

**Notes** — Van der Aa (1973) regarded *Phyllosticta ericae* (on dead leaves of *Erica carnea*, Germany) as identical to *P. pyrolae* (conidia 4.5–7.5 × 4–9 µm; on *Pyrola rotunifolia*, USA). Phylogenetically, *P. pyrolae* is distinct from *P. ericarum*. Okane et al. (2001) compared *Phyllosticta* isolates occurring on *Ericaceae*, and concluded that *P. pyrolae* is distinct from *P. capitalensis*, which proved to be a dominant endophyte associated with *Ericaceae*. *Phyllosticta capitalensis* was recently shown to have an extremely wide host range, occurring on numerous economically important crops, on which it is commonly incorrectly identified (Glienke et al. 2011). Based on a megablast search of NCBI's GenBank nucleotide database, the closest hit using the ITS sequence is *Guignardia philoprina* (GenBank AF312008; Identities = 622/626 (99 %), Gaps = 1/626 (0 %)), followed by *Phyllosticta citribraziliensis* (GenBank FJ538352; Identities = 605/606 (99 %), Gaps = 1/606 (0 %)), and *Phyllosticta citrichinaensis* (GenBank JN791665; Identities = 627/639 (98 %), Gaps = 6/639 (1 %)). Closest hits using the LSU sequence yielded highest similarity to *Phyllosticta hymenocalidicola* (GenBank JQ044443; Identities = 908/914 (99 %), Gaps = 0/914 (0 %)), *Guignardia vaccinii* (GenBank FJ588242; Identities = 907/915 (99 %), Gaps = 0/915 (0 %)), and *Guignardia philoprina* (GenBank DQ377878; Identities = 898/915 (98 %), Gaps = 2/915 (0 %)).

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**Colour illustrations.** Leaves and flowers of *Erica gracilis*; conidiogenous cells and conidia with mucoid sheaths. Scale bars = 10 µm.