

Lv C, Luo L, Li J and Hsiang T. 2010. First report of dollar spot of seashore Paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*) caused by *Sclerotinia homoeocarpa* in South China. *Plant Disease* 94:373.

Seashore paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum* Swartz) is a warm season perennial grass, native to tropical and subtropical regions of North and South America (Carrow, 2000). Its fine texture and tolerance to low mowing and hypersaline environments make it a commercially promising turfgrass species for coastal regions of south China. In late March 2009, disease symptoms were observed from two golf courses fairways, in Shenzhen and Foshan, Guangdong province, China. Small, round patches from 25 to 75 mm diameter were found, consisting of bleached, straw color leaf lesions bounded by reddish-brown margins. Similar patches had previously been observed on seashore paspalum since 1997 in Guangdong province, but this turf species has been grown in southern China only since the early 1990s. These symptoms were observed when daytime temperatures were above 25 C and with heavy dew formation at night. Greatest severity was seen in spring and fall. Several contact and systemic fungicides applied after first symptoms were observed, and they were usually successful in suppressing disease. To confirm the disease as dollar spot, isolates from Shenzhen and Foshan were obtained by plating diseased leaf blades of *P. vaginatum* (cv. Salam) on potato dextrose agar media. Isolates produced white, fluffy, aerial mycelium, columnar when mature, and usually with a cinnamon base and dark brown or black substratal stroma on and in the agar. One representative isolate from each location was chosen for pathogenicity testing. Six-week-old *P. vaginatum* (cv. SalamTM) grown from seed in pots was inoculated with 5-mm-diameter agar plugs with hyphae from 5-day-old cultures, by direct placement onto leaves, with three replicate pots per isolate. Plants treated with sterile agar plugs served as controls. Inoculated turf was incubated at 25 C under 12 hour light/dark conditions. A plastic film was also placed over the pots to retain moisture. Chlorotic leaf lesions developed starting 4 days after inoculation and became a bleached straw color. The same fluffy white fungus was re-isolated from lesions, while no disease was observed on controls, thus completing Koch's postulates. The internal transcribed spacer region of the ribosomal DNA (ITS) was amplified from DNA extracted from two isolates using the primers ITS5 and ITS4 (White et al., 1990), and the 610-bp sequences showed 98% similarity with *Sclerotinia homoeocarpa* F.T. Bennett in GenBank and have been deposited as accessions GQ386985 and GU002301. Dollar spot on *P. vaginatum* has been commonly observed in the U.S.A. (Carrow, 2000). To our knowledge, this is the first confirmed report of dollar spot on *P. vaginatum* in China, or from any host plant in China.