

**ASPECT PREFERENCES OF A *TELOSCHISTES CHRYSOPHTHALMUS*
POPULATION GROWING ON CEMENT PLASTER IN THE URBAN
ENVIRONMENT OF LA PLATA (BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE,
ARGENTINA).**

Teloschistes chrysophthalmus (L.) Th. Fr., is a well-known widespread fruticose lichen in warm temperate areas. In a recent study it was found growing on the cement plaster of the top of the wall of the terrace of a private house in La Plata (Buenos Aires Province, Argentina), and determined by keys (Ferraro, 1979, Osorio, 1977, Poelt, 1970, Scutari & Teinhardt, 2001)

The house which was built in 1954, is located in the centre of the town, by a busy street, and is orientated in a north-south direction. This orientation provides an opportunity to investigate preferences to exposure on different aspects of the walls, taking into account fertile and sterile specimens.

TABLE 1- Distribution pattern and percentage of *Teloschistes chrysophthalmus* growing on a terrace wall of La Plata., Argentina.

	Fertile	Sterile	Total	Density IND/m	%fertile specimens (in sector)
N	16	50	66	11	24,2
S	3	16	15	2,14	20
E	15	18	33	3,3	45
W	26	5	31	5,1	83
TOTAL	60	89	145	5	41

The highest number of individuals and density were found on the wall with a north-facing aspect. This indicates that *T. chrysophthalmus* is a thermophilous, photophilous species, although the number and percentage of fertile specimens is greatest on the wall with the west aspect.

But the most striking fact is that these specimens have been found in an urban area on a cement plaster substratum, because, according to Poelt 1979, the only *Teloschistes* species that can also grow on rocks is *T. exilis* (Michaux) Vainio, but it is round in section and so is different from *T. chrysophthalmus*, which has flat laciniae. According to the British Lichen Checklist, *Teloschistes flavicans* is also present in England. This species grows on maritime rocks (P. Lambley, com. pers.)

T. chrysophthalmus is a corticolous species (Ferraro 1978, Osorio 1977, Poelt 1979) and the literature and Internet searches to find records of this lichen on man made substrata had no results (Recent Literature on Lichens database). Recently, it has been found growing on painted metal from a road bridge in a rural area (Rosato, 2003). However in this case it was found in the centre of the town. It is probable that the higher pH of the substratum acts as a buffer, allowing the lichen to tolerate the polluted environment.

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