



Etiology of *Cyclocarya paliurus* Anthracnose in Jiangsu Province, China

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OPEN ACCESS

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Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
Plant Pathogen Interactions,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Plant Science

Received: 02 October 2020

Accepted: 28 December 2020

Published: 18 January 2021

Citation:

Zheng X-r, Zhang M-j, Shang X-l,
Fang S-z and Chen F-m (2021)
Etiology of *Cyclocarya paliurus*
Anthracnose in Jiangsu Province,
China. *Front. Plant Sci.* 11:613499.
doi: 10.3389/fpls.2020.613499

Cyclocarya paliurus is an extremely valuable and multifunctional tree species whose leaves have traditionally been used in medicine or as a medicinal tea in China. In recent years, anthracnose has been frequently observed on young leaves of *C. paliurus* in several nurseries located in Jiangsu Province, resulting in great yield and quality losses. To date, no information is available about the prevalence of *C. paliurus* anthracnose in China. The main purpose of the present study was to characterize the etiology of *C. paliurus* anthracnose. Phylogenetic analysis of the eight-loci concatenated dataset revealed that all 44 single-spore *Colletotrichum* isolates belonged to three species in the *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* species complex, namely, *Colletotrichum aenigma*, *Colletotrichum fructicola*, and *C. gloeosporioides* sensu stricto. Phenotypic features, including the colony appearance and the morphology of conidia, appressoria, and ascospores, were consistent with the phylogenetic grouping. Virulence tests validated that the three *Colletotrichum* species could cause typical symptoms of anthracnose on *C. paliurus* leaves, similar to those observed in the field. The optimum mycelial growth temperature ranged from 25 to 30°C for all representative isolates, while *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. isolates exhibited greater tolerance to high temperature (40°C). Fungicide sensitivity assays indicated that all three *Colletotrichum* species were sensitive to tetramycin, which may be a potential alternative for the management of *C. paliurus* anthracnose. To our knowledge, this study provides the first report of *C. aenigma*, *C. fructicola*, and *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. causing *C. paliurus* anthracnose in China as well as in the world.

Keywords: *Cyclocarya paliurus*, etiology, fungicide sensitivity, *Colletotrichum*, anthracnose

INTRODUCTION

Cultivated for fine timber and as a medicinal plant, *Cyclocarya paliurus* is the sole extant species in the genus *Cyclocarya* and is native to China, naturally distributed in mountainous regions in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River (Fang et al., 2011; Deng et al., 2015; Xie et al., 2015; Zheng et al., 2020). In Chinese folklore, *C. paliurus* is commonly called the “sweet tea tree,”

and its leaves have traditionally been used as drug formulations for the treatment of obesity or diabetes mellitus (Fang et al., 2011; Cao et al., 2017; Xie et al., 2018). In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to *C. paliurus* because phytochemical studies have demonstrated that the extracts of its leaves possess a wide range of biological activities beneficial to human beings, such as antihypertensive (Xie et al., 2006), hypoglycemic (Wang et al., 2013), anti-HIV-1 (Zhang et al., 2010), antioxidant (Xie et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2018a,b), antitumor (Liu et al., 2018b), and anticancer (Xie et al., 2013) activities. Current focal studies of *C. paliurus* have concentrated on producing or identifying the bioactive components in its leaves. Unfortunately, to date, no information about *C. paliurus* anthracnose is available, and this disease could become a limiting factor affecting the *C. paliurus* tea industry.

The Coelomycetous genus *Colletotrichum* Corda includes plant pathogens responsible for anthracnose diseases with a global distribution (Hyde et al., 2009; Wikee et al., 2011; Cannon et al., 2012; Dean et al., 2012; He et al., 2019). From the perspective of economic and scientific importance, *Colletotrichum* was denoted the eighth most significant fungal phytopathogen group worldwide (Dean et al., 2012), attacking over 3200 dicot and monocot plant species (Manire et al., 2002; O'Connell et al., 2012). The morphological taxonomy of *Colletotrichum* species has historically been arduous owing to overlapping characteristics, and the morphology sometimes varies with environmental factors (e.g., temperature, illumination, etc.) in culture (Freeman et al., 1998; Cannon et al., 2012; Damm et al., 2019). Molecular tools have been widely applied to effectively identify and define fungi at the species level. In recent years, the majority of studies regarding anthracnose were conducted principally via morphology and multigene phylogeny based on modern taxonomic concepts, which provides a more precise and robust solution (Damm et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2014, 2015; De Silva et al., 2017a; Diao et al., 2017; Guarnaccia et al., 2017; Fu et al., 2019).

Colletotrichum spp. infections initially occur via the attachment of spores to the host plant surface, followed by spore germination and the formation of an appressorium, which penetrates the plant cuticle. This process suggests that appressoria and spores play a critical role in the infection cycle and that certain highly inhibitory substances against spore germination and appressorium production would be potential alternatives to control anthracnose (De Silva et al., 2017b; Gao et al., 2020; Konsue et al., 2020). Currently, chemical pesticides are identified as the principal agents used for anthracnose management (Bi et al., 2011). However, excessive use of such chemicals has also brought a series of challenges over time (Lu et al., 2010; Hu et al., 2015; Duan et al., 2018), including pathogen resistance and residual toxicity that affects human health and the environment (Kim et al., 2015; Alijani et al., 2019). The selection of environmentally safe, high-efficacy and relatively new fungicides is therefore imperative.

The application of antibiotic fungicides derived from metabolites of beneficial microbes to control phytopathogens has recently attracted increased attention since these compounds have been found to be environmentally friendly and may

help to overcome pesticide resistance due to their low toxicity to non-target organisms and structural versatility (Moreira and May De Mio, 2015; Simionato et al., 2017; Han et al., 2020), offering a safe and effective way to circumvent the drawbacks of chemically synthesized pesticides and decreasing the environmental risks associated with their contamination (Ma et al., 2018a; Zhu et al., 2018).

Tetramycin, the fermentation metabolite of *Streptomyces ahyscopicus*, exhibits excellent inhibitory activity against many plant pathogens, including *Botrytis cinera*, *Passalora fulva*, *Phytophthora capsici*, and *Pyricularia oryzae* (Zhong et al., 2010; Ren et al., 2014; Song et al., 2016; Chen L. L. et al., 2017; Ma et al., 2018a), which has been registered to manage rice and fruit crop diseases in China (Zhao et al., 2010). On the other hand, a previous study reported that tetramycin has the potential to elicit disease resistance by activating plant defensive enzymes, including polyphenol oxidase (PPO), peroxidase (POD), and phenylalanine ammonia lyase (PAL) (Zhong et al., 2010). Owing to its environmental friendliness and high efficiency, tetramycin has become the preferred fungicide in recent years (Song et al., 2016; Ma et al., 2018a,b).

Phenazine-1-carboxylic acid (PCA) is an important N-containing heterocyclic secondary metabolite (Zhu et al., 2019), which has been proved having antimicrobial (Palchykovska et al., 2012; Udumula et al., 2017), antitumorigenic (Gupta et al., 2014), antiviral, and antitubercular effects (Logua et al., 2009; Palchykovska et al., 2012), widely existed in microbial metabolites of *Pseudomonads* and *Streptomyces* (Zhu et al., 2019). Particularly, in recent years, PCA received much attention due to outstanding inhibition effects against several phytopathogenic fungi in agricultural application (Zhu et al., 2019; Han et al., 2020). In China, PCA has been registered as the biofungicide “Shenqinbactin” for its environmental friendliness, low toxicity to human and animals, and the enhancement of crop production (Zhu et al., 2018, 2019; Han et al., 2020).

Kasugamycin, the fermentation product of *Streptomyces kasugaensis*, is a member of the aminoglycoside antibiotic (Uppala and Zhou, 2018). It was originally developed as a biofungicide for the management of rice blast caused by *P. oryzae*. Kasugamycin inhibits protein biosynthesis, with both fungicidal and bactericidal activities (McGhee and Sundin, 2011). Due to its high efficiency and friendliness to environment, the use of Kasugamycin in United States has been approved by EPA for controlling diseases of several pome fruits in the past decade¹.

In 2018, during an investigation of *C. paliurus*, serious anthracnose symptoms (**Figure 1A**) were observed in several nurseries located in the scientific research base of Nanjing Forestry University in Baima town (Baima), Nanjing. Over a half of the leaves were infected in Baima based on our observation. This anthracnose has been considered an emerging disease, but it is becoming endemic; nevertheless, the etiology, epidemiology, and management of this disease are uncertain. Hence, the objectives of the present study were to (1) accurately identify the *Colletotrichum* spp. causing

¹<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2014/08/29/2014-20502/kasugamycin-pesticide-tolerances>



FIGURE 1 | *Cyclocarya paliurus* leaves with typical necrosis symptoms of anthracose. **(A)** Diseased leaves in the field. **(B,C)** Initial and later symptoms of *Cyclocarya paliurus* anthracose. **(D)** Gelatinous orange spore masses oozed and arranged in concentric rings; bar = 2 mm. **(E)** Longitudinal section of acervuli developed on leaf lesion; co indicates conidia; bar = 10 μm . **(F)** Scanning electron photomicrograph of acervuli formed on leaf lesion; co and cp indicate conidia and conidiophores, respectively; bar = 10 μm .

C. paliurus anthracnose in Jiangsu Province, China, combining morphological and biological characteristics with molecular phylogenetic analyses; (2) examine the virulence of these fungi on *C. paliurus* leaves *in vitro*; and (3) characterize and compare the inhibitory effects of biofungicides against different *Colletotrichum* spp. *in vitro*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Field Survey and Sampling

A field survey of *C. paliurus* anthracnose was carried out in Nanjing (five nurseries), Changzhou (four nurseries), and Yancheng (four nurseries) in September and October 2018 during the late growing season. Disease incidence was calculated as the percentage of trees displaying anthracnose symptoms out of the total number of evaluated trees (Bautista-Cruz et al., 2019). Three leaves exhibiting typical symptoms of anthracnose were

randomly sampled per plant, and at least 10 symptomatic plants were sampled per nursery. All samples were then packaged in self-sealing bags and transported in an ice chest to the laboratory and then stored at 5°C prior to isolation.

Colletotrichum Isolation

To isolate the fungus, small sections (4-by-4 mm pieces) were removed from the margin of leaf lesions, surface disinfected in 1% (vol/vol) NaClO₃ for 45 s and 75% ethanol for 30 s, rinsed in sterile distilled water three times, and air-dried on sterilized paper. The sections were then cultured onto 2% potato dextrose agar (PDA) (five sections per plate) amended with 100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ ampicillin to inhibit bacterial growth and incubated at 25°C in the dark. The emerging edges of the fungal mycelium were observed daily and transferred aseptically onto new PDA plates. Colonies similar in morphology to *Colletotrichum* spp. were purified using the monospore isolation procedure described by Cai et al. (2009), and single-spore cultures were preserved in

PDA slant test tubes at 4°C for follow-up studies. All isolates used in this study were deposited in State Key Laboratory of Forest Protection in Nanjing Forestry University.

Molecular Identification and Phylogenetic Analysis

For further characterization of the *Colletotrichum* spp., total genomic DNA (gDNA) of all single-spore isolates was extracted following the CTAB method described by Than et al. (2008). The concentrations of gDNA extracts were adjusted to 100 ng/μL with autoclaved double distilled water (ddH₂O) using a NanoDrop 2000 spectrophotometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Madison, WI, United States) and stored at -20°C before use. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) amplification was performed for the following loci: the ITS region, calmodulin (CAL), β-tubulin (TUB), actin (ACT), chitin synthase 1 (CHS-1), glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH), glutamine synthetase (GS), and Apn2-Mat1-2 intergenic spacer (ApMat) genes. PCR amplifications were conducted in a 25 μL volume, mixed with 8.5 μL of ddH₂O, 1 μL of each primer (10 μM), 2 μL of template DNA, and 12.5 μL of 2 × PCR Taq Master Mix (Applied Biological Materials Inc., Canada), using an Eppendorf Nexus Thermal Cycler (Germany). A negative control was added in all amplifications, where an equal volume of ddH₂O replaced the template DNA. The primers and PCR settings for each locus are shown in **Table 1**. Amplification products were purified and sequenced by Jie Li Biotech Company (Shanghai, China). Forward and reverse DNA sequences were assembled and manually edited where necessary using Bioedit software (version 7.0.5²), and the consensus sequences were deposited in GenBank (**Table 2**). Reference sequences from ex-type or other authoritative specimens of *Colletotrichum* spp. were retrieved from GenBank and aligned with sequences generated herein for constructing phylogenetic trees, with *C. boninense* (MAFF 305972) used as an outgroup (**Tables 2, 3**).

The phylogenetic analysis for each individual locus and the concatenated matrix were inferred under the Bayesian inference (BI) and maximum-likelihood (ML) criteria in MrBayes 3.2.6 (Ronquist et al., 2012) and MEGA 7 (Kumar et al., 2016), respectively. For BI analysis, the best nucleotide substitution model of each locus was ascertained by MrModeltest 2.3 according to AICc, with K2 + I identified for CHS, TN93 identified for GAPDH, K2 + G identified for ACT and ApMat, GTR + G identified for CAL and GS, and TN93 + G identified for ITS and TUB. Four Markov chains were run for 30 million generations simultaneously, with trees sampled every 1000 generations. The first 25% of trees were discarded as the burn-in phase of the analyses, while the remaining trees were used for calculating posterior probabilities (PPs) in the majority rule consensus tree. ML analysis was performed based on the GTR + G + I model, and clade support was determined by 1000 bootstrap replicates, with gaps treated as missing data.

Morphological and Biological Characterization

Fourteen representative isolates were selected for further studies according to BI/ML phylogenetic analysis (**Table 1**).

Mycelial blocks (2 mm in side length) aseptically taken from actively growing cultures were transferred to new PDA plates and incubated at 25°C in darkness. Colony characteristics, including conidiomata or ascomata production, were determined up to 30 days post-inoculation (dpi). Conidia, appressoria, ascospores, and asci for microscopy were obtained and examined according to the procedure described by Weir et al. (2012). At least 30 measurements per structure were recorded at ×100 magnification using a ZEISS Axio Imager A2m microscope (Carl Zeiss, Göttingen, Germany) equipped with differential interference contrast (DIC) optics. To observe fungal structures developed on infected tissue, leaves showing typical symptoms of anthracnose were collected and prepared using the method of Huang et al. (2018), with photomicrographs taken by a Regulus 8100 field emission scanning electron microscope (FE-SEM, Japan).

To determine the optimal temperature for colony growth, mycelial blocks (2 mm in side length) of 14 representative isolates were cultured as described above and incubated at temperatures of 5–40°C with 5°C intervals. The colony diameter was measured at two perpendicular angles, and the average was taken at 4 dpi. Five replicates per isolate were examined at all eight temperatures, and the experiment was conducted twice. Differences in the morphological and biological characteristics of the isolates were determined by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) using IBM SPSS Statistics 24.0 software (SPSS, Inc., Chicago, IL, United States).

Virulence Tests of *Colletotrichum* Isolates

Virulence tests were conducted with reference to previous reports with minor modifications (Huang et al., 2016; Chen Y. et al., 2017; Xue et al., 2019). Fourteen representative *Colletotrichum* isolates were selected and cultured on PDA and used for virulence tests on detached *C. paliurus* leaves under controlled conditions (**Table 2**). Conidial suspensions of each isolate were prepared as previously described and adjusted to two concentrations of 1×10^6 and 1×10^8 conidia/mL with ddH₂O.

Asymptomatic *C. paliurus* leaves were surface disinfected and air-dried as mentioned above, and then one piercing wound was made on the right side of each leaf using a sterile needle (insect pin, 0.71 mm in diameter), or the leaves were left unwounded. Wound inoculation was performed by placing an 8 μL conidial suspension (1×10^6 conidia/mL) or mycelial blocks (5 mm in length) from margins of actively growing colonies onto each stab wound. Non-wound inoculation was conducted by placing an 8 μL spore suspension (1×10^8 conidia/mL) or mycelial blocks onto the mid-right region of the leaves without pin pricking. Leaves inoculated with ddH₂O or non-colonized PDA blocks were treated as negative controls. The experiment was conducted in triplicate for each treatment and control, involving five leaves per replicate. All treatments and controls were placed into transparent containers (334 × 215 × 87 mm) lined with moist sterile filter paper and sealed by plastic wrap to maintain a high relative humidity and then incubated at 25°C under a 12 h photoperiod in a growth chamber. The whole experiment was carried out twice.

²<http://www.mbio.ncsu.edu/bioedit/page2.html>

TABLE 1 | Descriptions and sequence accession numbers obtained from GenBank of the *Colletotrichum* spp. used in the phylogenetic study.

Species	Culture/Isolate ^a	Host	City/Country	GenBank accession number ^b							
				ITS	GAPDH	CAL	ACT	CHS-1	TUB	GS	ApMat
<i>C. aenigma</i>	ICMP 18608	<i>Persea americana</i>	Israel	JX010244	JX010044	JX009683	JX009443	JX009774	JX010389	JX010078	KM360143
	HC3 ^c	<i>Cyclocarya paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476807	MT501007	MT500919	MT500875	MT500963	MT501051	MW344671	MW344720
	JS2	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476808	MT501008	MT500920	MT500876	MT500964	MT501052	MW344672	MW344721
	JS7	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476809	MT501009	MT500921	MT500877	MT500965	MT501053	MW344673	MW344722
	SC7 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476810	MT501010	MT500922	MT500878	MT500966	MT501054	MW344674	MW344723
	YM8 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	MT476811	MT501011	MT500923	MT500879	MT500967	MT501055	MW344675	MW344724
	ZH2	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	MT476812	MT501012	MT500924	MT500880	MT500968	MT501056	MW344676	MW344725
<i>C. aeschynomenes</i>	ICMP 17673	<i>Aeschynomene virginica</i>	United States	JX010176	JX009930	JX009721	JX009483	JX009799	JX010392	JX010081	KM360145
<i>C. alatae</i>	CBS 304.67 , ICMP 17919	<i>Dioscorea alata</i>	India	JX010190	JX009990	JX009738	JX009471	JX009837	JX010383	JX010065	KC888932
<i>C. alienum</i>	ICMP 12071	<i>Malus domestica</i>	New Zealand	JX010251	JX010028	JX009654	JX009572	JX009882	JX010411	JX010101	KM360144
<i>C. aotearoa</i>	ICMP 18537	<i>Coprosma</i> sp.	New Zealand	JX010205	JX010005	JX009611	JX009564	JX009853	JX010420	JX010113	KC888930
<i>C. arecicola</i>	CGMCC 3.19667, HNBL5	<i>Areca catechu</i>	Wenchang, China	MK914635	MK935455		MK935374	MK935541	MK935498		MK935413
<i>C. asianum</i>	ICMP 18580 , CBS 130418	<i>Coffea arabica</i>	Thailand	FJ972612	JX010053	FJ917506	JX009584	JX009867	JX010406	JX010096	FR718814
<i>C. boninense</i>	MAFF 305972	<i>Crinum asiaticum</i> var. <i>sinicum</i>	Japan	JX010292	JX009905	JQ005674	JX009583	JX009827	JQ005588		
<i>C. clidemiae</i>	ICMP 18658	<i>Clidemia hirta</i>	United States, Hawaii	JX010265	JX009989	JX009645	JX009537	JX009877	JX010438	JX010129	KC888929
<i>C. cordylinicola</i>	MFLUCC 090551 , ICMP 18579	<i>Cordyline fruticosa</i>	Thailand	JX010226	JX009975	HM470238	HM470235	JX009864	JX010440	JX010122	JQ899274
<i>C. fructicola</i>	ICMP 18581 , CBS 130416	<i>Coffea arabica</i>	Thailand	JX010165	JX010033	FJ917508	FJ907426	JX009866	JX010405	JX010095	JQ807838
	BM5 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476813	MT501013	MT500925	MT500881	MT500969	MT501057	MW344677	MW344726
	BX1	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476814	MT501014	MT500926	MT500882	MT500970	MT501058	MW344678	MW344727
	F5	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476815	MT501015	MT500927	MT500883	MT500971	MT501059	MW344679	MW344728
	GX1 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476816	MT501016	MT500928	MT500884	MT500972	MT501060	MW344680	MW344729
	GT7	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476817	MT501017	MT500929	MT500885	MT500973	MT501061	MW344681	MW344730
	HC2 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476818	MT501018	MT500930	MT500886	MT500974	MT501062	MW344682	MW344731
	HC6	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476819	MT501019	MT500931	MT500887	MT500975	MT501063	MW344683	MW344732
	JS3	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476820	MT501020	MT500932	MT500888	MT500976	MT501064	MW344684	MW344733
	JS9	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476821	MT501021	MT500933	MT500889	MT500977	MT501065	MW344685	MW344734
	LC7 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476822	MT501022	MT500934	MT500890	MT500978	MT501066	MW344686	MW344735
	LG2	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476823	MT501023	MT500935	MT500891	MT500979	MT501067	MW344687	MW344736
	LG4	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476824	MT501024	MT500936	MT500892	MT500980	MT501068	MW344688	MW344737
	LV2	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476825	MT501025	MT500937	MT500893	MT500981	MT501069	MW344689	MW344738
	NC25 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476826	MT501026	MT500938	MT500894	MT500982	MT501070	MW344690	MW344739
	NC26	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476827	MT501027	MT500939	MT500895	MT500983	MT501071	MW344691	MW344740
	PL2	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476828	MT501028	MT500940	MT500896	MT500984	MT501072	MW344692	MW344741
	PX3	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	MT476829	MT501029	MT500941	MT500897	MT500985	MT501073	MW344693	MW344742
	SC6 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476830	MT501030	MT500942	MT500898	MT500986	MT501074	MW344694	MW344743
	SC9	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476831	MT501031	MT500943	MT500899	MT500987	MT501075	MW344695	MW344744
	T5	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476832	MT501032	MT500944	MT500900	MT500988	MT501076	MW344696	MW344745
	T9	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476833	MT501033	MT500945	MT500901	MT500989	MT501077	MW344697	MW344746
	H3	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476834	MT501034	MT500946	MT500902	MT500990	MT501078	MW344698	MW344747
	H4	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	MT476835	MT501035	MT500947	MT500903	MT500991	MT501079	MW344699	MW344748
	YH6 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	MT476836	MT501036	MT500948	MT500904	MT500992	MT501080	MW344700	MW344749

(Continued)

TABLE 1 | Continued

Species	Culture/Isolate ^a	Host	City/Country	GenBank accession number ^b							
				ITS	GAPDH	CAL	ACT	CHS-1	TUB	GS	ApMat
	YH7	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	<i>MT476837</i>	<i>MT501037</i>	<i>MT500949</i>	<i>MT500905</i>	<i>MT500993</i>	<i>MT501081</i>	<i>MW344701</i>	<i>MW344750</i>
	YM2	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	<i>MT476838</i>	<i>MT501038</i>	<i>MT500950</i>	<i>MT500906</i>	<i>MT500994</i>	<i>MT501082</i>	<i>MW344702</i>	<i>MW344751</i>
	YM7	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	<i>MT476839</i>	<i>MT501039</i>	<i>MT500951</i>	<i>MT500907</i>	<i>MT500995</i>	<i>MT501083</i>	<i>MW344703</i>	<i>MW344752</i>
	ZH6	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	<i>MT476840</i>	<i>MT501040</i>	<i>MT500952</i>	<i>MT500908</i>	<i>MT500996</i>	<i>MT501084</i>	<i>MW344704</i>	<i>MW344753</i>
<i>C. gloeosporioides</i>	IMI 356878, ICMP 17821 , CBS 112999	<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	Italy	<i>JX010152</i>	<i>JX010056</i>	<i>JX009731</i>	<i>JX009531</i>	<i>JX009818</i>	<i>JX010445</i>	<i>JX010085</i>	<i>JQ807843</i>
	BM6 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	<i>MT476841</i>	<i>MT501041</i>	<i>MT500953</i>	<i>MT500909</i>	<i>MT500997</i>	<i>MT501085</i>	<i>MW344705</i>	<i>MW344754</i>
	F8	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	<i>MT476842</i>	<i>MT501042</i>	<i>MT500954</i>	<i>MT500910</i>	<i>MT500998</i>	<i>MT501086</i>	<i>MW344706</i>	<i>MW344755</i>
	GX3 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	<i>MT476843</i>	<i>MT501043</i>	<i>MT500955</i>	<i>MT500911</i>	<i>MT500999</i>	<i>MT501087</i>	<i>MW344707</i>	<i>MW344756</i>
	JS1	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	<i>MT476844</i>	<i>MT501044</i>	<i>MT500956</i>	<i>MT500912</i>	<i>MT501000</i>	<i>MT501088</i>	<i>MW344708</i>	<i>MW344757</i>
	JS5	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Changzhou, China	<i>MT476845</i>	<i>MT501045</i>	<i>MT500957</i>	<i>MT500913</i>	<i>MT501001</i>	<i>MT501089</i>	<i>MW344709</i>	<i>MW344758</i>
	LC2 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	<i>MT476846</i>	<i>MT501046</i>	<i>MT500958</i>	<i>MT500914</i>	<i>MT501002</i>	<i>MT501090</i>	<i>MW344710</i>	<i>MW344759</i>
	LC6	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Nanjing, China	<i>MT476847</i>	<i>MT501047</i>	<i>MT500959</i>	<i>MT500915</i>	<i>MT501003</i>	<i>MT501091</i>	<i>MW344711</i>	<i>MW344760</i>
	YM4 ^c	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	<i>MT476848</i>	<i>MT501048</i>	<i>MT500960</i>	<i>MT500916</i>	<i>MT501004</i>	<i>MT501092</i>	<i>MW344712</i>	<i>MW344761</i>
	YM5	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	<i>MT476849</i>	<i>MT501049</i>	<i>MT500961</i>	<i>MT500917</i>	<i>MT501005</i>	<i>MT501093</i>	<i>MW344713</i>	<i>MW344762</i>
	ZH3	<i>C. paliurus</i>	Yancheng, China	<i>MT476850</i>	<i>MT501050</i>	<i>MT500962</i>	<i>MT500918</i>	<i>MT501006</i>	<i>MT501094</i>	<i>MW344714</i>	<i>MW344763</i>
<i>C. horii</i>	NBRC 7478 , ICMP 10492	<i>Diospyros kaki</i>	Japan	<i>GQ329690</i>	<i>GQ329681</i>	<i>JX009604</i>	<i>JX009438</i>	<i>JX009752</i>	<i>JX010450</i>	<i>JX010137</i>	<i>JQ807840</i>
<i>C. kahawae</i> subsp. <i>ciggaro</i>	ICMP 18539	<i>Olea europaea</i>	Australia	<i>JX010230</i>	<i>JX009966</i>	<i>JX009635</i>	<i>JX009523</i>	<i>JX009800</i>	<i>JX010434</i>	<i>JX010132</i>	
<i>C. kahawae</i> subsp. <i>kahawae</i>	IMI 319418, ICMP 17816	<i>Coffea arabica</i>	Kenya	<i>JX010231</i>	<i>JX010012</i>	<i>JX009642</i>	<i>JX009452</i>	<i>JX009813</i>	<i>JX010444</i>	<i>JX010130</i>	<i>JQ894579</i>
<i>C. ledongense</i>	LD1683, CGMCC 3.18888	<i>Hevea brasiliensis</i>	Hainan, China	<i>MG242009</i>	<i>MG242017</i>	<i>MG242013</i>	<i>MG242015</i>	<i>MG242019</i>	<i>MG242011</i>	<i>MG242021</i>	
<i>C. musae</i>	CBS 116870 , ICMP 19119	<i>Musa</i> sp.	United States	<i>JX010146</i>	<i>JX010050</i>	<i>JX009742</i>	<i>JX009433</i>	<i>JX009896</i>	<i>HQ596280</i>	<i>JX010103</i>	<i>KC888926</i>
<i>C. noveboracense</i>	AFKH109 , CBS 146410	<i>Malus domestica</i>	United States	<i>MN646685</i>	<i>MN640567</i>	<i>MN640566</i>	<i>MN640565</i>		<i>MN640569</i>	<i>MN640568</i>	<i>MN640564</i>
<i>C. nupharicola</i>	ICMP 18187 , CBS:470.96	<i>Nuphar lutea</i> subsp. <i>polysepala</i>	United States	<i>JX010187</i>	<i>JX009972</i>	<i>JX009663</i>	<i>JX009437</i>	<i>JX009835</i>	<i>JX010398</i>	<i>JX010088</i>	<i>JX145319</i>
<i>C. perseae</i>	GA100 , CBS 141365	<i>Persea americana</i>	Israel	<i>KX620308</i>	<i>KX620242</i>	<i>KX620206</i>	<i>KX620145</i>		<i>KX620341</i>	<i>KX620275</i>	<i>KX620177</i>
<i>C. psidii</i>	CBS 145.29 , ICMP 19120	<i>Psidium</i> sp.	Italy	<i>JX010219</i>	<i>JX009967</i>	<i>JX009743</i>	<i>JX009515</i>	<i>JX009901</i>	<i>JX010443</i>	<i>JX010133</i>	<i>KC888931</i>
<i>C. queenslandicum</i>	ICMP 1778	<i>Carica papaya</i>	Australia	<i>JX010276</i>	<i>JX009934</i>	<i>JX009691</i>	<i>JX009447</i>	<i>JX009899</i>	<i>JX010414</i>	<i>JX010104</i>	<i>KC888928</i>
<i>C. salsolae</i>	ICMP 19051	<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Hungary	<i>JX010242</i>	<i>JX009916</i>	<i>JX009696</i>	<i>JX009562</i>	<i>JX009863</i>	<i>JX010403</i>	<i>JX010093</i>	<i>KC888925</i>
<i>C. siamense</i>	ICMP 18578 , CBS 130417	<i>Coffea arabica</i>	Thailand	<i>JX010171</i>	<i>JX009924</i>	<i>FJ917505</i>	<i>FJ907423</i>	<i>JX009865</i>	<i>JX010404</i>	<i>JX010094</i>	<i>JQ899289</i>
<i>C. siamense</i> (syn. <i>C. hymenocallidis</i>)	CBS 125378 , ICMP 18642	<i>Hymenocallis americana</i>	China	<i>JX010278</i>	<i>JX010019</i>	<i>JX009709</i>	<i>GQ856775</i>	<i>GQ856730</i>	<i>JX010410</i>	<i>JX010100</i>	<i>JQ899283</i>
<i>C. theobromicola</i>	CBS 124945 , ICMP 18649	<i>Theobroma cacao</i>	Panama	<i>JX010294</i>	<i>JX010006</i>	<i>JX009591</i>	<i>JX009444</i>	<i>JX009869</i>	<i>JX010447</i>	<i>JX010139</i>	<i>KC790726</i>
<i>C. ti</i>	ICMP 4832	<i>Cordyline</i> sp.	New Zealand	<i>JX010269</i>	<i>JX009952</i>	<i>JX009649</i>	<i>JX009520</i>	<i>JX009898</i>	<i>JX010442</i>	<i>JX010123</i>	<i>KM360146</i>
<i>C. tropicale</i>	CBS 124949 , ICMP 18653	<i>Theobroma cacao</i>	Panama	<i>JX010264</i>	<i>JX010007</i>	<i>JX009719</i>	<i>JX009489</i>	<i>JX009870</i>	<i>JX010407</i>	<i>JX010097</i>	<i>KC790728</i>
<i>C. xanthorrhoeae</i>	BRIP 45094 , ICMP 17903, CBS 127831	<i>Xanthorrhoea preissii</i>	Australia	<i>JX010261</i>	<i>JX009927</i>	<i>JX009653</i>	<i>JX009478</i>	<i>JX009823</i>	<i>JX010448</i>	<i>JX010138</i>	<i>KC790689</i>

^aCulture numbers in bold type represent ex-type or other authentic specimens.

BRIP, Plant Pathology Herbarium, Department of Employment, Economic, Development and Innovation, Queensland, Australia; CBS, Culture collection of the Centraalbureau voor Schimmelcultures, Fungal Biodiversity Centre, Utrecht, Netherlands; ICMP, International Collection of Microorganisms from Plants, Auckland, New Zealand; IMI, Culture collection of CABI Europe UK Centre, Egham, United Kingdom; MAFF, MAFF Genebank Project, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Tsukuba, Japan; MFLUCC, Mae Fah Luang University Culture Collection, Chiang Rai, Thailand; NBRC, NITE Biological Resource Centre, Japan. MAFF 305972 (*C. boninense*) was added as an outgroup.

^bSequences in italics were generated in this study. ITS, internal transcribed spacers 1 and 2 together with 5.8S nrDNA; GAPDH, partial glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase gene; CAL, partial calmodulin gene; ACT, partial actin gene; CHS-1, partial chitin synthase 1 gene; TUB2, partial beta-tubulin gene.

^cIsolates used for morphological and biological analysis, virulence tests, and biofungicide sensitivity assays.

TABLE 2 | Primers used in this study, with sequences, conditions and sources.

Gene	Product name	Primer	Direction	Sequence (5'-3')	PCR conditions	References
ITS	Internal transcribed spacer	ITS1	Forward	CTTGGTCATTTAGAGGAAGTAA	Denaturation for 4 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 55°C, 30 s at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C	Gardes and Bruns, 1993
		ITS4	Reverse	TCCTCCGCTTATTGATATGC		White et al., 1990
GAPDH	Glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase	GDF1	Forward	GCCGTCAACGACCCCTTCATTGA	Denaturation for 4 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 60°C, 30 s at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C	Guerber et al., 2003
		GDR1	Reverse	GGGTGGAGTCGTACTTGAGCATGT		Guerber et al., 2003
ACT	Actin	ACT-512F	Forward	ATGTGCAAGGCCGGTTTCGC	Denaturation for 4 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 57°C, 30 s at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C	Carbone and Kohn, 1999
		ACT-783R	Reverse	TACGAGTCCTTCTGGCCCAT		Carbone and Kohn, 1999
TUB	β -tubulin	T1	Forward	AACATGCGTGAGATTGTAAGT	Denaturation for 4 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 61°C, 30 s at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C	O'Donnell and Cigel'nik, 1997
		Bt-2b	Reverse	ACCCTCAGTGTAGTGACCCTTGGC		Glass and Donaldson, 1995
CAL	Calmodulin	CL1A	Forward	GATCAAGGAGGCCCTTCTC	Denaturation for 4 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 58°C, 30 s at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C	O'Donnell et al., 2000
		CL2A	Reverse	TTTTTGCATCATGAGTTGGAC		O'Donnell et al., 2000
CHS-1	Chitin synthase 1	CHS-79F	Forward	TGGGGCAAGGATGCTTGAAGAAG	Denaturation for 4 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 58°C, 30 s at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C	Carbone and Kohn, 1999
		CHS-354R	Reverse	TGGAAGAACCATCTGTGAGAGTTG		Carbone and Kohn, 1999
GS	Glutamine synthetase	GSLF2	Forward	TACACGAGSAAAAGGATACGC	Denaturation for 4 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 30 s at 94°C, 30 s at 54°C, 30 s at 72°C, and a final extension of 10 min at 72°C	Liu et al., 2016
		GSLR1	Reverse	AGRCGCACATTGTGTCAGTATCG		Liu et al., 2016
ApMat	Apr2-Mat1-2	AM-F	Forward	TCATTCTACGTATGTGCCCG	Denaturation for 3 min at 94°C, followed by 30 cycles; 45 s at 94°C, 45 s at 62°C, 1 min at 72°C, and a final extension of 7 min at 72°C	Silva et al., 2012
		AM-R	Reverse	CCAGAAATACACCGAACTTGC		Silva et al., 2012

Disease incidence was determined at 10 dpi, while the incubated leaves were monitored for the onset of anthracnose lesions for up to 20 dpi. Virulence was determined by measuring the diameter of the necrotic lesions in two perpendicular directions at 7 and 10 dpi for the wounded and non-wounded leaves, respectively. Differences in the virulence of the isolates were determined by ANOVA, and mean values were compared by Tukey's test ($P < 0.05$) using SPSS as previously described. Each *Colletotrichum* isolate involved in the virulence test was reisolated from the inoculated leaves, and their identity was confirmed by morphological and molecular approaches as previously described to fulfill Koch's postulates.

Biofungicide Sensitivity Assessments *in vitro*

Effects on Mycelial Growth

Phenazine-1-carboxylic acid [1% active ingredient (a.i.); Shanghai Non-gle Biological Products Co., Ltd., Shanghai,

China], tetramycin (0.3% a.i.; Liaoning Wkioc Bioengineering Co., Ltd., Liaoning, China), and kasugamycin (4% a.i.; Shaanxi Microbe Biotechnology Co., Ltd., Shaanxi, China) were used. Fourteen representative isolates were selected based on the above studies. The fungicide sensitivity of each isolate was tested on complete medium (CM) plates (Yeast extract 10 g/L, Casamino-acid 5 g/L, Agar 15 g/L, 1% sterile glucose after autoclaving) amended with fungicides. Mycelial blocks (2 mm in side length) aseptically taken from actively growing cultures were placed onto CM with or without (control) fungicide amendments. The final concentrations of each a.i. in the amended media were 0.1, 0.25, 0.5, 1, 2.5, and 5 μ g/mL for tetramycin and 1, 2.5, 5, 10, 25, and 50 μ g/mL for PCA and kasugamycin. Each treatment was tested in triplicate, and the entire experiment was repeated twice. The mean colony diameter was measured at 4 dpi, and the formula for percent inhibition was [(radial growth of the control – radial growth at fungicide concentration)/radial growth of the control] \times 100%. Half of the maximal effective

TABLE 3 | Morphological characteristics of *Colletotrichum* isolates from *Cyclocarya paliurus*.

Species/Isolate	Conidia		Appressoria		Ascospore		
	Length (μm)	Width (μm)	Length (μm)	Width (μm)	Length (μm)	Width (μm)	Shape
<i>C. aenigma</i>							
HC3	18.58 \pm 0.51ab (14.79–26.09)	7.44 \pm 0.17b (5.56–10.2)	10.71 \pm 0.25ab (8.35–13.68)	7.48 \pm 0.18f (5.85–9.56)	18.4 \pm 0.3bc (16.04–22.36)	7.32 \pm 0.14a (6.11–9.06)	Cylindrical
SC7	18.82 \pm 0.45ab (15.74–26.64)	8.17 \pm 0.23a (5.73–11.13)	11.46 \pm 0.42a (8.61–16.92)	7.96 \pm 0.25abcde (5.87–11.73)	18.7 \pm 0.24abc (16.91–21.94)	7.44 \pm 0.14a (6.01–8.85)	Cylindrical
YM8	19.29 \pm 0.43a (14.3–24.64)	8.29 \pm 0.17a (6.44–10.97)	11.2 \pm 0.24ab (9.6–14.34)	7.53 \pm 0.14ab (5.87–9.06)	17.77 \pm 0.16c (15.94–19.52)	6.75 \pm 0.15b (5.56–9.17)	Cylindrical
<i>C. fructicola</i>							
BM5	16.24 \pm 0.24d (12–18.68)	6.52 \pm 0.17d (4.79–8.28)	10.7 \pm 0.21ab (8.35–13.84)	7.79 \pm 0.12bcdef (6.45–9.4)	19.55 \pm 0.33a (16.67–23.75)	4.63 \pm 0.08c (3.85–5.44)	Curved fusoid
GX1	16.52 \pm 0.38d (13.64–23.14)	6.9 \pm 0.19bcd (5.1–9.79)	10.75 \pm 0.25ab (8.67–14.15)	7.88 \pm 0.13bcdef (6.53–9.56)	19.3 \pm 0.38ab (15.41–25.35)	4.68 \pm 0.11c (3.59–5.81)	Curved fusoid
HC2	17.11 \pm 0.42cd (12.39–22.34)	7.35 \pm 0.16b (5.63–9.59)	10.87 \pm 0.23ab (9.02–13.49)	7.83 \pm 0.13bcdef (6.56–9.25)	18.82 \pm 0.36ab (13.23–21.34)	4.72 \pm 0.12c (3.4–5.84)	Curved fusoid
LC7	17.07 \pm 0.24cd (14.44–19.92)	7.03 \pm 0.17bcd (5.47–8.77)	10.97 \pm 0.2ab (9.24–12.94)	7.69 \pm 0.14def (6.55–8.97)	19.2 \pm 0.34ab (14.32–24.04)	4.67 \pm 0.11c (3.79–6.13)	Curved fusoid
NC25	16.38 \pm 0.4d (12.89–22.79)	6.72 \pm 0.18d (4.89–8.66)	11.17 \pm 0.19ab (9.33–12.91)	7.77 \pm 0.14cdef (6.54–9.26)	19.05 \pm 0.37ab (16.53–23.89)	4.55 \pm 0.09c (3.2–5.65)	Curved fusoid
SC6	16.68 \pm 0.29cd (13.49–20.71)	6.58 \pm 0.16d (4.5–8.25)	10.42 \pm 0.23b (8.49–12.86)	7.86 \pm 0.11bcdef (6.61–8.95)	19.06 \pm 0.39ab (13.64–24.69)	4.68 \pm 0.12c (3.1–6.19)	Curved fusoid
YH6	16.61 \pm 0.38cd (14.36–22.58)	6.68 \pm 0.17d (4.95–8.83)	10.68 \pm 0.25ab (8.04–12.95)	7.99 \pm 0.14abcde (6.76–9.97)	18.8 \pm 0.31ab (15.41–21.99)	4.72 \pm 0.12c (3.7–6.13)	Curved fusoid
<i>C. gloeosporioides</i>							
BM6	17.07 \pm 0.28cd (14.72–19.84)	6.76 \pm 0.16cd (5.15–8.45)	11.05 \pm 0.2ab (9.55–13.48)	8.27 \pm 0.15ab (6.94–10.39)	13.24 \pm 0.3d (10.66–16.8)	4.83 \pm 0.09c (3.91–5.98)	Cylindrical
GX3	17.25 \pm 0.37cd (13.44–23.81)	6.93 \pm 0.12bcd (5.87–8.1)	11.12 \pm 0.18ab (9.13–13.01)	8.1 \pm 0.16abcd (6.06–10.61)	13.14 \pm 0.32d (9.86–17.07)	4.81 \pm 0.09c (3.62–5.84)	Cylindrical
LC2	16.96 \pm 0.26cd (15.06–21.22)	7.04 \pm 0.16bcd (4.95–9.69)	11.18 \pm 0.18ab (9.48–13.12)	8.24 \pm 0.14abc (6.94–10.11)	12.9 \pm 0.33d (9.02–16.54)	4.89 \pm 0.09c (3.79–5.84)	Cylindrical
YM4	17.76 \pm 0.33bc (15.69–24.82)	7.26 \pm 0.13bc (5.96–8.67)	11.1 \pm 0.21ab (9.63–13.91)	8.38 \pm 0.12a (6.99–10.16)	13.23 \pm 0.29d (10.73–16.06)	4.85 \pm 0.08c (4.19–5.98)	Cylindrical

Data are mean \pm standard error, with ranges in parentheses.

Columns with the same letter do not differ significantly according to Duncan's test ($P < 0.05$).

concentration (EC_{50}) was estimated by regression to the \log_{10} probability conversion of the percentage of inhibition of the fungicide concentrations.

Effects on Spore Germination

Tetramycin was selected to test its ability to inhibit conidia germination. Spore suspensions and fungicide solutions were mixed with sterilized water to 10 mL volume. The final fungicide concentrations were 0.005, 0.01, 0.05, 0.1, 0.5, and 1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$, while spore suspension was adjusted to 1×10^5 spores/mL for each treatment. A 20 μL droplet of each suspension was placed on a hydrophobic cover slip and incubated at 25°C for 18–20 h in a humidity chamber according to Fang et al. (2018). Each treatment was conducted in triplicate, and the entire experiment was repeated twice. Conidia were then observed at $\times 100$ magnification using a ZEISS microscope and scored as germinated if the length of the germ tube was longer than half of the conidial length. The conidial germination inhibition rate was calculated as previously described (Munir et al., 2016).

RESULTS

Field Symptoms and *Colletotrichum* Isolates

In May 2018, typical symptoms of anthracnose were first observed on newly emerged leaves of *C. paliurus* in a commercial nursery in Baima (Figure 1A), and the infection quickly spread to all *C. paliurus* nurseries within the growing season, with the infection rate reaching 64% (150 trees were investigated). Similar symptoms were observed in plant bases at Changzhou and Yancheng, with infection rates over 35 and 45% (100 trees were investigated), respectively. The initial symptoms appeared in the form of subcircular or irregular pale-brown spots scattered on the leaves (Figure 1C). Gradually, the lesions enlarged and coalesced to form large necrotic areas, which turned off-white surrounded by a dark-brown border as symptoms progressed (Figure 1B). The dead tissue withered, resulting in premature defoliation of the plant in severe cases (Figure 1A). Under high-moisture conditions, a number of acervuli were formed in concentric rings and oozed gelatinous orange spore

masses (Figure 1D). Photomicrographs further corroborated the presence of conidiophores and conidia on the surfaces of leaf lesions under optical or SEM microscopy (Figures 1E,F).

A total of 44 monosporic *Colletotrichum* isolates were recovered from symptomatic tissues and used for further molecular identification (Table 1). The shapes and sizes of conidia of these cultures were basically concordant with the sporulation on the lesions (Figures 2C, 3C, 4C). The general morphological characteristics of all isolates resembled those of *Colletotrichum* species.

Molecular Identification and Phylogenetic Analysis

In the present study, the ITS, CAL, ACT, GPDH, TUB, CHS-1, GS, and ApMat region/genes of all 44 monosporic isolates were successfully amplified and sequenced (Table 1). Sequences generated herein along with reference sequences from ex-type or other authoritative specimens were concatenated for phylogeny construction, composing a dataset of 3192 characters, with 1828 constant characters, 574 parsimony-uninformative characters, and 790 parsimony-informative characters.

The topological structure of the phylogenetic trees constructed using BI and ML criteria was basically consistent, demonstrating that the evolutionary relationships of the experimental strains were statistically supported. A consensus tree with clade support from bootstrap proportions (BPs) and PP values was generated (Figure 5). The phylogenetic tree revealed that all 44 *Colletotrichum* isolates belonged to three well-separated clades and nested within the *C. gloeosporioides* species complex.

Six *Colletotrichum* isolates composed a highly supported clade (100% BP/1.00 PP) with the *Colletotrichum aenigma* type strain ICMP 18608. Twenty-eight isolates belonged to the other highly supported clade (100% BP/1.00 PP) along with the *Colletotrichum fructicola* type strain ICMP 18581. Ten isolates clustered in another highly supported clade (100% BP/1.00 PP) with the *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. type strain IMI 356878 (Figure 5).

Morphological and Biological Analyses

Fourteen representative isolates clustered in three clades in the ML/BI phylogenetic analysis, including three of *C. aenigma*, seven of *C. fructicola*, and four of *C. gloeosporioides* s. s., were selected for further studies (Table 1).

Colonies of *C. fructicola* isolates produced abundant grayish-green aerial hyphae with white halo edges, and the back of the colony was grayish-green with concentric rings (Figures 3A,B). Isolates of *C. aenigma* and *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. exhibited white or gray mycelia, and the back of the colony was densely arranged with a grayish-green color in the center (Figures 2A,B, 4A,B). There were few differences in the shapes of conidia, conidiophores, and appressoria among the three species. Conidia were all one-celled, hyaline, smooth-walled, mostly cylindrical with broadly rounded ends, and sometimes slightly and gradually acute to the end (Figures 2C, 3C, 4C). The average conidial sizes for isolates were as follows: *C. aenigma*, 14.3–26.6 × 5.56–11.13 μm; *C. fructicola*, 12–23.14 × 4.5–9.79 μm; and *C. gloeosporioides* s. s., 13.44–24.82 × 4.95–9.69 μm (Table 3). Conidiophores were smooth-walled, septate, and hyaline to pale brown

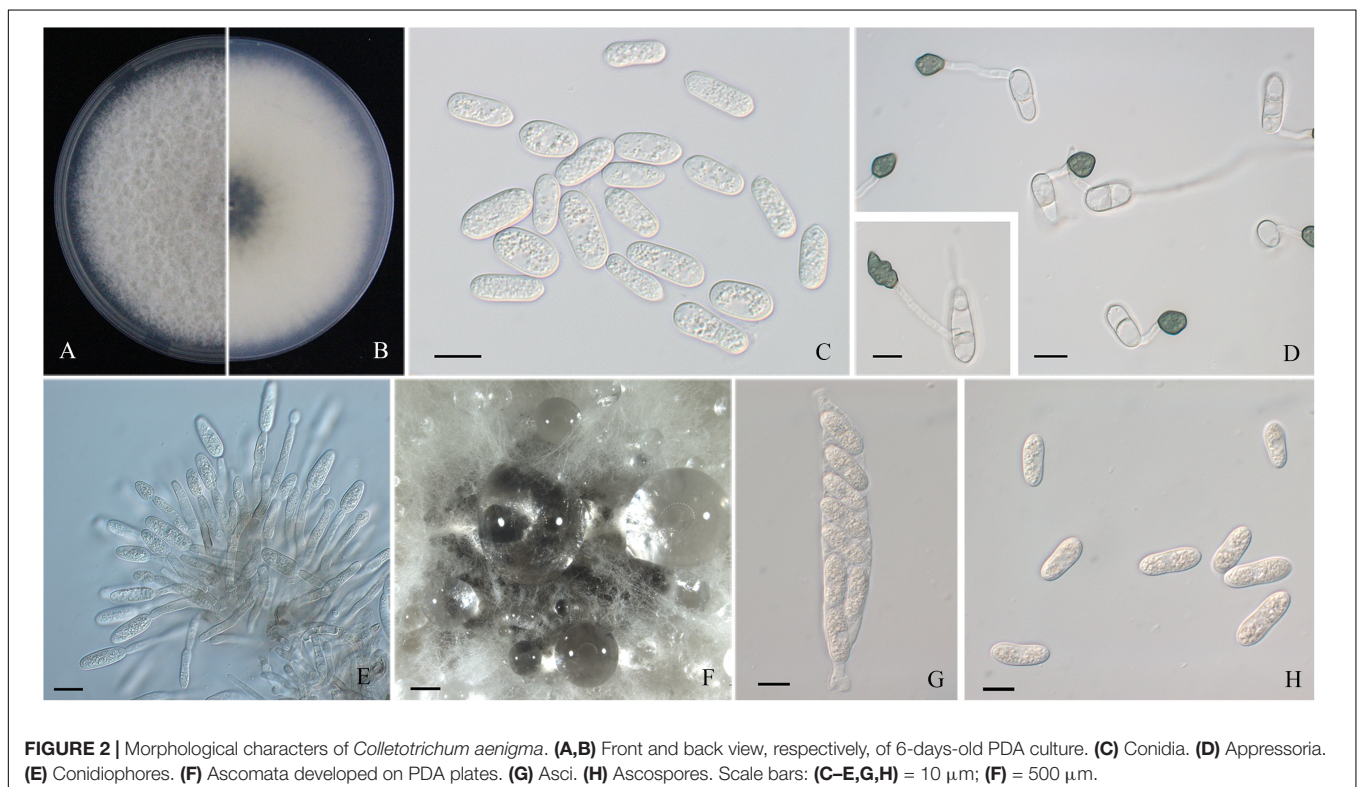


FIGURE 2 | Morphological characters of *Colletotrichum aenigma*. (A,B) Front and back view, respectively, of 6-days-old PDA culture. (C) Conidia. (D) Appressoria. (E) Conidiophores. (F) Ascomata developed on PDA plates. (G) Ascus. (H) Ascospores. Scale bars: (C–E,G,H) = 10 μm; (F) = 500 μm.

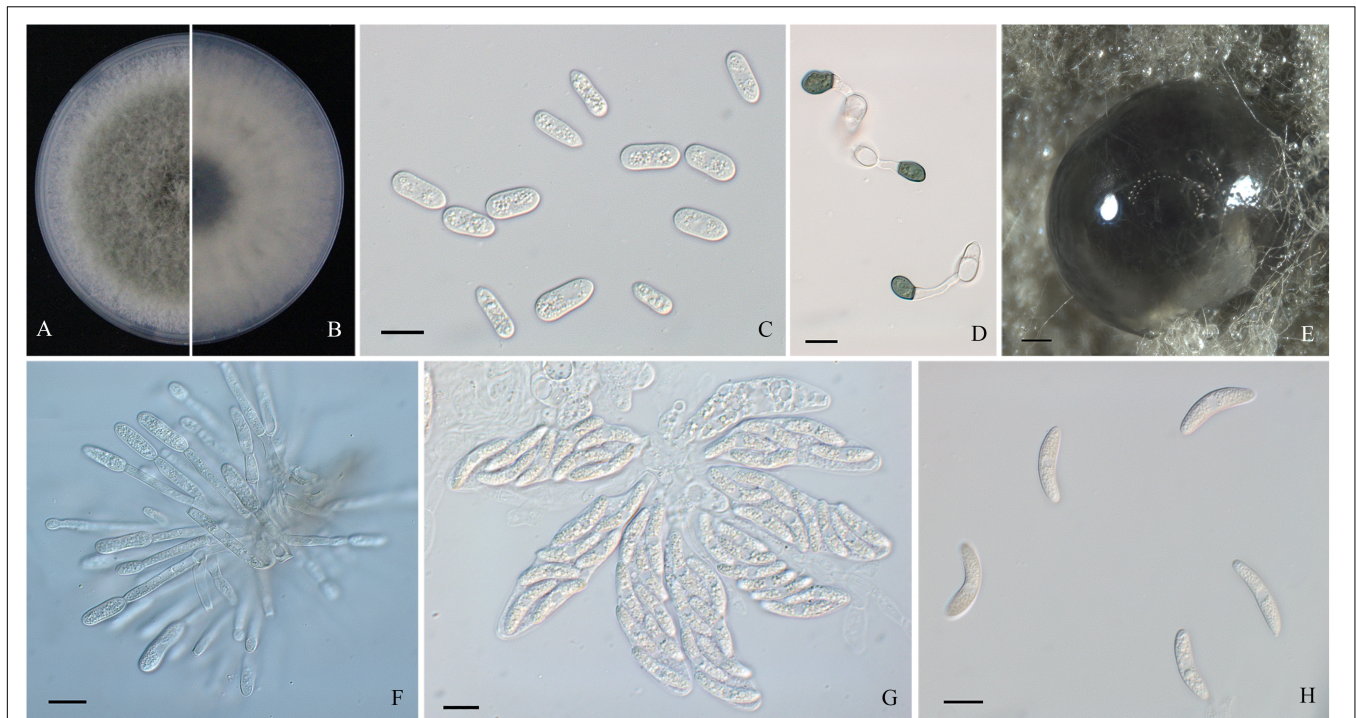


FIGURE 3 | Morphological characters of *Colletotrichum fructicola*. **(A,B)** Front and back view, respectively, of 6-days-old PDA culture. **(C)** Conidia. **(D)** Appressoria. **(E)** Ascumata developed on PDA plates. **(F)** Conidiophores. **(G)** Asci. **(H)** Ascospores. Scale bars: **(C,D,F-H)** = 10 μm ; **(E)** = 200 μm .

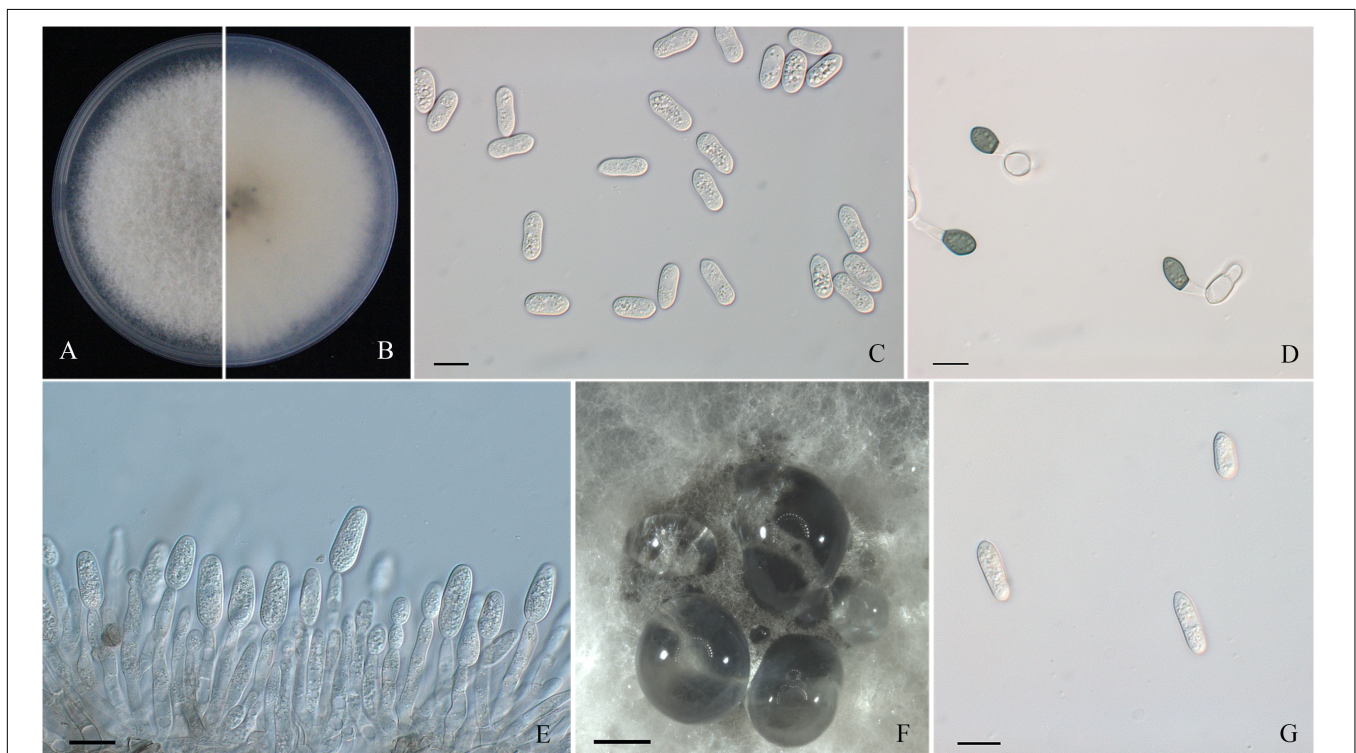
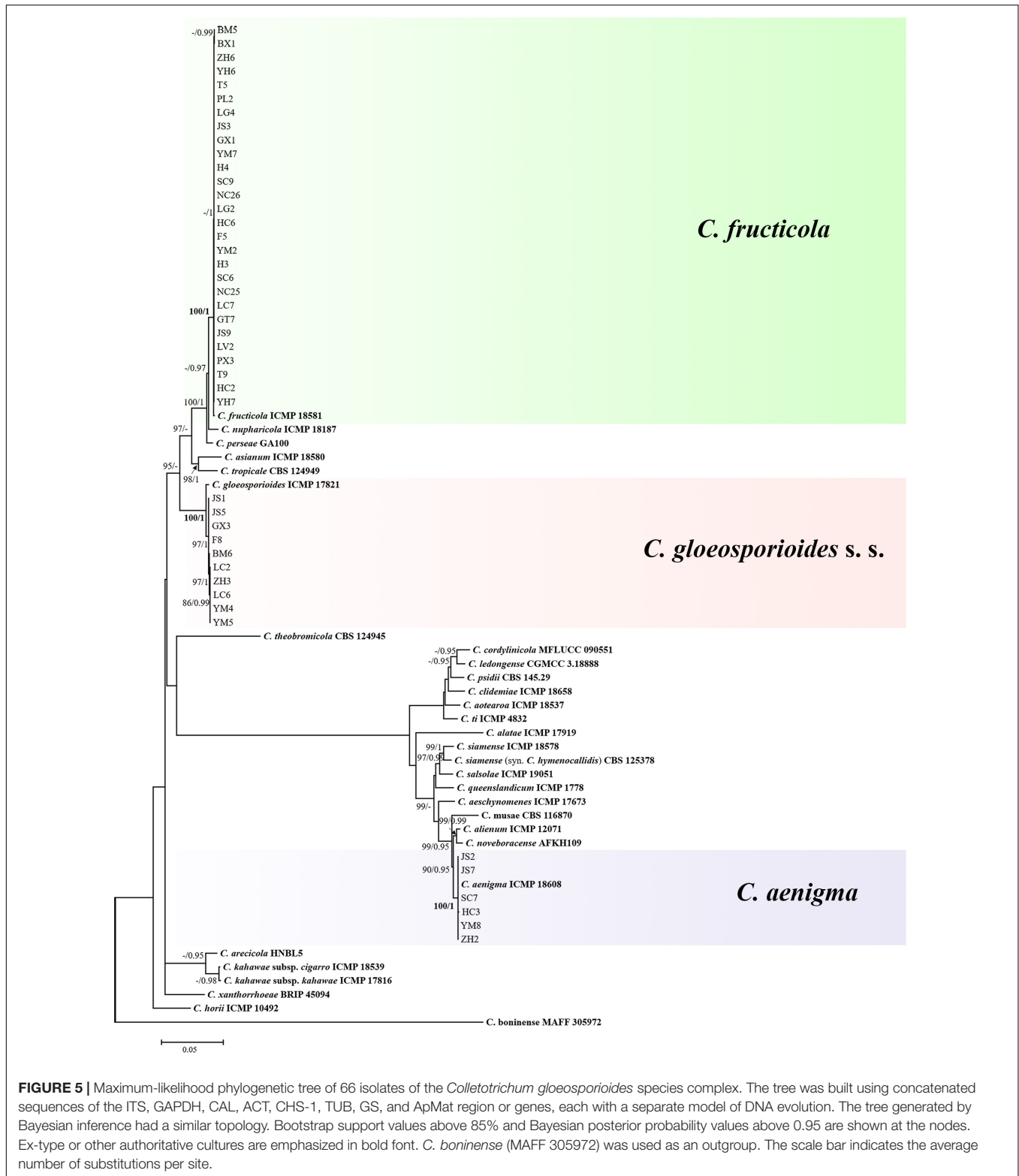


FIGURE 4 | Morphological characters of *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides sensu stricto*. **(A,B)** Front and back view, respectively, of 6-days-old PDA culture. **(C)** Conidia. **(D)** Appressoria. **(E)** Conidiophores. **(F)** Ascumata developed on PDA plates. **(G)** Ascospores. Scale bars: **(C-E,G)** = 10 μm ; **(F)** = 500 μm .



(Figures 2E, 3F, 4E). Appressoria were dark brown, subglobose or ellipsoid, and rarely irregular (Figures 2D, 3D, 4D). The average appressorium sizes for the isolates were as follows: *C. aenigma*, 8.35–16.92 × 5.87–11.73 μm; *C. fructicola*,

8.04–14.15 × 6.45–9.97 μm; and *C. gloeosporioides* s. s., 9.13–13.91 × 6.06–10.61 μm (Table 3). Ascomata of three *Colletotrichum* species formed on PDA at 20 dpi and were semi-immersed in agar medium, dark-brown, and subglobose

to pyriform (Figures 2F, 3E, 4F). Asci were clavate, fasciculate, and eight-spored in most cases, while asci of *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. were not observed (Figures 2G, 3G). Ascospores of *C. aenigma* isolates were hyaline, smooth-walled, aseptate, cylindrical, and $15.94\text{--}22.36 \times 5.56\text{--}9.17 \mu\text{m}$ in size (Table 3 and Figure 2H). Ascospores of *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. isolates were hyaline, smooth-walled, aseptate, cylindrical, and $9.02\text{--}17.07 \times 3.62\text{--}5.98 \mu\text{m}$ in size (Table 3 and Figure 4G). Ascospores of *C. fructicola* were hyaline, aseptate, smooth-walled, fusoid, slightly curved, straight with round ends, and $13.23\text{--}25.35 \times 3.1\text{--}6.19 \mu\text{m}$ in size (Table 3 and Figure 3H).

All 14 representative isolates tested exhibited a similar growth pattern on PDA at the different treatment temperatures. No mycelial growth of any tested isolates was observed *in vitro* at 5°C. The optimum mycelial growth temperature of the three *Colletotrichum* species was 25–30°C, but the high temperature tolerance of the three species was different. Isolates of *C. aenigma* and *C. fructicola* were more sensitive to high temperature and grew very slowly (or could not grow) at 40°C, with mean growth rates lower than those of *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. isolates.

Virulence Tests of *Colletotrichum* Isolates

All 14 selected isolates were pathogenic on leaves of *C. paliurus* and reproduced typical symptoms of anthracnose. Seven days after wounded or non-wounded inoculation, distinct brown or off-white necrotic lesions with dark-brown boundaries developed (Figure 6), while no symptoms developed on the corresponding mock controls.

The severity of disease caused by these isolates showed significant differences (Table 4). Isolates of *C. gloeosporioides* s. s.

generally showed strong virulence, with mean lesion diameters ranging from 17.88 to 23.16 and 17.52 to 22.11 mm with wounded and non-wounded inoculation using mycelial plugs as inocula, respectively. There was no significant difference in virulence among *C. fructicola* isolates in *C. paliurus* leaves, with mean lesion diameters ranging from 16.65 to 20.52 and 17.41 to 21.09 mm with wounded and non-wounded inoculation using mycelial plugs as inocula, respectively. *C. aenigma* isolates showed much weaker virulence, with mean lesion diameters ranging from 12.38 to 14.89 and 11.78 to 14.12 mm with wounded and non-wounded inoculation using mycelial plugs as inocula, respectively. The lesions produced by mycelial inoculation were generally larger than those produced by spore suspension inoculation among the three *Colletotrichum* species (Table 4). *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* s. s. isolate BM6 and *C. fructicola* isolate BM5 produced reproductive structures of the fungus on the necrotic lesions (Figure 6). *C. fructicola* isolate YH6 produced lesions with a wheel-shaped pattern on *C. paliurus* leaves (Figure 6). The *Colletotrichum* species were reisolated from all inoculated symptomatic leaves and were found to be morphologically and molecularly identical to the original isolates using the aforementioned methods, thus fulfilling Koch's postulates.

Sensitivity of *Colletotrichum* Isolates to Biofungicides

Fourteen representative isolates evaluated showed similar biological responses to all tested biofungicides. Kasugamycin at 50 mg/mL showed no suppressive activity against the mycelial growth of the three *Colletotrichum* spp. on CM medium ($EC_{50} > 100 \mu\text{g/mL}$). PCA showed moderate inhibition of the

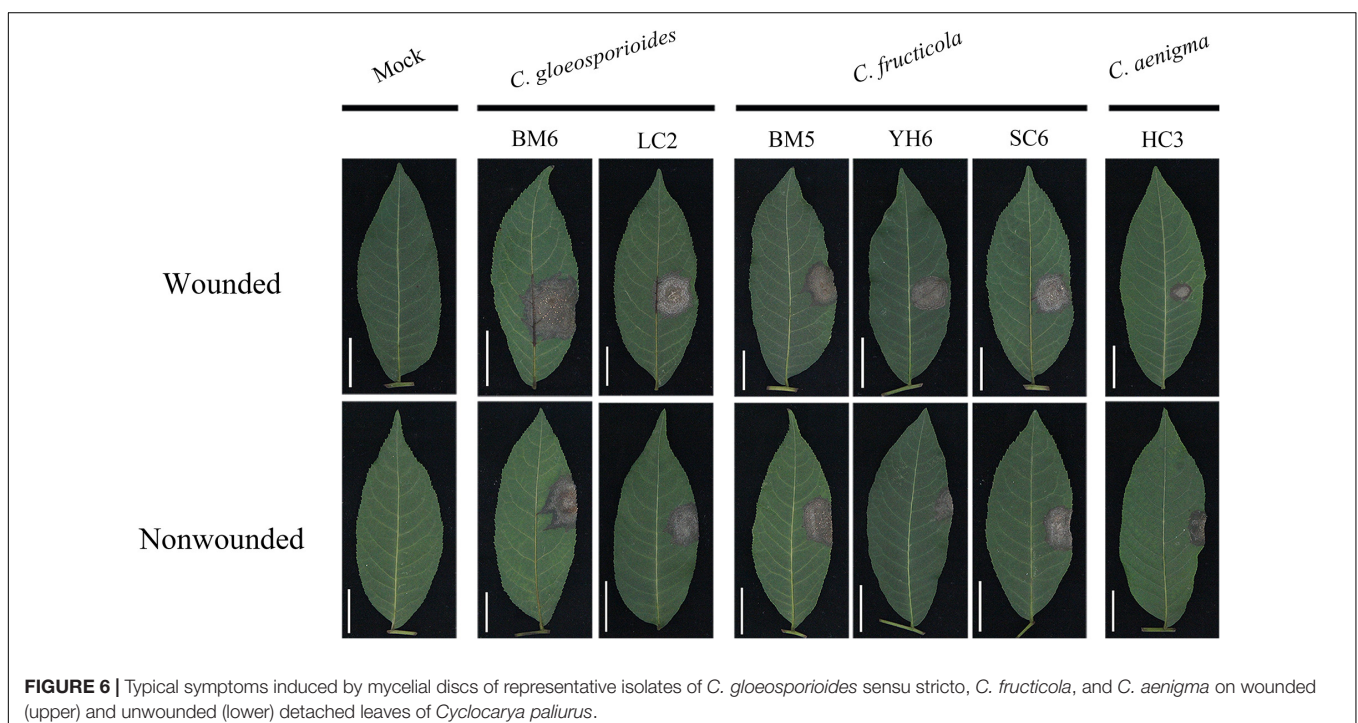


FIGURE 6 | Typical symptoms induced by mycelial discs of representative isolates of *C. gloeosporioides* sensu stricto, *C. fructicola*, and *C. aenigma* on wounded (upper) and unwounded (lower) detached leaves of *Cyclocarya paliurus*.

TABLE 4 | Pathogenicity of *Colletotrichum* isolates on detached leaves of *Cyclocarya paliurus*.

Species/ Isolates	Infected leaves (%) ^a				Lesion diameter (mm) ^b			
	Conidial suspension		Mycelial plug		Conidial suspension		Mycelial plug	
	Wounded	Non-wounded	Wounded	Non-wounded	Wounded	Non-wounded	Wounded	Non-wounded
CK	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<i>C. aenigma</i>								
HC3	80.00 ± 11.55	60.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	86.67 ± 6.67	9.63 ± 0.9b	5.79 ± 0.56b	12.38 ± 1.10f	14.12 ± 1.28cd
SC7	93.33 ± 6.67	60.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	93.33 ± 6.67	9.58 ± 0.96b	5.77 ± 0.48b	13.10 ± 0.82ef	14.44 ± 0.92cd
YM8	73.33 ± 6.67	66.67 ± 6.67	100.00 ± 0.00	86.67 ± 6.67	8.9 ± 0.81b	5.41 ± 0.39b	14.89 ± 1.07def	11.78 ± 1.02d
<i>C. fructicola</i>								
BM5	93.33 ± 6.67	80.00 ± 11.55	100.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	17.69 ± 0.99a	15.85 ± 1.26a	20.52 ± 0.61abc	20.37 ± 0.91ab
GX1	93.33 ± 6.67	73.33 ± 6.67	100.00 ± 0.00	93.33 ± 6.67	16.44 ± 1.07a	13.85 ± 1.26a	18.75 ± 0.76bcd	20.16 ± 0.98ab
HC2	86.67 ± 6.67	80.00 ± 11.55	100.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	16.41 ± 1.16a	13.86 ± 1.27a	18.18 ± 1.06bcd	19.75 ± 1.03abc
LC7	86.67 ± 6.67	86.67 ± 6.67	100.00 ± 0.00	93.33 ± 6.67	16.21 ± 1.03a	14.73 ± 1.49a	20.51 ± 0.94abc	18.59 ± 1.76abc
NC25	93.33 ± 6.67	86.67 ± 13.33	100.00 ± 0.00	93.33 ± 6.67	16.34 ± 0.88a	13.41 ± 1.03a	18.93 ± 1.07bcd	21.09 ± 0.95a
SC6	93.33 ± 6.67	73.33 ± 6.67	100.00 ± 0.00	93.33 ± 6.67	15.45 ± 1.16a	12.93 ± 1.52a	16.90 ± 0.94cde	18.06 ± 1.54abc
YH6	93.33 ± 6.67	80.00 ± 11.55	100.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	15.56 ± 1.04a	13.87 ± 1.12a	16.65 ± 0.87cde	17.41 ± 1.14abc
<i>C. gloeosporioides</i>								
BM6	86.67 ± 6.67	80.00 ± 11.55	100.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	18.43 ± 0.93a	15.92 ± 1.14a	23.16 ± 0.80a	22.11 ± 0.66a
GX3	86.67 ± 6.67	86.67 ± 6.67	100.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	17.24 ± 0.91a	16.35 ± 0.87a	20.29 ± 0.81abc	19.03 ± 1.03abc
LC2	86.67 ± 6.67	80.00 ± 11.55	100.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	17.27 ± 0.97a	12.98 ± 0.86a	17.88 ± 0.61bcd	17.52 ± 1.68abc
YM4	93.33 ± 6.67	80.00 ± 11.55	100.00 ± 0.00	100.00 ± 0.00	17.44 ± 0.63a	15.21 ± 1.49a	20.40 ± 0.58abc	21.39 ± 1.03a

^{a,b}Values were means ± standard error of three replications.

Means with different letters indicate mean lesion lengths that are significantly different ($P < 0.05$). Data were calculated using disease incidence of 15 inoculated leaves.

– represents no symptom developed on inoculated site.

^{CK}Detached *C. paliurus* leaves were inoculated with sterile water or PDA plugs without the pathogens (as controls).

mycelial growth of the three *Colletotrichum* spp., with isolates of *C. fructicola* exhibiting more sensitivity to this biofungicide. The EC₅₀ of tetramycin against the mycelial growth of all representative isolates was lower than that of any of the other biofungicides, including the low EC₅₀ of tetramycin against spore germination, indicating that tetramycin was the most effective biofungicide against the three *Colletotrichum* spp. used in this study.

DISCUSSION

In recent years, the cultivation of *C. paliurus* has undergone a major expansion to meet the increasing demand for young leaves of this species for medical use or *C. paliurus* tea production in China, which may have caused the high incidence of foliar diseases in these newly established plantations. Therefore, it is of great importance to diagnose and control these fungal diseases of *C. paliurus*. Unfortunately, little information was available about these diseases, i.e., *C. paliurus* anthracnose. Hitherto, this study is first comprehensive analysis demonstrating the etiology of *C. paliurus* anthracnose in China, providing valuable information about the phenotypic and molecular characteristics, virulence, and fungicide sensitivity of the causal agents associated with this disease. Moreover, this study provides the first report of *C. aenigma*, *C. fructicola*, and *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. causing *C. paliurus* anthracnose in China as well as in the world.

Colletotrichum gloeosporioides species complex is regarded as the most challenging taxa within the *Colletotrichum* genus (Silva et al., 2012). Although polyphasic method is recommended for characterizing *Colletotrichum* species, there is still lack of consensus among taxonomists on the selection of markers for phylogenetic studies (Cao et al., 2020; Vieira et al., 2020). Recent studies revealed that concatenated GS and ApMat alignment can achieve a satisfactory *Colletotrichum* species identification (Liu et al., 2015; Sharma et al., 2017). Conservative region/genes (ITS, GAPDH, CAL, CHS-1, ACT, and TUB) have been previously accepted for delimiting species in this species complex (Weir et al., 2012). Therefore, in the present study, eight loci (ITS, GAPDH, CAL, CHS-1, ACT, TUB, including GS and ApMat) were selected in phylogenetic analysis for *Colletotrichum* isolates classification. Based on BI/ML multilocus concatenated phylogenetic analyses, including sequences from 28 authentic specimens in the *C. gloeosporioides* species complex, the 44 isolates were categorized into three well-separated clades: six isolates clustered in the *C. aenigma* clade (14%), 28 isolates clustered in the *C. fructicola* clade (64%), and 10 isolates clustered in the *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. clade (22%). With respect to phenotypic characterization based on colony morphology, characteristics of conidia, appressoria, ascospores, and asci were entirely in line with the results of the molecular data.

Colletotrichum fructicola was first described by Prihastuti et al. (2009), causing coffee berry disease in Thailand. The species is geographically diverse and threatens a wide range of hosts, which has been reported on *Fragaria* × *ananassa*

TABLE 5 | Growth rate (mm/4d) of *Colletotrichum* isolates from *Cyclocarya paliurus* cultured on PDA at different temperatures.

Species/Isolates	5°C	10°C	15°C	20°C	25°C	30°C	35°C	40°C
C. aenigma								
HC3	0a	2.01 ± 0.1ab	3.92 ± 0.09abc	7.67 ± 0.01abc	12.43 ± 0.14b	12.39 ± 0.14a	7.6 ± 0.57a	2.4 ± 1.22ab
SC7	0a	2.26 ± 0.2a	3.77 ± 0.12abc	7.66 ± 0.04abc	12.66 ± 0.19b	12.62 ± 0.09a	7.69 ± 0.08a	2.13 ± 1.11ab
YM8	0a	2.24 ± 0.17a	3.79 ± 0.15abc	7.96 ± 0.05abc	12.28 ± 0.31b	12.19 ± 0.08a	7.72 ± 0.56a	0b
C. fructicola								
BM5	0a	1.11 ± 0.56ab	3.54 ± 0.22abc	8.81 ± 0.09ab	15.49 ± 0.04a	12.93 ± 0.28a	5.64 ± 0.48b	2.71 ± 1.36ab
GX1	0a	1.79 ± 0.12ab	3.61 ± 0.09abc	8.32 ± 0.28abc	15.81 ± 0.04a	13.56 ± 0.25a	5.17 ± 0.42b	2.71 ± 1.35ab
HC2	0a	1.62 ± 0.18ab	3.2 ± 0.19abc	8.46 ± 0.49abc	15.42 ± 0.12a	13.33 ± 0.27a	4.91 ± 0.08b	0b
LC7	0a	1.36 ± 0.14ab	3.72 ± 0.16abc	8.96 ± 0.07a	15.84 ± 0.07a	12.99 ± 0.45a	5.59 ± 0.11b	1.99 ± 0.05ab
NC25	0a	0.91 ± 0.46b	3.35 ± 0.19abc	8.56 ± 0.35abc	15.68 ± 0.13a	12.93 ± 0.34a	5.36 ± 0.46b	2.66 ± 1.33ab
SC6	0a	1.68 ± 0.28ab	3.27 ± 0.35bc	8.12 ± 0.17abc	15.74 ± 0.17a	13.45 ± 0.45a	5.44 ± 0.34b	0b
YH6	0a	1.61 ± 0.21ab	3.64 ± 0.24abc	8.28 ± 0.35abc	15.9 ± 0.15a	13.42 ± 0.14a	5.7 ± 0.47b	2.08 ± 0.13ab
C. gloeosporioides								
BM6	0a	1.84 ± 0.07ab	4.27 ± 0.13a	7.37 ± 0.38c	11.54 ± 0.36bc	12.37 ± 0.65a	8.12 ± 0.21a	3.36 ± 0.99ab
GX3	0a	1.89 ± 0.17ab	4.21 ± 0.2ab	7.62 ± 0.13bc	11.62 ± 0.46bc	12.66 ± 0.17a	8.35 ± 0.2a	5.25 ± 1.13a
LC2	0a	1.76 ± 0.19ab	4.24 ± 0.13a	7.57 ± 0.29bc	10.88 ± 0.26c	11.75 ± 0.18a	8.1 ± 0.12a	3.2 ± 0.76ab
YM4	0a	1.93 ± 0.19ab	4.26 ± 0.17a	7.73 ± 0.38abc	12.04 ± 0.43bc	12.42 ± 0.8a	8.01 ± 0.15a	2.43 ± 0.74ab

Columns with the same letter do not differ significantly according to Tukey's test ($P < 0.05$).

and *Malus* sp. (United States), *Ficus* sp. (Germany), *Persea americana* (Australia), *Pyrus pyrifolia* (Japan), *Limonium* sp. (Israel), *Tetragastris* sp. and *Theobroma* sp. (Panama), *Dioscorea* sp. (Nigeria), *Malus* sp. (Brazil) (Weir et al., 2012), and *Mangifera indica* (China) (Mo et al., 2018). In the current study, *C. fructicola* was the most predominant species and exhibited strong pathogenicity (Table 4), which seems to be the most economically harmful species of *C. paliurus* anthracnose in Jiangsu Province, China.

Colletotrichum gloeosporioides s. s., a genetically and biologically diverse species, previously reported to infect fruits in tropical area (Sangeetha and Rawal, 2008; Udayanga et al., 2013), which is probably related to its ability to tolerate high temperatures (Table 5). However, this species was recently reported increasingly prevalent in the temperate region, such as Hebei, Shandong, and Shanxi Provinces of China (Jayawardena et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2020). Results in the present study demonstrated that *C. gloeosporioides* showed the strongest pathogenicity to *C. paliurus* (Table 4). The prevalence and ecological adaptation zone of *C. gloeosporioides* on *C. paliurus* in China would be further studied.

Interestingly, multiple *Colletotrichum* species were isolated and identified from the same leaf and even within the same lesion of single *C. paliurus* trees. As reported in previous studies, several *Colletotrichum* species can cause anthracnose on the same host (Munir et al., 2016; Chen Y. et al., 2017; De Silva et al., 2017a; Diao et al., 2017; Guarnaccia et al., 2017; Fu et al., 2019; Xue et al., 2019). It is reasonable to believe that *C. paliurus* anthracnose may be a complex disease. With more samples collected, it is possible that even more *Colletotrichum* species, or even novel species, will be characterized as responsible for this disease. Consequently, future attention should be given to probe *Colletotrichum* species collected from *C. paliurus* anthracnose in different geographical areas with different latitudes or elevations in China.

Temperature is an indispensable factor that affects epidemics of anthracnose or other plant diseases (Dubrulle et al., 2020). High temperatures and their frequency may be the factors leading to the delay or non-occurrence of plant diseases (Han et al., 2016; Xue et al., 2019). In the present study, no significant differences occurred in the optimum and minimum mycelial

TABLE 6 | Mean half-maximal effective concentration (EC_{50}) of *Colletotrichum* spp.

Species/ Isolate	EC_{50} (mg/liter) ²			
	Mycelial growth			Spore germination
	Tetramycin	PCA	Kasugamycin	Tetramycin
C. aenigma				
HC3	2.5 ± 0.01	22.95 ± 6.39	>100	0.02 ± 0.00
SC7	2.59 ± 0.11	42.05 ± 12.64	>100	0.15 ± 0.01
YM8	2.51 ± 0.01	39.5 ± 14.03	>100	0.02 ± 0.01
C. fructicola				
BM5	2.61 ± 0.12	19.54 ± 2.18	>100	0.02 ± 0.01
GX1	2.41 ± 0.08	24.67 ± 4.42	>100	0.02 ± 0.01
HC2	2.65 ± 0.22	24.67 ± 5.3	>100	0.02 ± 0.01
LC7	2.46 ± 0.11	32.24 ± 5.03	>100	0.03 ± 0.02
NC25	2.44 ± 0.01	20.14 ± 0.93	>100	0.01 ± 0.00
SC6	2.45 ± 0.13	26.16 ± 4.85	>100	0.02 ± 0.00
YH6	2.59 ± 0.07	15.61 ± 1.49	>100	0.02 ± 0.00
C. gloeosporioides				
BM6	3.15 ± 0.46	40.71 ± 9.07	>100	0.04 ± 0.01
GX3	2.6 ± 0.19	40.47 ± 9.56	>100	0.02 ± 0.00
LC2	3.1 ± 0.46	40.21 ± 7.54	>100	0.02 ± 0.00
YM4	3.03 ± 0.35	38.03 ± 9.7	>100	0.01 ± 0.00

²Data are mean ± standard error.

growth temperatures of *C. aenigma* and *C. fructicola*, while *C. gloeosporioides* s. s. isolates exhibited more tolerance to high temperature, which was in concordance with previous study results (Han et al., 2016). These data may provide useful information for *C. paliurus* anthracnose control strategies: fungicide applications should be timed before the optimum growth temperature is reached.

Once infection occurs, the suppression of spore germination and mycelial growth within the plant tissue plays a crucial role in anthracnose management. In the present study, tetramycin showed excellent inhibitory effect on the mycelial growth and spore germination of the three *Colletotrichum* species (Table 6). The satisfactory inhibitory activity against different life stages of *Colletotrichum* species indicates that tetramycin may be a potential alternative for the management of *C. paliurus* anthracnose. In previous studies, the excellent curative and protective activity of tetramycin has been widely reported in Phytophthora blight, rice blast, tomato leaf mold, Corynespora leaf spot, and cucumber gray mold (Zhao et al., 2010; Miao et al., 2015; Song et al., 2016; Chen L. L. et al., 2017; Ma et al., 2018a,b), demonstrating that tetramycin would be helpful to prevent the occurrence and spread of plant diseases throughout the field. Accordingly, protective and curative activity of tetramycin on *C. paliurus* anthracnose in the field trials would be further studied before it is put into use.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets presented in this study can be found in online repositories. The names of the repository/repositories and

accession number(s) can be found in the article/**Supplementary Material**.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

X-RZ was responsible for the entire process of experimentation and writing the manuscript. M-JZ helped perform the experiment and analyze the results. X-LS and S-ZF provided experimental materials. F-MC supervised the work. All authors contributed to manuscript revision and read and approved the submitted version.

FUNDING

This study was financially supported by the Postgraduate Research and Practice Innovation Program of Jiangsu Province (KYCX20_0875).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank the reviewers for their valuable suggestions on this manuscript.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

The Supplementary Material for this article can be found online at: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpls.2020.613499/full#supplementary-material>

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Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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