

# Cladonia confusa

## SYNONYMS

*Cladina leptoclada* (des Abb.) D. Galloway

## FAMILY

Cladoniaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Cladonia confusa* R.Sant.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Lichen – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lichens - Fruticose

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Characterised by mat-forming podetia 2–6 cm tall; a distinctly arachnoid surface; rounded, distinct heads greenish to greenish yellow; mainly trichotomous branching with axils distinctly perforate; terminal, convex, dark-brown apothecia; and perlatolic and usnic acids as major secondary metabolites.

## DISTRIBUTION

**North Island:** Three Kings Is to Wellington (Rimutaka Ranges). **South Island:** Nelson (St Arnaud Ranges, Mt Gloriana Spenser Mts), Marlborough (Mt Tapuae-o-uenuku Inland Kaikoura Range), Canterbury (Foggy Peak Torlesse Range, Mt Hutt, Ben Ohau Range, Kirkliston Range), Otago (St Marys Range, Old Man Range, Rock & Pillar Range, East Dome Garvie Mts), Southland (Borland Bog, The Wilderness, Awarua Bay). **Stewart Island: Chatham Island: Campbell Island:** (Perserverance Harbour, Tucker Cove, Homestead River).  
Known also from East and South Africa, Madagascar, Central and South America (it is the most frequent species of subgen. *Cladonia* in the neotropics), and SE Australia and Tasmania.

## HABITAT

Very widely distributed in all parts, s.l. to 2000 m. In subalpine peat bogs and in grassland or amongst *Leptospermum* and *Dracophyllum* in heathland.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**Primary thallus** evanescent. **Podetia** in mats or tufts often spreading in dense swards, 2–15 cm tall, branching loose to dense, isotomic, mainly trichotomous, irregular or forming compact rounded heads, branches slender 0.3–0.4 mm diam., internodes 5 mm long, axils distinctly open with star-like diverging branchlets. **Cortex** cottony with minute algal glomerules, greenish-yellow to pale yellow, sometimes bright yellow, never brownish at apices.

**Chemistry:** Cortex K-, KC+ yellow, Pd-. Perlatolic, anziaic and usnic acids. Two chemodemes present: (1) Usnic and perlatolic acids ±ursolic acid; (2) Perlatolic acid alone.



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### **SIMILAR TAXA**

Usnic-acid-deficient specimens (from Flagstaff and from Deceit Peaks, Port Pegasus, Stewart I.) were earlier referred to *C. confusa* f. *bicolor* (Mull.Arg.) Ahti, but are presently regarded as a chemodeme of *C. confusa*.

### **SUBSTRATE**

Terricolous

### **ATTRIBUTION**

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (11 September 2021). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, Features and Similar taxa sections copied from Galloway (1985) & Galloway (2007).

### **REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING**

Galloway D.J. 1985: *Flora of New Zealand: Lichens*. Wellington: PD Hasselberg, Government Printer. 662 pp.  
Galloway D.J. 2007: *Flora of New Zealand: Lichens, including lichen-forming and lichenicolous fungi*. 2nd edition. Lincoln, Manaaki Whenua Press. 2261 pp

### **MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cladonia-confusa/>