

Grimmia plagiopodia

COMMON NAME

Dry rock moss

SYNONYMS

Grimmia argentea R.Br.bis

FAMILY

Grimmiaceae

AUTHORITY

Grimmia plagiopoda Hedw.

FLORA CATEGORY

Non-vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Mosses

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL, TO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUS

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: South Island (Castle Hill Basin Canterbury).

Otherwise recorded sparingly from Antarctica, Australia, South America and elsewhere throughout the world (Seppelt & Green 1998).

HABITAT

Saxicolous. Montane. Confined to limestone outcrops within the Castle Hill karstfield. Castle Hill is now surrounded by tussock grassland but it was formerly forested.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Saxicolous, forming minute, rounded, bright silvery cushions on limestone rock. Stems short c.5 mm tall, closely matted together, densely and turgidly branched. Leaves crowded, broadly ovate or oblong, deeply concave; margins plane not thickened. Nerve weak and narrow. Hyaline point usually longer than lamina, wide and rough, usually branched one or more times, irregularly dentate and variably flexuose or geniculate. Cells non-sinuose; the upper ones rather large 9-12 µm, those below widely oblong. Seta very short, curved. Capsule completely immersed, almost sessile, swollen at the base on one side. Peristome teeth pale-yellow, thin, delicate, irregularly cleft at apex. Operculum conic, with a short erect beak. Calyptra small. mitriform. Spores 12 µm diameter.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from other New Zealand *Grimmia* by the capsule, which is deeply immersed amongst the leaves, basally swollen and set asymmetrically on the seta; by the broad leaves whose cells are short and wide below; and by the hyaline point which is characteristically longer than the lamina, flexuose or geniculate, usually branched one or more times, and irregularly dentate.

FRUITING

Fruiting material is known but there is no data on fruiting times.



THREATS

Grimmia plagiopodia is known from only a single area in the Castle Hill portion of the Tresslick Basin. There it is confined to limestone outcrops, where it is threatened by rock climbing. As rock climbing has increased in popularity over the last two decades, this minute moss has seriously declined, presumably because plants are scuffed out, trampled or dislodged by ropes. Currently there is little management of the situation.

SUBSTRATE

Saxicolous on limestone.

Sometimes misspelled as *Grimmia plagiopoda*.

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet Prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (29 August 2011). Description adapted from Sainsbury (1955).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Sainsbury, G.O.K. 1955: A handbook of the New Zealand mosses. *Royal Society of New Zealand Bulletin* 5.
Seppelt, R.D.; Green, T.G.A. 1998: A bryophyte flora for Southern Victoria Land, Antarctica. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 36: 617-635.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/grimmia-plagiopodia/>