

# Knightsiella splachnirima

## SYNONYMS

Baeomyces splachnirima, Baeomyces squamarioides, Icmadophila splachnirima, Knightsiella leucocarpa, Knightsiella squamarioides, Lobaria leucocarpa, Lobaria splachnirima, Parmelia splachnirima, Physcia splachnirima, Thelidea corrugata, Thelidea splachnirima, Tubercularia squamarioides

## FAMILY

Icmadophilaceae

## AUTHORITY

Knightsiella splachnirima (Hook.f. & Taylor) Gyeln.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Lichen – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lichens - Squamulose

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, RR, Sp, TO

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Characterised by the terricolous habit; the lettuce-green, small-foliose to squamulose thallus; the subpedicellate, scattered, pink apothecia with buff-pruinose, wrinkled-scabrid discs; a pale yellowish hypothecium; 1-septate, ellipsoidal ascospores, 12–15(–18) × 3–5 µm; and thamnolic acid and decarboxythamnolic acid in the medulla.

## DISTRIBUTION

**South Island:** Nelson (Stockton and Denniston plateaux), Otago (Silver Peaks, Swampy Summit, Maungatua, Black Swamp nr Milton); Southland (Awarua Plain, Longwood Range, Aparima River, Takitimu Mountains, Borland Bog); **Stewart Island:** (Mt Anglem to Port Pegasus). **Auckland Islands. Campbell Island. Chatham Islands.**

Australia: also in Tasmania and Victoria.

One of our genuinely rare lichens in the South Island, and of surpassing beauty and elegance when seen fresh in the field when it is happily fruiting. It was first collected in the Chatham Islands (February 2000) by *Dr P.N. Johnson*, who recorded it from bare peat at 180 m in bracken-*Dracophyllum* scrub. It is most abundant on Stewart I., but even there it is not especially common, although in the south in open moorland at Port Pegasus close to the Fraser Peaks, it is now more abundant than it was 30 years ago. Colonies on Swampy Summit near Dunedin were close to extinction in the early 1960s, but today are vigorously expanding.

## HABITAT

On exposed, subalpine peat, in open heathland and in raised peat bogs (McQueen & Wilson 2000), s.l. to 900 m.



Southern Circuit track, Stewart Island.  
Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken:  
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Southern Circuit track, Stewart Island.  
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## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**Thallus** foliose, lobate, ± closely attached, orbicular to spreading to 4 cm diam. **Lobes** rounded, margins entire or incised, slightly wavy, subascendent. **Upper surface** smooth, matt or shining, without isidia, pseudocyphellae or soredia. Photobiont green ?*Coccomyxa*. Medulla white. **Lower surface** pale, arachnoid. **Apothecia** laminal, sessile or subpedicellate, disc undulate to plane, pink, ± pruinose, with a thin concolorous margin. Ascospores colourless, 1-septate, 8 per ascus.

**Chemistry:** Thallus K+ pale yellow, C-, KC-, Pd+ yellow or orange, UV+ white; containing thamnolic (major), decarboxythamnolic (tr.), 4-O-methylcryptochlorophaeic (tr.) acids and several unidentified depsides in trace amounts (Johnston 2001c: 22).

## SIMILAR TAXA

Its morphology is strikingly similar to that of *Siphula australiensis* Kantvilas, but this latter species has thicker, scabrid-mealy lobes that are chalky white, and it is consistently sterile (as with all known species of *Siphula*).

## SUBSTRATE

Terricolous (healthland and peat)

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Melissa Hutchison (25 June 2021). Information in the Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, Features and Similar taxa sections copied from Galloway (1985, 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/knightiella-splachnirima/>