

Lepra novaezelandiae

FAMILY

Ochrolechiaceae

AUTHORITY

Lepra novaezelandiae (Szatala) I. Schmitt, A.W.Archer & Lumbsch

FLORA CATEGORY

Lichen – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lichens - Crustose

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Characterised by the corticolous habit; disc-like apothecia; 1-spored asci; and the presence of hypothamnolic acid that is responsible for the characteristic violet-purple K reaction.

DISTRIBUTION

North Island: Northland (Mangamuka) to Wellington. **South Island:** Nelson to Southland. **Stewart Island:** (Wilson Bay, Port Pegasus).

Also in Tasmania and eastern Australia from Queensland to Victoria.

HABITAT

Widespread, especially on *Fuscospora* bark in beech forest and on bark of *Dacrydium cupressinum* and *Dracophyllum*, both East and West of the Main Divide, s.l. to 1000 m.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Thallus glaucous green to fawnish or grey-green, continuous, wrinkled-plicate to ± papillate, delimited at margins by a thin, dark, wavy line of prothallus, spreading in patches, 3-5 cm diam., matt or shining, occasionally shallowly cracked to ± areolate, sorediate. **Soralia** in eroding papillae, devoid of hymenial elements, round, 0.05-0.8 mm diam., soredia white or grey-white, granular-farinose. **Apothecia** rare, mostly immersed deeply in verrucae and obscured by a dense sorediate 'plug', hymenia usually eroded; disc dark-grey, densely white-pruinose. Epithecium grey-brown, unchanged in K. Hypothecium brownish grey, unchanged or becoming colourless in K. **Hymenium** colourless, 150–180 µm thick.

Paraphyses densely reticulate, c. 1.0 µm thick. **Asci** one-spored.

Ascospores hyaline, ellipsoidal to cylindrical, sometimes a little curved or broader at one end, (52–)84–150 × (14–)22–48 µm, contents guttulate; wall to 5 µm thick, internally smooth, slightly trimmed at apices when old.

Chemistry: Medulla and soredia K+ dark-purple or violet, KC+ reddish violet, C–, Pd–, UV+ white; containing hypothamnolic acid (major), ± conhypothamnolic acid (minor).



Corticolous on Podocarp windfall, Wanuiomata Wellington. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 27/11/2019, Licence: CC BY.



Corticolous on Podocarp windfall, Wanuiomata Wellington. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 27/11/2019, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

It is distinguished from the superficially similar *P. truncata* by the K and C reactions (*P. truncata* is K+ dull orange-yellow, KC+ pink). In addition, *P. novaezealandiae* has rather thicker and more wrinkled thalli, characteristic papillae that are mostly incipient verrucae; and its verrucae have squashed, broad bases rather than constricted bases as in *P. truncata*.

SUBSTRATE

Corticolous

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (17 October April 2021). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, Features, and Similar taxa sections copied from Galloway (1985) and 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/lepra-novaezealandiae/>