

# Pycnothelia caliginosa

## FAMILY

Cladoniaceae

## AUTHORITY

Pycnothelia caliginosa D.J.Galloway & P.James

## FLORA CATEGORY

Lichen – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lichens - Fruticose

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Characterised by the terricolous habit; the grey-white, granular to subsquamulose thallus developed on a thick, fibrous, black prothallus; erect or decumbent, hollow, terete to somewhat flattened podetia, terminated by black, convex, spherical to conglomerate apothecia.

## DISTRIBUTION

**South Island:** Nelson (Cobb Valley, Tasman Mts, Denniston Plateau). One of several taxa that have a rather restricted distribution in Nelson and South West Tasmania.

## HABITAT

On peaty soils and on quartzite sand in exposed grassland where considerable areas of bare soil are present, sometimes inundated. It occurs with the following lichens: *Austropeltum glareosum*, *Cladia aggregata*, *Cladonia murrayi*, *C. southlandica*, *C. subsubulata*, *Siphula complanata*, *S. decumbens*, *S. elixii*, *S. foliacea*, *S. fragilis* and *S. jamesii*.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**Primary thallus** granular, appearing subsquamulose, granules convex at first, 0.1–0.5 mm diam., occasionally discrete, normally continuous, forming flattened or convex, concrescent, irregular patches 2–20 cm diam., often appearing somewhat areolate or spreading ± uniformly over soil, sometimes on a thin to thick, fibrous, black prothallus, granules grey-white, sometimes blackened in parts, surface smooth to roughened. **Podetia** occasional to frequent, erect or decumbent, hollow, terete or somewhat flattened, simple, finger-like to branched, proliferating towards apices, 0.5–1.5(–2) cm tall, 103 mm diam., thinly or thickly covered with thalline granules from base to apex, or decorticate in patches or completely decorticate and exposing brown-black cartilaginous medullary strands; sometimes longitudinally fissured or fistulose. **Apothecia** black, convex, spherical to ±conglomerate, shining, immarginate, solitary or clustered, 0.5–1.5(–2) mm diam. **Ascospores** 10–5–12 × 2–5–4(–4.5) µm. **Pycnidia** at apices of short stalks or on lateral branches of podetia, or on thalline granules, short (0.5 mm or less), variable, cylindrical or tapering, solitary to densely clustered. **Conidia** falciform, 4–5–5 × 0.5 µm.

**Chemistry:** Cortex K+ yellow; containing atranorin and chloroatranorin plus three unidentified compounds including two aliphatic acids.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *Cladonia* but separated by its greyish white nodular-squamulose primary thallus, black prothallus, secondary subterete thallus that is simple or sparingly branched, and glossy, black apothecia that form conglomerate clusters.



## **SUBSTRATE**

Terricolous

## **ATTRIBUTION**

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (18 April 2021). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, and Features 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/pycnothelia-caliginosa/>