

Ramalina celastri

COMMON NAME

Cartilage lichen

SYNONYMS

Parmelia celastri

FAMILY

Ramalinaceae

AUTHORITY

Ramalina celastri (Spreng.) Krog & Swinscow

FLORA CATEGORY

Lichen – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lichens - Fruticose

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Characterised by the corticolous (rarely saxicolous) habit; variable thallus morphology; numerous laminal and/or marginal apothecia; numerous short, linear pseudocyphellae; and usnic acid as sole secondary metabolite.

DISTRIBUTION

Three Kings Islands: (Raoul Island). **North Island:** Northland (Three Kings Islands) to Wellington. **South Island:** Nelson to Southland (absent from Fiordland), both E and W of the Main Divide. **Chatham Islands:** (Wharekauri, Te Whanga Lagoon, Stony Creek).

Very widespread and the most common species of the genus in New Zealand, though with conspicuous gaps in distribution (e.g. Fiordland and Stewart Island).

A widespread tropical lichen known also from the Caribbean, Mexico, South America, Tristan da Cunha, E Africa, India, the Pacific Islands and Australia.

HABITAT

On coastal and inland fence posts and railings and introduced trees and shrubs, especially fruit trees, and decorticated wood. Also on a variety of native trees and shrubs and occasionally on rock and concrete. Known collections occur on the following substrata: wood (5%), rock (18%), native vegetation (41%), and exotic vegetation (36%) [J. Bannister pers. comm.].



On fence post. Photographer: Marley Ford, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Aberrant polluted form. Photographer: Marley Ford, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Thallus erect, rigid, (1-)5-10(-12) cm tall, sparingly to moderately branched from an open broad base, holdfast prominent. **Branches** flattened, ± lanceolate, plane or canaliculate, width variable, 1-20 mm wide, commonly 3-10 mm wide, smooth or uneven, undulate, plicate or ridged, pale greenish- grey to pale stramineous or fawn-grey, young branches thin, ± smooth and even, older branches longitudinally ribbed- striate or reticulately ridged from subcortical strands of cartilaginous strengthening tissue, often lacerate-cracked or fenestrate, pseudocy-phellae common and often prominent, white, shortly linear to irregular, cortex sometimes eroding to reveal ± clathrate arrangement of subcortical cartilaginous strands, margins sinuous, entire, slightly thickened, apices narrow, entire to broad and ± ragged, in well-developed thalli small lobules or adventitious thalli growing from lamina, soralia absent. **Apothecia** numerous, marginal in young thalli, then laminal in older thalli, pedicellate, 0.2-0.5 mm diam., deeply cupuliform when young with a thin margin, becoming plane when convex and ± immarginate with age, disc flat or convex, sometimes papillate, white- or pinkish-pruinose, thalline exciple smooth at first, becoming coarsely wrinkled scabrid, glossy. **Ascospores** straight, apices rounded or acute, 10-16 × 4-7 µm.

Chemistry: Usnic acid.

SUBSTRATE

Corticolous, lignicolous, saxicolous, artificial surfaces (concrete)

ETYMOLOGY

ramalina: Meaning small branches, twiggy.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (5 December 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/ramalina-celastrii/>