

Usnea ciliata

SYNONYMS

Neuropogon melaxanthus var. *ciliatus* Nyl., *Neuropogon ciliatus* (Nyl.) Kremp., *Usnea melaxantha* var. *ciliata* (Nyl.) Müll.Arg.

FAMILY

Parmeliaceae

AUTHORITY

Usnea ciliata (Nyl.) Du Rietz

FLORA CATEGORY

Lichen – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lichens - Fruticose

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Characterised by the saxicolous habit; the erect thallus arising from a proliferating holdfast; a monopodial to moderately branched thalline branches, often with violaceous-black pigmentation; a smooth, waxy, black-annulate surface; a compact medulla and a thick axis; subterminal, geniculate apothecia with a black disc and conspicuous excipular rays; and norstictic and salazinic acids in the medulla.

DISTRIBUTION

North Island: Gisborne (Mt Hikurangi), Hawke's Bay (Kaweka Ranges), Wellington (Ruapehu, Otupae Range, N. Ruahine Ranges, Tararua Ranges). **South Island:** Nelson (Kakapo Peak, Schist Mt, Crimea Range, Mt Robert, St Arnaud Ranges), Marlborough (Branch River, Mt Tapae-o-uenuku, Mt Mitre, Mt Fyffe), Canterbury (Mt Trovatore, Temple Basin Arthur's Pass, Craigieburn Range, Cass, Porter's Pass, Torlesse Range, Castle Rock Banks Peninsula, Two Thumb Range, Ben Ohau Range, Mt Peel, Four Peaks Range), Otago (Mt Avalanche, Mt Sir William, Humboldt Mts, The Remarkables, Mt Roy, Pisa Range, Dunstan Mts, Old Man Range, Poolburn Reservoir, Lake Onslow, Rock & Pillar Range, Silver Peaks), Southland (Grave-Talbot Pass, Takahe Valley, Thomson Mts, Borland Saddle, West Dome, Mid Dome). **Stewart Island:** (Mt Anglem).

HABITAT

On rock faces, outcrops and boulders in fellfield, 550–3000 m. The most common and widespread species of sect. *Neuropogon* in New Zealand.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Thallus fruticose, erect, tufted to spreading, to 9 cm tall. **Branches** 2–3 mm wide at base, weakly dichotomously to richly branching above. Surface yellow to brown-red at base, often with black cracks, becoming conspicuously blackened or yellow-grey or bluish-purple above with conspicuous black bands, not papillate or sorediate, smooth, waxy and shining, often ± strongly faveolate. **Apothecia** frequent, lateral on branches, disc bluish-black, margins smooth, concolorous with thallus, with ray-like branchlets, black, few to many, thalline exciple smooth.

Chemistry: Medulla K+ yellow→red, C–, KC+ red, Pd+ orange-red; containing norstictic, protocetraric (±), salazinic, and usnic acids.

SIMILAR TAXA

Usnea torulosa is similar.



Poolburn. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 16/07/2022, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SUBSTRATE

Saxicolous

ETYMOLOGY

ciliata: From the Latin cilia 'eyelash', meaning fringed with hairs

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (15 January 2022). 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/usnea-ciliata/>