

Usnea ciliifera

SYNONYMS

Usnea xanthophana Stirt.

FAMILY

Parmeliaceae

AUTHORITY

Usnea ciliifera Motyka

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 corticolous habit.

DISTRIBUTION

North Island: Northland (Kawerua, Great Barrier Island), Auckland (Rangitoto), South Auckland (Tokoroa, Whale Island), Wellington (Ruapehu, Tararua Range). **South Island:** Nelson (St Arnaud Range, Lake Rotoiti, Mt Mueller, Mt Haast), Marlborough (d'Urville Island), Canterbury (Lewis Pass, Arthur's Pass, Cass, Woolshed Hill, Craigieburn Range, Governor's Bush, Mt Peel), Otago (Mt Brewster, Matukituki Valley, Dart Valley, Rees Valley, Routeburn Valley, Key Summit, Silver Peaks, Mihiwaka, Mt Cargill, Flagstaff, Leith Valley, Boyd's Bush, Maungatua), Southland (Cascade Creek, Eglinton Valley, Hauroko Burn Fiordland, Borland Saddle, Mavora Lakes, Longwood Range, West Dome, Waikaia Valley).

HABITAT

On trunks and branches of forest trees, mainly a canopy species. Especially well-developed in *Fuscospora* forests east of the Main Divide in the South Island, and often visually arresting at treeline. Like *U. capillacea* - the two taxa are often sympatric - it is a mist species.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Thallus fruticose, erect or pendulous, 4-6(-10) cm long, pale yellow, yellowish-white or greenish-yellow, non-pigmented, not blackened at base, corticolous. **Branches** terete, 1-2.5 mm diam., tapering towards apices, branching sympodial, rather open, lateral fibrils at right angles to main branches, rather sparse, primary and secondary branches papillate, ± articulate-cracked both at branch points and between branches, without isidia, pseudocyphellae or soredia. **Apothecia** common, subterminal, to 5 mm diam., disc concave at first then plane, distinctly marginate, pinkish or yellowish with a fine, white pruina, margins with radiating, long, straight or flexuous, robust, ray-like branchlets, exciple smooth. **Ascospores** 10 × 6 µm.

Chemistry: Thallus K+ brownish or –; containing fumarprotocetraric and usnic acids.



Corticolous in shrub, Bank's Peninsula Canterbury. Photographer: Marley Ford, Licence: CC BY.



Windfall, Stewart Island. Photographer: Marley Ford, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *U. molliuscula*, but distinguished from it by the more richly divided and entangled branches, the thicker cortex, fewer lateral fibrils, and by fumarprotocetraric acid in the medulla.

SUBSTRATE

Corticolous

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (1 May 2022). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, and Features 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/usnea-ciliifera/>