

Usnea torulosa

SYNONYMS

Usnea dasypogoides var. *torulosa* Müll.Arg., *Usnea aurescens* Motyka, Lich. Gen., *Usnea torulosa* var. *aurescens* (Motyka) G.N.Stevens

FAMILY

Parmeliaceae

AUTHORITY

Usnea torulosa (Müll.Arg.) Zahlbr.

FLORA CATEGORY

Lichen – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

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 or subdecumbent thallus to 5 cm tall, greenish yellow, pale-yellow or yellow-white, blackened at base; the simple, straight branches, 1–1.5 mm diam.; the glossy, waxy, annulate-cracked cortex; round to irregular, punctate to spreading pseudocyphellae that become granular-sorediate; and a variable secondary chemistry, generally containing squamatic acid (UV+ white).

DISTRIBUTION

South Island: Nelson (Lake Cobb, Kakapo Peak, Mt Arthur, St Arnaud Range), Canterbury (Lewis Pass, Arthur's Pass, Cass, Craigieburn Range, Foggy Peak Torlesse Range), Otago (Mt Earnslaw, The Remarkables, Garvie Mountains, Pisa Range, Dunstan Mountains, Old Man Range, Poolburn Reservoir, Rock & Pillar Range, Horse Range, Mt Misery, Lamb Hill, Silver Peaks, Waikouaiti Reservoir, Swampy Summit, Flagstaff, Maungatua, Waipori, Blue Mountains), Southland (West Dome, Fiordland). Known also from Australia.

HABITAT

From rocks in exposed alpine habitats. Associated with species of *Bryoria*, *Usnea*, *Umbilicaria*, *Pseudephebe*, *Notoparmelia signifera* etc.



Saxicolous, alpine, Mt Anglem Stewart Island.
Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken:
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Saxicolous, alpine, Mt Anglem Stewart Island.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Thallus fruticose, erect or partly decumbent, branches short, stiff, to 5 cm tall, pale greenish-yellow or pale yellow or yellowish-white blackened at base, crowded and convergent at base. **Branches** uniform, mostly simple, straight or rarely curved, 1-1.5 mm thick, thinner at apices, cortex glossy, waxy, annulate- cracked or fissured in parts, occasionally slightly faveolate, with small, round to irregular, punctate to spreading **pseudocyphellae** which become granular-sorediate. **Soredia** granular in convex masses, yellowish or blackened. **Apothecia** not seen.

Chemistry: Three distinct chemodemes are found in this species, and may in fact represent independent taxa: (1) psoromic, conpsoromic, ±squamatic and usnic acids, (2) squamatic and usnic acids [the type has this chemistry], (3) barbatic, 4-O-demethylbarbatic, squamatic (UV+ white) and usnic acids.

SUBSTRATE

Saxicolous, corticolous

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (11 January 2024). 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-torulosa/>