



Botrychium lunaria

Common Name(s):

moonwort

Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Critical

Distribution:

Indigenous. New Zealand, South Island, where it is known from Hoary Head and Billies Knob, Kahurangi National Park, North West Nelson. There is also an old gathering made from somewhere on Mt Torlesse, Canterbury. New Zealand plants appear to be the same as the form known from Australia

Habitat:

Alpine. Growing in short turf within limestone and marble karst systems

Features*:

Diminutive fern. Sterile laminae fleshy, pinnate, 10-50 x 5-20 mm, bearing 4-5 pairs of dark green, fan-shaped pinnae. Fertile laminae overtopping sterile. 1-3 times branched, bearing numerous yellow-brown sporangia c.10 mm diam.

Flowering:

Not applicable - spore producing

Fruiting:

Not applicable - spore producing

Threats:

First recorded in New Zealand from Mt Torlesse, Canterbury in 1882 it was not seen again until 1980 and 1983 when it was discovered on Hoary Head and Billies Knob on the Mt Arthur and Mt Owen Ranges of Kahurangi National Park. At neither location is it common, and it remains vulnerable to browsing animals, weeds and from human recreational activities such as caving and tramping. It is very vulnerable to plant collectors.

***Attribution:**

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange 6 June 2005. Description from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

References and further reading:

Brownsey, P.J.; Smith-Dodsworth, J.C. 2000: New Zealand ferns and allied plants. David Bateman Ltd, Auckland

de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Courtney, S.P.; Heenan, P.B.; Barkla, J.W.; Cameron, E.K.; Hitchmough, R.; Townsend, A.J. 2009: Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand (2008 revision). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 61-96.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2076



Caption: *Botrychium lunaria*
Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth