Bragginsella anomala

Common Name(s):

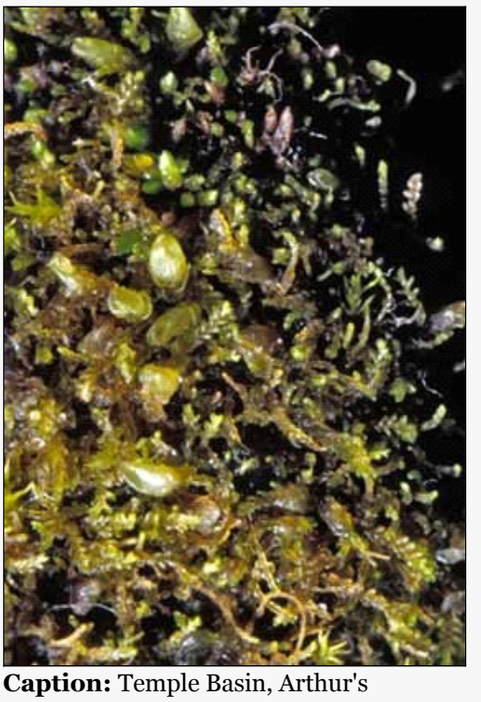
Liverwort

Current Threat Status (2009):

Data Deficient

Distribution:

Endemic monotypic genus. Known so far only from one site in Arthurs Pass National Park, South Island



Caption: Temple Basin, Arthur's Pass.
Photographer: John Braggins

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Features*:

Plants diminutive, light green to red green (drying ivory white), without wall pigments, growing erect through other mosses; shoots indeterminate in length, living axes usually under 12 mm long, mostly 370-435 microns wide with leaves. Plants freely but remotely branching, branches acute or almost at right angles to stem, lateral-intercalary, occupying the entire median portion of the leaf axil. Stems c.90-140 microns diameter, wiry, firm, smooth or weakly striolate, c. 10 cells high, with rigid, thick-walled cells. Cortical cells smooth, in surface view very irregular, 10-14 x 13-26 microns radical walls thick, lumina rounded. Rhizoids usually absent, rarely bearing a few short rhizoids, locally scattered on ventral side of stem; without geotrophic or plagiotropic leafless axes. Bilaterally symmetric, ventral merophytes vestigially developed, 1(-2) cells wide, mostly devoid of perceptible under leaves, sometimes vestigial ones present, bearing slime papillae, or with few-celled cushion near the ventral base of leaves on one side of the axis. Leaves remote, alternate, stiffly laterally spreading, ranging to erect-spreading, 245-265 x 225-255 microns broadly ovate, unistratose, unlobed and edentate, insertion broad-based, the apices somewhat contracted to narrowly rounded, strongly concave; leaf insertion along a weakly arched line, dorsal portion of the insertion usually perceptibly but weakly extended toward shoot apex. Cells of leaves extremely small, marginal 9-11 microns median no wider but tending to be longer 7-11 x 7-15 microns orientated linearly, variable; basal cells orientated in lines as the median, also variable, 7-9 x 15-21 microns often varying in one leaf from oblong to scarcely elongate, cuticle of cells armed, on margins and the surface, with tholiform papillae; these not arising over lumen but over radial cell walls, papillae similar in diameter to cell width, with those of distal and peripheral sectors having discernible individual boundaries or, locally coalescent in transverse lines, papillae of median sectors ± coalescent in longitudinal lines, those of leaf bases apparently orientated and coalescent in longitudinal lines terminating at leaf base. Perianths requiring description.

Fruiting:

January-February (still poorly known)

Threats:

Although only known from the type locality so far, the habitat this species occupies is both widespread and secure. Further it has not been searched for that extensively within this type of habitat. Therefore it seems more appropriate to treat this species as 'Data Deficient' until such time as a thorough survey for it has been undertaken. At its sole known location it is vulnerable to overcollection. Luckily it is very small and easily overlooked. However, until further populations are found this unusual liverwort remains at serious risk of extinction. Especially as its only known habitat is so prone to human disturbance, and because it is so small, inconspicuous, and occupies such a small area, its eradication by accident or stochastic events are a major conservation concern.

***Attribution:**

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 November 2007. Description based on Schuster (1997).

References and further reading:

Schuster, R.M. 1997: On *Bragginsella*, a new genus of Jungermanniales from New Zealand. *Bryologist 100*: 362-367.

For more information, visit:
http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=4936