



Plagiochila fragmentisima

Common Name(s):

Liverwort

Current Threat Status (2009):

Data Deficient

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island: Fiordland National Park.

Habitat:

Corticolous on the bark of beech (*Nothofagus* spp.) and rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) where it has been recorded growing in association with *Cuspidatula monodon*.

Features:

Plants yellowish-white to pallid whitish-green above, more or less tawny or yellowish-brown, medium or large in size, rigid, erect, shoot-apices subhamate, or more or less coiled 20-60 x 2.0-3.4 mm, basal 2/3 of shoot almost denuded because of caducous and fragmenting leaves; shoot arising from rhizomatous, creeping, ramified caulid. Stem pale above, deep brown below, c.500 microns thick, 17-19 cells in cross-section. Branches irregular, infrequent or few, plants mostly subsimple but subfloral innovations frequent, vegetative branches always lateral-intercalary in origin, arising from lateral leaf axils. Leaves closely imbricate, freely fragmenting, brittle, often all leaves except for basal and subbasal portions and near shoot apex, fragmented or dropped, resulting in denuded stem; leaves strongly revolute, recurved along dorsal margin, more or less laterally appressed when immature (near shoot apex), before fragmentation subtriangularly ovate-oblong, 1.5-2.0 x 1.7-2.1 mm, immature leaves strongly ampliate at the ventral base, apex narrowly rounded or nearly truncate, dorsal margin more or less arched, long decurrent at base, strongly deflexed-revolute; margin entire or with several (2-5) small teeth on ventral side, especially near gynoecia. Underleaves absent. Rhizoids frequent on lower rhizomatous portion. Male plants not seen. Female inflorescences more or less laterally compressed, terminal on leading stem, often with 1-2 innovations; bracts erect-appressed, similar to subinvolucral leaves in size and shape, dorsal margin strongly revolute and decurved, inflated at base, with many remote, small marginal, apical and ventral teeth; perianth cyathiform, c.3.5 x 3.0 mm with distinct, more or less wide or narrow wing on dorsal keel, mouth wide, bilabiate to truncate or slightly arched, entire or with a few weak teeth.

Fruiting:

Fruiting period unknown

Threats:

Listed as Data Deficient as it is only known from a few gatherings from coastal forest in Fiordland National Park. The bryophyte flora of this huge, mountainous national park is still very poorly known, and it is difficult to see how this species could actually be threatened. Further survey is needed.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=4977