



Vesicularia inflectens

Common Name(s):

moss

Current Threat Status (2009):

Data Deficient

Distribution:

Indigenous. New Zealand: Kermadec Islands (Raoul Island).
Known from one gathering made in May 2009. Common in many
Melanesian and Polynesian islands, South-east Asia and China

Features*:

Plants variable yellow-brown to golden-green when fresh, lustrous, on soil. Stems creeping, irregularly branched, to c.15 mm, in cross-section with small, firm-walled cortical cells, no hyaloderm or central strand, with brown and apparently smooth rhizoids arising in fascicles on the ventral surface. Branches rather short. Stem and branch leaves weakly differentiated. Leaves complanate, secund in upper part of stems, c.1.6–1.8 X 0.8–0.9 mm, the dorsal leaves nearly symmetric, the lateral leaves markedly asymmetric, entire or crenulate above, broadly ovate, acute; upper laminal cells rhombic, thin-walled and lax, smooth, c.60–90 X 15–18 micrometre, becoming smaller at leaf apex and somewhat more elongate near leaf base; marginal cells sometimes weakly differentiated at mid leaf, not forming an obvious border; alar cells not differentiated. Costae weak, short and double or nearly absent. ?Autoicous. Perichaetia scattered on stems; perichaetial leaves somewhat smaller than vegetative, erect. Setae smooth, elongate, c.9–15 mm; capsules horizontal, oblong-cylindric with neck virtually lacking, c.1 mm; exothecial cells rather firm-walled and weakly thickened in corners. Operculum conical.

Fruiting:

The sole New Zealand gathering was sparingly fertile when collected in May 2009.

Threats:

Known for New Zealand so far from a single chance gathering made from "rough, chewed up ground that would dry up in summer" at c.80 m a.s.l. on the roadside near the entrance to Ravine 7, Raoul Island, where it was mistaken in part for *Ectropothecium sandwichense* and a *Rhynchostegium* sp. Superficially the similarity of this moss to these two other genera - both of which are common on Raoul means that *Vesicularia* is probably more overlooked on Raoul than threatened. Further, this species should be searched for in northern New Zealand (within the known range of *Ectropothecium*).

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (30 August 2010).

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=6651



Caption: Raoul Island, Kermadec Islands. Feb 2012.

Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe from a specimen collected by Peter de Lange.