

LICHENS ON THE SUMMIT OF LITTLE MOUNT PEEL

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In New Zealand lichenology the Mt. Peel area is a classic one for it was here in the 1920's that H.H. Allan first discovered in New Zealand the arctic-alpine lichen Solorina crocea, one of a small number of New Zealand lichens which appear to be bipolar, being common to fell-field or alpine grassland vegetation in New Zealand, and the tundras of the Northern Hemisphere. Although S. crocea and several other bipolar lichens (Cetraria ericetorum and Cornicularia aculeata) are found along the Mt. Peel ridge they are restricted to Middle Peel and Big Mt. Peel. Nevertheless the summit of Little Mt. Peel is not without interest from the lichen viewpoint, and to complete the earlier botanical surveys of Metcalf and Molloy (1974) and Macmillan (1974, 1975) a preliminary list of lichens collected from the same area is presented below.

The taxa identified are predominantly macrolichens (i.e. those needing only a hand lens or the unaided eye for determination and not requiring any microscopic examination) and voucher specimens are held in the herbarium of Botany Division (CHR). The many microlichens which frequently form an encrusting mosaic on exposed rocks are, with few exceptions, not dealt with in this study.

The southwest-facing slope is dominated by solid rock outcrops and being wettest has the richest development of lichens both in terms of numbers of species and in luxuriance of growth. In contrast the north-facing slope is dry, stony and rather open and lichens are much less obvious both on rocks and on bare ground and appear to be localised most frequently in water drainage channels. The eastern slope above the shelter hut is occupied by a dryish grassland with few lichen habitats apart from exposed soil and decayed tussock bases where one finds such species as Psoroma ciliata and P. hirsutulum. Between the hut and the southwest face a small southeast-facing slope catches some moisture from the south and in consequence has a rather richer lichen flora than the drier eastern slope, the species Hypogymnia lugubris, Pseudocyphellaria degelii and Thamnomia vermicularis being encountered.

In the list which follows lichens are arranged alphabetically and their slope preference is indicated.

	N	E	SE	SW
<u>Agyrophora zahlbruckneri</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>Arthrorhaphis citrinella</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Baeomyces fungoides</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>B. heteromorphus</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Cladia aggregata</u>	X	X	X	X
<u>Cladonia aurii</u>	X	X	X	X
<u>C. capitellata</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>C. chlorophaea</u>	.	X	.	X
<u>C. pityrea</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>C. squamosa</u>	.	X	.	X

	N	E	SE	SW
<u>C. subulata</u>	.	X	.	X
<u>C. verticillata</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>Coccocarpia palmicola</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>Coccotrema cucurbitula</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Coriscium sp.</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Diploschistes bryophilus</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Hypogymnia lugubris</u>	X	.	X	X
<u>Lecanora parmelina</u>	.	X	X	X
<u>L. trachyderma</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Lecidea coromandelica</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>L. demissa</u>	X	X	X	X
<u>L. irrubens</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>L. macrocarpa</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Menegazzia aeneofusca</u>	X	X	.	X
<u>Neuropogon acromelana</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Omphalina sp.</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Pertusaria dactylina</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Parmelia glabrans</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>P. martinii</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>P. pictada</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>P. signifera</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Placopsis illita</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>P. perrugosa</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>P. rhodophthalma</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Pseudocyphellaria degelii</u>	.	.	X	X
<u>P. delisea</u>	X	.	X	X
<u>Psoroma buchanani</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>P. ciliata</u>	.	X	X	.
<u>P. hirsutulum</u>	.	X	X	.
<u>Rhizocarpon geographicum</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Siphula foliacea</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>S. fragilis</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>S. roccellaeformis</u>	X	X	.	X
<u>Siphulastrum mammillata</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Stereocaulon caespitosum</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>S. colensoi</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>S. corticatulum</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>S. ramulosum</u>	X	.	.	X

	N	E	SE	SW
<u>Thamnotia vermicularis</u>	X	.	X	X
<u>Toninia bullata</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>Usnea contexta</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>Umbilicaria cylindrica</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>U. polyphylla</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>U. vellea</u>	.	.	.	X
<u>Xanthoparmelia congensis</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>X. mougeotiana</u>	X	.	.	.
<u>X. scabrosa</u>	X	.	.	X
<u>X. tasmanica</u>	X	.	.	.

References

- Metcalf, L.J. and Molloy, B.P.J. 1974: The vegetation of the summit of Little Mount Peel. Canterbury Botanical Society Journal 7: 29-31.
- Macmillan, B. 1974: Mosses and liverworts (of Little Mount Peel) Canterbury Botanical Society Journal 7: 32.
- Macmillan, B. 1975: Little Mount Peel - A correction. Canterbury Botanical Society Journal 8: 20.

METACRIAS ERICHRYSA

On one of the walks at Mesopotamia Tessa David found a large black and very woolly caterpillar. It was unknown to the members of the group.

Tessa has since found a description of it and writes as follows :

"Thought you may be interested - I found the name and description of the woolly caterpillar I found - Metacrias erichrysa, Tiger moth, occurring in sub-alpine zones of the South Island, feeding on low growing plants such as Acaena, Wahlenbergia, Muehlenbeckia: Quote; "If there has ever been a justification for naming a caterpillar a woolly bear, it is here. After the third moulting the hairy larva of the Tiger moth is covered with tufts of long, light to darkish brown hairs, which are longest towards the posterior" Unquote: I'm sorry I didn't get a photo but just may get another chance one day."

Tessa David
