

**Verrucaria australiensis** P.M.McCarthy

*Muelleria* 7: 320 (1991)

T: by the Lincoln Hwy, 17 km S of Cowell, Eyre Penin., S.A., 23 Oct. 1970, *R.B.Filson* 11796; holo: MEL.

Illustration: P.M.McCarthy, *op. cit.* 321, fig. 2.

Thallus endolithic to subepilithic and diffuse-farinose, pale grey-green, ecorticate. Algae globose, 5–8  $\mu\text{m}$  diam. Prothallus and basal layer not apparent. Perithecia semi-immersed to almost completely immersed, 0.1–0.17 (–0.2) mm diam., black, leaving pits in the rock following their decay; apex rounded to somewhat pointed; ostiole inconspicuous. Involucrellum absent. Exciple 15–20  $\mu\text{m}$  thick and black at the apex and sides, 12–15  $\mu\text{m}$  thick and brown at the base. Centrum 0.08–0.12 (–0.14) mm wide. Periphyses 14–17  $\times$  2–3  $\mu\text{m}$ . Asci 30–45  $\times$  12–16  $\mu\text{m}$ . Ascospores ellipsoidal to elongate-ellipsoidal, 7.5–14  $\times$  4–7  $\mu\text{m}$ .

An endemic species, known from maritime and seashore limestone in S.A., Vic. and Tas.

Vic.: Spray Point, Cape Schanck Coastal Park, Mornington Penin., *P.M.McCarthy* 355 (MEL). Tas.: Erith Is., Kents Group, Bass Strait, *J.S.Whinray* 2682 (MEL).

This lichen is characterised by its pale inconspicuous thallus, minute and immersed to semi-immersed perithecia that lack an involucrellum, and very small ellipsoidal ascospores.

