

Verrucaria austroalpina P.M.McCarthy

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T: track from Charlotte Pass to Blue L., Mount Kosciuszko Natl Park, N.S.W., 18 Jan. 1968, *W.A.Weber & D.McVean s.n.*; holo: COLO.

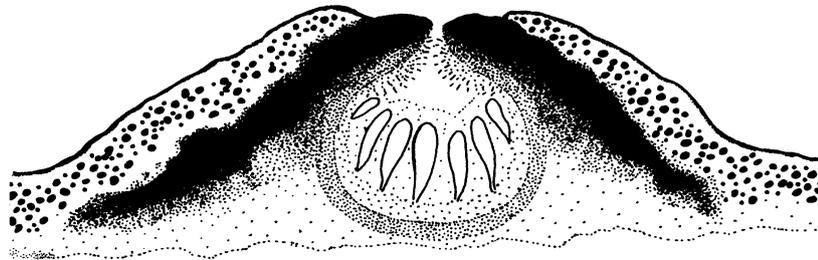
Illustration: P.M.McCarthy, *loc. cit.* fig. 1.

Thallus epilithic, continuous to rimose, 50–140 μm thick, smooth, matt, with a brown-black upper layer, whitish within, and with a brown-black basal layer, not gelatinous when wetted. Algae globose, ellipsoidal, or somewhat angular, 5–12 \times 5–7 μm . Prothallus not apparent. Perithecia almost completely overgrown by the thallus apart from an 80–120 μm wide apical area, 0.4–0.7 mm diam., brown-black; ostiole inconspicuous or in a shallow 40–60 μm wide depression. Involucrellum contiguous with the upper half of the exciple, extending to exciple base level and often merging with the basal layer, 60–90 μm thick. Exciple 20–30 μm thick, hyaline at the base and sides, medium to dark brown near the apex. Centrum 0.15–0.23 mm wide. Periphyses 24–35 \times 1–2 μm . Asci 88–100 \times 21–25 μm . Ascospores elongate-ellipsoidal to ellipsoidal, 21–34 \times 7–12.5 μm .

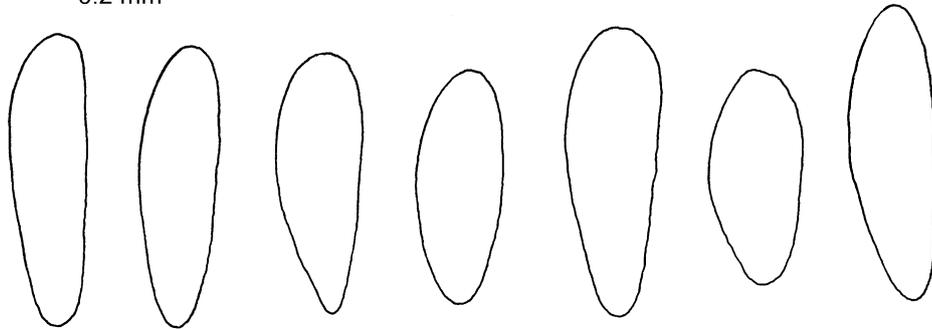
This endemic species is known from aquatic siliceous rock at an altitude of 2000 m in alpine N.S.W. and from a slightly lower elevation in eastern Vic.

Vic.: Middle Ck, Langford West Aqueduct, Bogong High Plains, alt. c. 1600 m, *H.Mayrhofer 15484, H.Hertel & R.Filson* (GZU).

A very distinctive lichen in a comparatively extreme habitat, *V. austroalpina* has a rather thick dark thallus that, surprisingly, is whitish inside. The perithecia have a broad, divergent involucrellum, and they produce large and unusually elongate ascospores.



0.2 mm



20 μm

