

**Verrucaria inconstans** P.M.McCarthy

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T: Vale R., Vale of Belvoir, 5 km NE of Mayday Mount, Tas., 41°33'S, 146°53'E, 21 May 1993, *P.M.McCarthy* 654 & *G.Kantvilas*; holo: MEL; iso: HO, MEL.

Illustrations: P.M.McCarthy, *op. cit.* 110, fig. 2; 111, fig. 3.

Thallus epilithic, sparingly rimose to deeply areolate, matt, smooth, medium grey-green to very dark grey-brown, 0.08–0.18 (–0.40) mm thick, corticate. Algae vertically elongate to subglobose, 4–11 × 4–8 μm. Prothallus not apparent; basal layer brown-black and 0.10–0.25 (–0.35) mm thick or absent. Perithecia one-third to two-thirds immersed, 0.18–0.35 (–0.40) mm diam., brown-black; ostiole inconspicuous or in a broad shallow depression. Involucrellum contiguous with the exciple, 60–100 (–120) μm thick. Exciple 15–25 μm thick, usually hyaline at the base and sides, pale to dark brown above. Centrum 0.1–0.2 mm wide. Periphyses 20–30 × 1.5–3 μm. Asci 53–65 × 16–20 μm. Ascospores subcylindrical to ellipsoidal, 12–20 × 5.5–9.5 μm.

Occurs on aquatic and semi-aquatic limestone and dolerite in Tas. and on granite in alpine N.S.W. Also in the South Island, New Zealand; reported from Papua New Guinea by Aptroot (*Tropical Bryology* 14: 25–34, 1998).

Tas.: Arm R., *G.Kantvilas* 359/84c & *P.W.James* (HO); 1 km W of Neika, by Huon Hwy, tributary of North-West Bay R., *P.M.McCarthy* 603 & *G.Kantvilas* (MEL). N.S.W.: Thredbo R., 1.7 km ENE of Dead Horse Gap, Mt Kosciuszko Natl Park, *P.M.McCarthy* 1817 (CANB); tributary of Thredbo R., Rams Head Ra., Mt Kosciuszko Natl Park, *P.M.McCarthy* 1845 (CANB).

This lichen is characterised by the rather dark and frequently deeply areolate thallus, the small perithecia with a thick involucrellum and the small ascospores. The perithecia are larger than those of *V. phaeoderma* and the algae are smaller.

