

Lithothelium kiritea

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

INTERIM CONSERVATION STATUS

2024 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT | Interim | Marshall et al (2024)

CATEGORY

Lichen

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lichens - Crustose

LICHEN SUBSTRATE

Corticolous (bark, wood)

THREATS

Lithothelium kiritea is usually an abundant, at times locally dominant, lichen of the trunks of *Cordyline australis* in coastal locations. Currently it is known from a small area of New Zealand, though abundant in that area (Marshall et al. 2024). It should be looked for elsewhere, as this species is more likely overlooked than truly absent, though indications are that it is a 'recent' arrival from overseas, probably Australia, and it should be looked for over there as well (Marshall et al. 2024). Currently the species has a provisional assessment of 'Not Threatened' (Marshall et al. 2024).

GENUS

Lithothelium

FAMILY

Pyrenulaceae

AUTHORITY

Lithothelium kiritea A.J. Marshall, Aptroot, de Lange & Blanchon

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ETYMOLOGY

kiritea: From te reo Māori [Māori language] meaning 'white skinned' in reference to the white covering the species applies to the bark of its host phorophyte.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Marshall A.J., Aptroot A., Blanchon D.J., James C.J., de Lange P.J. 2024. New Zealand *Lithothelium* (Pyrenulaceae) - description of a new species *Lithothelium kiritea* sp. nov., with notes on *L. australe*. *Ukrainian Botanical Journal* 81(2): 145–154. <https://doi.org/10.15407/ukrbotj81.02.145>



Lithothelium kiritea on the trunks of *Cordyline australis*, near Nile River, North Westland. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Date taken: 06/01/2024, Licence: CC BY.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Lithothelium kiritea Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lithothelium-kiritea/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lithothelium-kiritea/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026