Tortula viridipila

COMMON NAMES
moss

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2025 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Non-vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Mosses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Minute, calcicolous, light brownish-green colonial moss. Stems short, c. 3 mm tall with the leaves densely comose in bulbils, simple or branched. Leaves 2.5-3.0 mm long, imbricate and slightly twisted when dry, erecto-patent when moist; lamina with widened base, oblong-lanceolate, abruptly acuminate, aristate owing to the projecting nerve, concave, entire; margins recurved mid-leaf; nerve strong, slightly widened towards the apex, excurrent in a long, flexuose, green arista which is hyaline at its apex, scarcely denticulate, equal to 1/4 or 1/3 leaf length. Upper cells 13 microns wide, pellucid with firm walls, densely pluripapillose; marginal cells scarcely differentiated; basal cells for 1/4 to 1/3 of the leaf rather lax, shortly rectangular, thin-walled; those at the basal margin slightly narrower. Upper leaves wider, subspathulate. Seta c.10 mm long, red. Capsule c.1.75 mm long, elliptic, brown, glossy. Peristome red, teeth conjoined below in a very short membrane, irregularly filiform, occasionally joined above, oblique or suberect. Columnella exserted. Operculum obliquely rostellate. Calyptra long, tubular above, basally widely dilated. Spores 20 microns, muriculate.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. South Island, Kahurangi National Park (possibly elsewhere)

SUBSTRATE DETAILS
Terricolous alpine calcicole, favouring lime-enriched soil.

THREATS
A local endemic, abundant within its few known habitats. However the areas occupied are small and they are suspected of being in decline so the species has recently been listed as “Nationally Endangered” (see Glenny et al. 2011).

GENUS
Tortula

FAMILY
Pottiaceae

AUTHORITY
Tortula viridipila Dixon & Sainsbury

SYNONYMS
Desmatodon viridipilus (Dixon et Sainsbury) Sainsbury

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FRUITING
Although fruit has been seen insufficient information exists to provide any details on the timing of fruiting

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2014 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP
2010 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP
2005 | Range Restricted
Jump to current conservation status

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Glenny, D.; Fife, A.J.; Brownsey, P.J.; Renner, M.A.M.; Braggins, J.E.; Beever, J.E.; Hitchmough, R. 2011: Threatened and uncommon bryophytes of New Zealand (2010 Revision). New Zealand Journal of Botany 49: 305-327.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange August 2007.

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MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/tortula-viridipila/

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