

Black-foam Lichen

Anzia colpodes



Species Description

Black-foam Lichen is a medium-sized, foliose (leaf-like) lichen that grows in rosettes up to 20 cm in diameter. The pale greenish-grey lobes are each approximately 1-2 mm wide and grow over a thick spongy base of black fungal filaments from which the lichen gets its name. Pycnidia (asexual fruiting body) appear at the tips of the lobes as small black dots, while larger rust-brown apothecia (disc-shaped sexual reproductive structures) appear amongst the lobes.



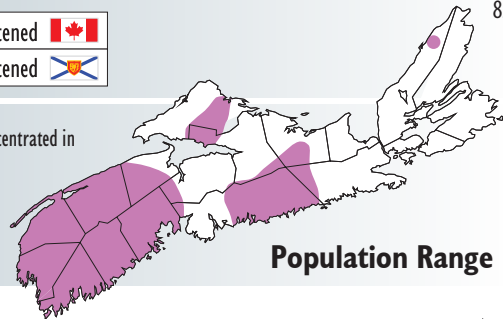
STATUS

Threatened 

Threatened



Occurrences primarily concentrated in southwest Nova Scotia but extend throughout the province to parts of Cape Breton.



Habitat

Black-foam Lichen is found in forests consisting primarily of mature deciduous trees. It prefers high levels of precipitation and humidity and higher light levels. It grows on trees near subtle canopy gaps along or just upslope from wetlands, lakes, or streams. It is most commonly found between eye-level and 3 m high up trunks of Red Maples, but has also been found on White Ash, Sugar Maple, and Red Oak, among other species.



Black-foam Lichen habitat in Queens

Look for Black-foam Lichen on mature deciduous tree trunks with rough bark and ample light in areas free from dense undergrowth, in or near wetlands, and along edges of lakes and streams.

Interesting Points

- Black-foam Lichen can only reproduce through fungal spores if they are able to connect with the appropriate algal partner (*Trebouxia simplex*), making successful establishment from spores extremely limited.
- It belongs to an ancient genus of lichen (*Anzia*), for which there is a fossilized specimen dating back approximately 40 million years.
- In Canada, Black-foam Lichen was historically found in Ontario, Québec, and New Brunswick, but has not been sighted outside Nova Scotia in nearly two decades.



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Similar Species

Monk's-hood Lichen (*Hypogymnia physodes*): Hollow, lacks thick spongy base of black fungal filaments. Typically lacks apothecia and has white lip-shaped soredia on underside of lobe tips.



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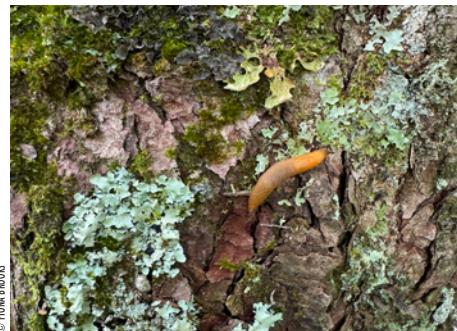
Tree Flute Lichen (*Menegazzia subsimilis/terebata*): Hollow, lacks thick spongy base of black fungal filaments. Lobes perforated when mature. Typically lacks apothecia and has white soralia on lobe tips.



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Threats to Survival

- Forestry operations (harvesting of old forests).
- Climate change (changing weather patterns).
- Pollution (air pollution).
- Gastropod grazing (native and alien slugs and snails).



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Arboreal slugs will eat Black-foam Lichen

How You Can Help

Learn to recognize this species and report your sightings. Participate in community bioblitzes. Advocate for sustainable forestry practices, climate change initiatives, and the protection of old forests in the province.



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Lichen surveying

Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

Contact: Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables:
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Info: www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Sighting Reports: 1-866-727-3447