

SERIES: LEARN YOUR LICHENS

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Common Name: Orange rock-posy

Scientific Name: *Rhizoplaca chrysoleuca* (Sm.) Zopf.

Synonyms: *Lecanora chrysoleuca*, *L. rubina*

Description: The vegetative body (thallus) of this lichen is pale yellowish green to dull yellow grey with round and rather closely appressed to irregular lobes, or centrally thick and lumpy covered with warts and lobules (small scale-like lobes). The lower surface (cortex) is light brown, but sometimes greenish black at the outer margins. The lichen lacks hair-like attachments (rhizines), but instead has a thick central holdfast (umbelicus). The sessile abundant pale to dark orange fruiting bodies (apothecia) with thick or thin margins can reach 2-5 mm in diameter and are very showy. The disks are slightly hollow (concave) at first, becoming flat or somewhat rounded (convex) at a later stage of development.

Habitat: On granitic rock or sometimes on erratic sandstone boulders on open grasslands.

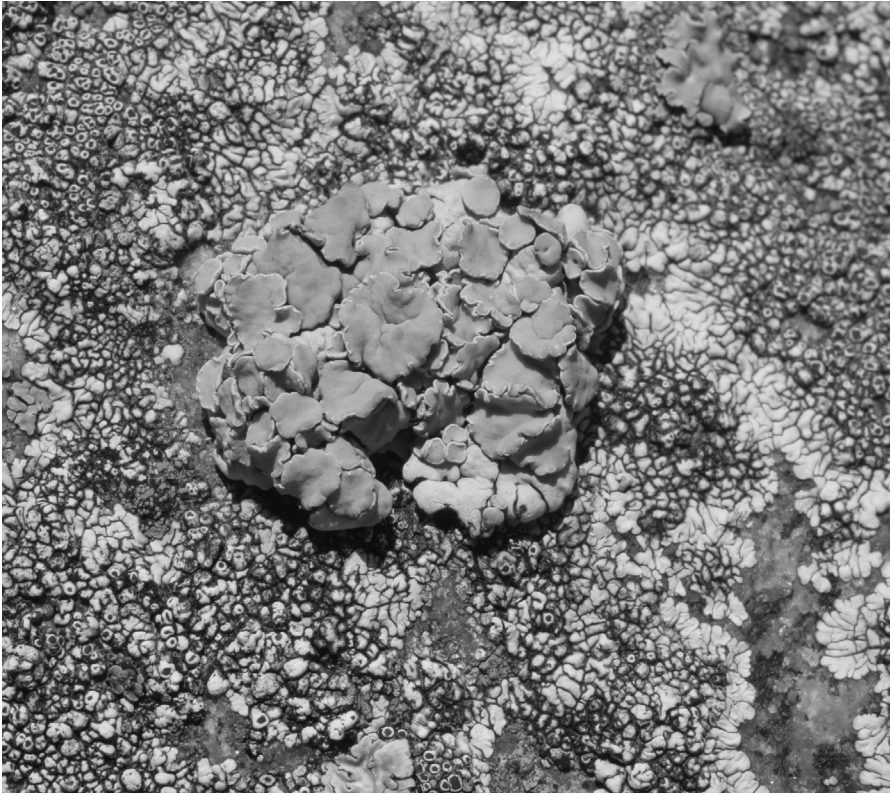
Growth form: Suggesting leaf-like lobes (foliose).

Provincial Status: Scattered, but can be locally common in the southern grasslands. Occasional in open boreal forest.

Comments: Due to its close attachment, the lichen can appear to be tightly adherent (crustose) but unlike such species, is attached by a single holdfast. It often is found with other rock species such as: Desert fire-dot lichen (*Caloplaca trachyphylla*), Golden moonglow lichen (*Dimelaena oreina*), Green rock-posy (*Rhizoplaca melanophthalma*) and Salted rock-shield (*Xanthoparmelia mexicana*).

This a series depicting some of the common and showy lichen species. The author hopes that you enjoyed this brief glimpse into our fascinating lichen flora, and will continue the series in 2014. Any comments or suggestions you might have would be appreciated. Thank you.

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Orange rock-posy, (Rhyzoplaca chrysoleuca (Sm.) Zopf. (see inside back cover for colour image) - Bernard de Vries



MYSTERY PHOTO

Mystery photo December 2013:

Blue Jay reader Harvey Schmidt found a smiling face in nature. Being a photographer who specializes in macro (close-up) photography, he managed to get a photo of that smiling face. Besides being small, this cheeky grin is in an unexpected place. The mystery in this photo is: where is the smile and on what? Bonus points for identification and latin name.