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Cryptogam of the Month-October 2008



Xanthoria elixii

Xanthoria elixii a recently described foliose lichen, that occurs on the bark of shrubs and trees in semi saline areas of Australia. This species was described from material collected from the Mullewa shire in 2004 by a Ukraine lichenologist working in Kiev. A readily recognised wide spread species *Xanthoria parietina* that is found on bark of old fruit trees and other substrates in the wetter areas of Australia can be easily confused with *X. elixii*. In the mature state both species form rosettes but can appear cluttered forming an indistinct shape as they will grow into each other. *X. elixii* is a smaller species with rosettes growing up to 2.5 cm diameter whereas *X. parietina* is usually 6 cm in diameter. The colour of both species can vary from orange to yellowish green and this is dependant on the degree of shade provided by their host species.

Spot testing for a chemical reaction shows the same colour change and requires more advanced tests to use this process.

The species is named in honour of the well known Australian Lichenologist Jack Elix.

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