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Cryptogam of the month-December 2011



Collema coccophorum

Collema coccophorum is a small dark olive green to black foliose to subfoliose lichen. The distorted thallus becomes slightly jellied when moist but solid when dry. Surface of the thallus may be covered with short isidia-like lobules giving this species a rough appearance. Apothecia when present can be numerous, usually black or reddish brown coloured flat to convex discs.

This species is commonly located on limestone, granite rocks and various soil types. In Western Australia this is one of eight species common in arid to semi arid areas. Populations of this species can also be seen within other Australian states and several overseas locations.

A similar soil species is *Collema novozelandicum*, which is rarely covered in lobules but has densely covered in isidia. Other species of this lichen group tend to be mainly located on bark tissue in more temperate environments.

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