

Plant of the Month — March 2019

Dasya villosa Harv.



Dasya villosa (Hairy Dasya) is a red seaweed that is widely distributed on southern Australian coastlines, occurring as far north on the west coast as Rottnest Island. The species is variable in colour, often light pink but dark red-brown thalli are also found. All branches are covered with fine filaments, resulting in a furry appearance. This feature occurs in most species of the genus and name *Dasya* reflects this, being derived from the Greek for 'hairy'. In the case of *D. villosa* this feature is further emphasized, as the species epithet *villosa* also means 'hairy', in this case from the Latin.

Hairy Dasya grows on rock in the subtidal. As with most red algae the species has separate gametophyte and sporophyte stages in its life cycle; the alga in the photo is the tetrasporophyte stage and reproductive structures (for those with good eyes) can be seen as small dark spots on the branches.

Photo: J. Huisman

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