

# *Anthoceros neesii* Prosk.

Status: **Endangered (EN)** B1,2c

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Class: Anthocerotopsida

Order: Anthocerotales

Family: Anthocerotaceae

**Description and biology.** This is a small plant forming a yellowish green, thick, fleshy thallus, ca. 1.0 cm diameter; capsules only 3-7 mm high and 0.3--0.4 mm diameter; spores 44--55 µm.

**Distribution and habitat:** Endemic to Central Europe (Czech Republic (2 old localities; Ex; Vána 1993), Germany in Hessen (15 old loc.) "vom Aussterben bedroht (CR); Ludwig et al. 1996, Poland (3 old loc. all in the 1900-century; Ex) and Austria (last seen in 2000).

Temperate central european.

A pioneer on clayey-loamy soil in open places, often intermixed with *A. agrestis* and *Nothothylas orbicularis*. It seems to be confined to crop fields; primary habitat unknown.

**History and outlook:** Although the species has been overlooked in former times, the treatment by Proskauer 1958 gives a sound basis for correct identification of hornwort specimens in Europe. There is only a handful localities (within a small region), where *Anthoceros neesii* was collected after the middle of the last century. Its habitat underwent severe changes due to very intense agricultural practice in most of the area.

Main threats are probably changes in agricultural practices; excessive application of fertilisers and pesticides.

One option would be to offer farmers incentives for continuing traditional agricultural practices in some fields where the species still can occur or for limiting the application of fertilisers and pesticides at field margins. This species should also be kept in culture at appropriate bryological, botanical gardens or *ex situ* storage in a safe way.

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