

Phycolepidozia exigua R.M.Schust.

Status: **Critically endangered (CR)** B1, 2bc

Class: Jungermanniopsida

Order: Jungermanniales

Family: Phycolepidoziaceae

Description and Biology: *Phycolepidozia exigua* is a microscopic liverwort, reduced to a green, filamentous and leafless creeping stem only 2-5 mm long and with 6 cells in transverse section. Underleaves are lacking. Plants autoicous; androecia spicate, leafy, with 3-6 pairs of imbricate bracts. Gynoecia terminal on branches, 2-3 pairs of acuminate-ciliiform bracts, perianth long-cylindrical, to 0,5 mm long, very deeply 6-lobed at mouth. Sporophyte with a reduced seta of only 4+4 cells. Vegetative reproduction unknown.

Distribution and Habitat: The species is only known from the type locality in Dominica, in an humid rain forest at ca. 400 m. The plants occurred on bark of a large tree, together with other hepatics.

History and Outlook: *Phycolepidozia exigua* was collected only once in Dominica, in 1966. The original locality was destroyed by a hurricane and efforts to relocate the species have been unsuccessful. It could thus be regarded as extinct. However, other species with similar habitat requirements have been rediscovered on Dominica and it cannot be assumed that this species will not be found following further searches. It is thus best treated as facing extremely high risk of extinction in the immediate future, meeting the IUCN criteria for Critically Endangered based on the small area, the single site, and the decline in habitat quality and extent. – CR (B1,2bc).

References:

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