

***Scaphophyllum speciosum*** (Horik.) H. Inoue

Including subsp. *speciosum* and subsp. *villosum* R.M. Schust.

Status: **Vulnerable (VU)** B1,2cd

Class: Marchantiopsida

Order: Jungermanniales

Fam. Jungermanniaceae

**Description and biology:** Plants robust, pale or yellow-green. Shoots simple or with few branches, 4-6cm long, leafy shoots c 7mm wide. Leaves closely imbricate, base sheathing stem, strongly canoe-shaped, almost transversely inserted and horizontally spreading, unlobed. Margin narrowly revolute, entire. Leaf cells 27-32 x 29-35µm diameter, thin-walled with small trigones, cuticle tuberculate. Underleaves absent, rhizoids numerous. Gemmae absent. Dioicous. Androecia unknown. Perianth terminal, pear shaped, plicate in upper part, mouth constricted, crenulate or ciliate-dentate, surface (subsp. *villosum*) covered in ciliate hairs or (subsp. *speciosum*) almost glabrous. Sporophyte ovoid, with bistratose wall, on long slender seta. Spores 10-20µm diameter.



The liverwort *Scaphophyllum speciosum*. With permission from Dr Ming-Jou Lai and the Journal Bryobrothera.

**Distribution and habitat:** Subsp. *speciosum*: endemic to Taiwan. Subsp. *villosum*: China (Tibet, Yunnan), Bhutan, East Nepal. Grows in mossy forest, especially *Tsuga/Rhododendron* and wet mixed broad-leaved forests, in mats on mossy logs and on moist banks, altitude 2500 to 2905m.

**History and outlook:** First described from Taiwan by Horikawa in 1934. Now known from five localities (fide Vana). Discovered in Bhutan in 1979, Yunnan in ?, Tibet in 1982 and East Nepal in 1991. Probably a threatened species in that the necessary habitat, undisturbed mossy forest is threatened throughout the Sino-Himalaya. Disturbance and partial clearing of such forest is likely to reduce the humidity below the threshold for its survival. This is a genuinely very rare species, as it is large and conspicuous and easily seen by experienced bryologists. Protection uncertain; the Bhutan locality falls within the Thrumshengla National Park.

**References:** Fu, X., Gao, C., Li, Q. & Fang, J.-S. 1995. *Scaphophyllum* new to mainland of China and *Tetradontium brownianum* (Dicks.) Schwaegr. new to China. *Bulletin of Botanical Research* 15: 57-60.  
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**Illustrations:** in Schuster (1998, figs 1&2) and Inoue (1966, fig. 1).

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