

Schistochila undulatifolia Piippo

Status: **Critically Endangered (CR)** B1,2c

Class: *Hepaticae*

Order: *Jungermanniales*

Family: *Schistochilaceae*

Description and Biology: *Schistochila undulatifolia* is rather robust leafy hepatic which forms rigid, more or less upright growing tufts on fallen trunks and fallen branches in tropical rain forests. The stems are up to 5 cm long and up to 1 cm wide, plants are yellowish brown in colour. The leaves consist of two lobes: dorsal lobe and ventral lobe. The ventral lobe is very narrow with long uniseriate tip. The dorsal basal margin of the dorsal lobe is very broad and distinctly undulating, and there is also one sharp tooth near its apex. The ventral margin of the dorsal lobe is attached to the ventral lobe. The plants also have large, 2-lobed underleaves with recurved margins. The cells have large trigones.

Distribution and Habitat: Known only from Papua New Guinea, more specifically in West Sepik Province at Frieda River, where it has been collected five times in near-by localities. The species has been found growing on fallen trunks and branches in tropical rain forest at altitudes of 800--1050 m. The other species of the genus occur in Southern Hemisphere.

History and Outlook: *Schistochila undulatifolia* has only been collected in the year 1981 in the province West Sepik, Papua New Guinea. Typical for many species of the genus in New Guinea is that its representatives occupy very narrow ranges occurring only in one mountain, which makes them very vulnerable for any kind of disturbance. Dangers for this particular species are mining of copper near its habitats and logging.

References:

- Piippo, S. 1984. Bryophyte flora of the Huon Peninsula, Papua New Guinea. III. Haplomitriaceae, Lepicoleaceae, Herbertaceae, Pseudolepicoleaceae, Trichocoleaceae, Schistochilaceae, Balantiopsaceae, Pleuroziaceae and Porellaceae (Hepaticae). *Ann. Bot. Fennici* 21: 21--48.
- Piippo, S. 1986. Bryophytes from Frieda River, East and West Sepik Provinces, Papua New Guinea. II. Hepaticae (Haplomitriaceae - Frullaniaceae). *Ann. Bot. Fennici* 23: 1--10.
- Piippo, S. 1994. Phytogeography and habitat ecology of Western Melanesian endemic Hepaticae. *J. Hattori Bot. Lab.* 75: 275--293.

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