



Usnea subalpina

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Usnea subalpina is an epiphytic lichen species found in the moister areas of southern Western Australia. The ability of this species to obtain nutrients and moisture from the atmosphere enables this lichen to survive. Spreading by means of spores or thallus fragmentation allows these particles to lodge into bark fissures where they can develop into new plants. This species can be easily overlooked due to its growth on the bark of upper limbs of tall Eucalyptus trees. When moist this species is very pliable and soft to the touch.

The yellow green colour of the species is common, although it can appear white occasionally. The presence of the spider-like fruiting bodies may not be present on many samples which resulted in this species only being recognised in the last couple of years. In many instances this species is only found on the ground after strong wind activity.

Usnea subalpina is similar in appearance to *Usnea scabrida* but has smaller discs and fewer spine-like filaments on the edge of the fruiting body.

Usnea subalpina also occurs in the non tropic eastern states of Australia.