

## **Verrucaria compacta** (A.Massal.) Jatta

*Syll. Lich. Ital.* 501 (1900)

*Placidium compactum* A.Massal., *Misc. Lichenol.* 62 (1856); *Dermatocarpon compactum* (A.Massal.) Lettau, *Hedwigia* 52: 97 (1912); *Catapyrenium compactum* (A.Massal.) R.Sant., *Lichens of Sweden & Norway* 82 (1984). T: Europe; holo: VER? n.v.

Illustration: G.Clauzade & C.Roux, *Bull. Soc. Bot. Centre-Ouest*, n.s., numéro spécial 7: 803, fig. 396 (part) (1985).

Thallus epilithic, areolate to subsquamulose, dark olive-green, dark brown or greenish black, matt,  $\pm$ smooth, 0.2–0.3 (–0.5) mm thick, corticate; areolae/squamules plane to convex, usually contiguous, 0.1–1 mm diam., often slightly attenuated at the base. Algae  $\pm$ globose, 7–14  $\mu$ m diam. Prothallus and basal layer not apparent. Perithecia  $\pm$ immersed, 1–3 per areole or squamule; apex rounded or a little flattened, to 0.2 mm diam.; ostiole inconspicuous or in a minute depression. Involucrellum absent. Exciple 30–40  $\mu$ m thick, hyaline at the base and sides, darkening to brown-black at the apex. Centrum 0.18–0.25 mm wide. Periphyses 25–35  $\times$  1.5–2  $\mu$ m. Asci 50–65  $\times$  15–23  $\mu$ m. Ascospores subglobose to globose, 8–13  $\times$  8–11  $\mu$ m. Pycnidia immersed, 70–120  $\mu$ m diam. Conidia bacilliform, 1.5–3  $\times$  c. 0.5  $\mu$ m.

Occurs on limestone and on calcareous lithosol in southern S.A. and parasitic on the *Buellia albula* (Nyl.) Müll.Arg. over limestone, while simultaneously existing as an independent lichen, in the Central-Western Slopes, N.S.W. Reports from W.A. and Vic. (R.B.Filson, *Checklist Austral. Lichens & Allied Fungi* 147, 1996) could not be confirmed. Also in Europe, North Africa, Asia, North America and New Zealand.

S.A.: 11 miles [c. 18 km] NW of Nullarbor HS, Nullarbor Plain, *R.Filson* 9488 (MEL); Koonalda, Nullarbor Plain, *D.McVean* 6659 (CANB); 4.5 km S of Beltana, Flinders Ra., *J.A.Elix* 17987 & *J.H.Elix* (CANB); along Hwy 20, 17 km W of Blanchetown, *J.A.Elix* 9272 (CANB). N.S.W.: Grove Ck, 12 km NE of Canowindra, near Canowindra–Orange road, parasitic on *Buellia albula* and free-living, *P.M.McCarthy* 1850 & *J.A.Elix* (CANB).

In Europe, *V. compacta* is commonly parasitic on other crustose lichens (O.Breuss, *Oesterr. Zeitschr. Pilzk.* 3: 16, 1994). However, this appears to be less common in Australia, and while some thalli in N.S.W. were initially parasitic on adjacent calcicolous crusts, others appeared to be free-living at all stages of their development.

