

Boreal felt lichen appears in many shapes and conditions during its 30-year life cycle. Below are a few examples you may see:

Public participation in finding boreal felt lichen can help researchers develop a greater understanding of its ecology and importance to our boreal forest ecosystems.

Erioderma pedicellatum
(Boreal Felt Lichen)



Boreal felt lichen is separating



Boreal felt lichen has deteriorated



Many lichen types growing with boreal felt lichen on same tree



Boreal felt lichen without fruiting bodies



Sample of a small boreal felt lichen

Photos: Eugene Conway

Boreal felt lichen, or *Erioderma pedicellatum*, was once found throughout the Northern Atlantic regions of Europe and North America. Since its discovery in the early 1900s, the species has been in rapid decline. Today, only approximately 100 lichens exist in Nova Scotia, and it is believed to be extinct throughout the rest of North America and Europe. Boreal felt lichen is considered critically endangered worldwide.

It is believed that aerial pollution (acid rain) and forest disturbances may have an impact on the survival of boreal felt lichen.

The Island of Newfoundland, however, has more than 10,000 known boreal felt lichens and counting. Survey efforts continue but your help in finding more boreal felt lichens and habitat will aid in determining the distribution of this cryptic species on the island.

Think you've found a boreal felt lichen? Tell us! Visit www.nlnature.com

Enter your information on the website to keep a record of your sighting and help determine the distribution of boreal felt lichen in Newfoundland.

Think you may have found something different? Let us know that too!

How to identify and report Boreal Felt Lichen sightings



Identifying balsam fir

Abies balsamea

Balsam fir is the primary substrate of boreal felt lichen. Identifying boreal felt lichen should begin with identifying the host tree, balsam fir.

Balsam fir is a medium-sized (>25 m) tree that is widespread throughout Canada.

Key to identifying balsam fir:



1. Triangular Christmas-tree shape



2. Needles are flat and spread out



3. Bark has distinctive resin blisters



4. Cones point upwards

Where to look:

On the tree trunk, from 50 centimetres to two metres from the ground

Boreal felt lichen also prefers balsam fir branches and middle-aged trees

Identifying boreal felt lichen

Erioderma pedicellatum

Boreal felt lichen is a grey, leaf-like lichen that grows flat on the tree. The leaf-like portions can range in colour from grey to bluish-green depending on the amount of moisture in the air.

The edges of the leaf (thallus) are curled and lighter grey than the centre.



One of the most distinctive aspects is “fruiting bodies” or apothecia that appear as red to brown-colored bumps on the lichen.



Dry phase



Wet phase

Photos: Claudia Hanel

Size of boreal felt lichen:

The size of the thallus or leaf varies, but is generally the size of a toonie or smaller.

