

Deconica baylisiana

the Alpine Pouch

Deconica baylisiana is a reddish-orange pouch fungus that inhabits open herbfields in mountainous areas. After no recorded sightings for 44 years, it was rediscovered on the Rock and Pillar Range in 2013 by an observer who posted a photo on the community science platform, iNaturalist, from which it was identified.

It is Aotearoa New Zealand's only Nationally Critical fungus; since the release of the national assessment in 2022 additional sites have been found.



Distribution

Rock and Pillar, Old Man, and Ida ranges in Otago. Also found on Mt Rakeahua, Rakiura / Stewart Island.



Conservation status

Regional	Threatened: Critical
National	Threatened: Critical



Dispersal

Most pouch fungi like *Deconica baylisiana* are thought to rely on animals to release and spread their spores, which are sealed within a fruitbody. Ground-dwelling birds, such as the extinct moa, may once have done much of this dispersal work in Aotearoa.

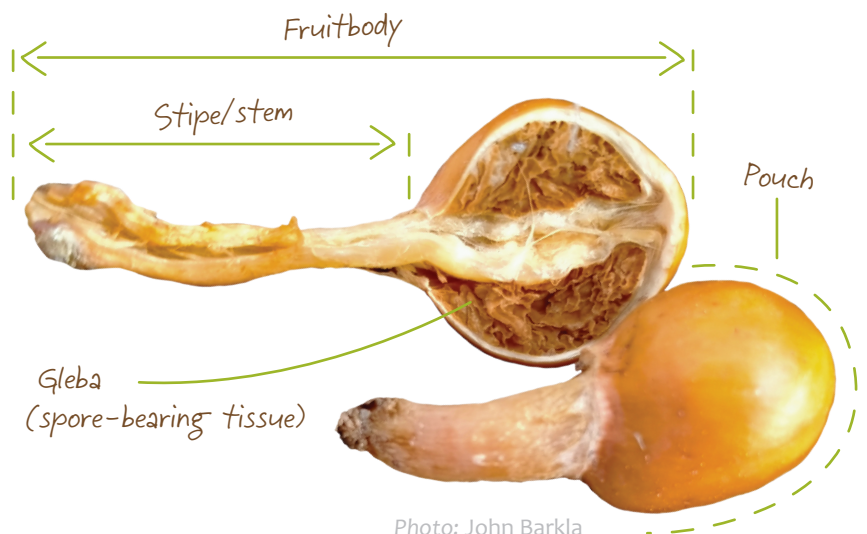


Photo: John Barkla