Clarification of three Umbilicaria species new to California

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In 1998 I reported Umbilicaria lambii Imshaug and U. rigida (Du Rietz) Frey as new to California in the Proceedings of the First Conference on Siskiyou Ecology (Peterson 1998). Unfortunately those proceedings were informally published, leading to a difficult-to-find, and potentially invalid, report of the species. This note is to establish a more tangible report that the two species occur in California. Further, the only published specimen report of Umbilicaria phaea var. coccinea Llano in California was more than 50 years ago (Llano 1950), so two locations for that taxon are also reported here.

Umbilicaria lambii and U. rigida were found on the same ultramafic rock outcrop near Sanger Peak in Del Norte County, California. The site was along a wind (and fog) swept ridge at ca. 1700 m elevation and within 50 km of the Pacific Coast. The original specimens collected by myself with Martin Hutten were identifiable but small, so I collected additional voucher specimens at a later date. U. lambii is rather unusual for the genus in that it has a nearly squamulose growth form. Previously U. rigida was known from Oregon and northward, while U. lambii was known from Washington and northward.

Umbilicaria phaea var. coccinea is unusual for the genus in that it has a deep red color. It is commonly called the “lipstick lichen” because in its habitat, it looks like someone took a tube of red lipstick and dotted the rock. The taxon was found at 2 locations near Interstate Highway 5, Siskiyou County. It is abundant in the area, frequently growing right along side of var. phaea. U. phaea var. coccinea is a rather locally distributd taxon, occurring in the drier, eastern portion of the Klamath region of northern California and southern Oregon, and with several disjunct populations in eastern Oregon and eastern Washington.

Specimens

Umbilicaria lambii: EBP #2485 (OSC) and EBP #2539 (hb. Peterson, hb. McCune, OSC); on ultramafic rock; subalpine rocky outcrops among dense shrubs and sparse trees (Abies sp., Picea breweriana, Pinus monticola, Pseudotsuga menziesii); along trail to Sanger Peak on S side before it crosses ridge; 41°55.2’N, 123°39.2’W; 1700 m elevation; 1 June 1997 (#2485) and 15 August 1997 (#2539).

Umbilicaria phaea var. coccinea: EBP #1527 (hb. Peterson); on rock; chaparral and oak savanna on NW facing slope with rocky ground (Quercus garryana, Ceanothus spp.); 1 km E of Hilt, Jefferson road, NE side of small rock quarry at end of county road; 41°59.8’ N, 122°36.5’W; 900-1100 m elevation; 17 May 1996. EBP #2458 (hb. Peterson); on rock, basalt?; chaparral dominated by Ceanothus, lower slope, S face; along Klamath River upstream from Shasta River – just SW of intersection of HWY 96 and Interstate 5, along an annual creek just after HWY 96 curves right when going south from intersection; 41°50.9’ N, 122°34.4’W; 214 m elevation; 3 May 1997.

Umbilicaria rigida: EBP #2494 (OSC) and EBP #2540 (OSC); on ultramafic rock; subalpine rocky outcrops among dense shrubs and sparse trees (Abies sp., Picea breweriana, Pinus monticola, Pseudotsuga menziesii); along trail to Sanger Peak on S side before it crosses ridge; 41°55.2’ N, 123°39.2’W; 1700 m elevation; 1 June 1997 (#2494) and 15 August 1997 (#2540).

Literature Cited
