

**Introduction:** The white totara scale was found on several Podocarpaceae trees at a planted teaching landscape of the California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt County, in October 2025. It was determined that the scales were introduced with some trees imported from New Zealand about 30 years ago, and the infestation persisted to the present with some evidence of parasitism.

**Distribution:** Native to New Zealand and introduced to the Isles of Scilly in Great Britain (Williams 1985).

**Description:** Scale cover of first instar nymphs oyster-shaped, markedly narrowed towards anterior end, with dark subterminal exuviae and bright white narrow wax secretion; second-instar nymphs similar but bright white wax secretion larger, becoming elongate-ovate and off-white when adult female develops inside its sclerotized cuticle (pupillarium). Adult female of *L. podocarpi* differs from *L. portaeaeureae*, the only other species of this genus in California, by scale cover oyster-shaped to elongate-ovate, presence of three or more pairs of sclerotized pygidial lobes, and smaller gland tubercles in elongate cluster by mouthparts (scale cover elongate and distinctly narrower with sides subparallel, only two pairs of pygidial lobes, and larger gland tubercles in elongate cluster in *L. portaeaeureae*; Ferris 1942).

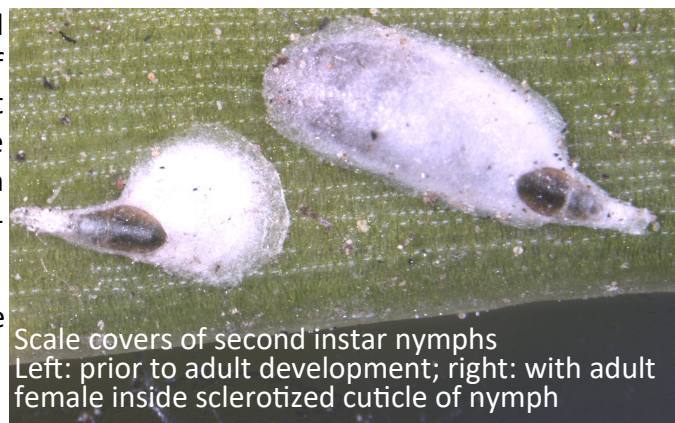
**Biology:** Adult female pupillarial, remaining within the sclerotized body of the second instar nymph (pupillarium). Inducing the formation of leaf margin galls in *Prumnopitys taxifolia* (Henderson & Martin 2006).

**Hosts and economic importance:** Restricted to Podocarpaceae, including species native to New Zealand: *Podocarpus acutifolius* and *P. nivalis* (new records), *P. laetus*, *P. totara*, and *Prumnopitys taxifolia*, and to Chile: *Podocarpus nubigenus* and *P. salignus* (new records) and *Prumnopitys andina* (Williams 1985; Henderson & Martin 2006). Feeding can cause chlorosis, which in heavy infestations can make the trees unsightly, potentially making this a minor nuisance pest of ornamental Podocarpaceae.

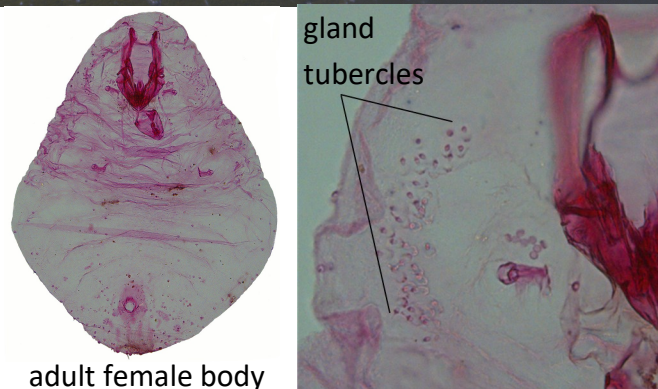
### References:

- Ferris, G.F. 1942. Atlas of the scale insects of North America. Series 4. Stanford University Press Palo Alto, California.
- Henderson, R.C. & Martin, N.A. 2006. Review of the gall-inducing scale insects of New Zealand (Hemiptera: Coccoidea), with a guide to field identification. *New Zealand Entomologist* 29: 59–75.
- Williams, D.J. 1985. Scale insects (Homoptera: Coccoidea) of Tresco, Isles of Scilly. *Entomologist's Gazette* 36: 135–144.

Prepared by Natalia von Ellenrieder (November 2025); Plant Pest Diagnostic Laboratory (<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/PPD/>).



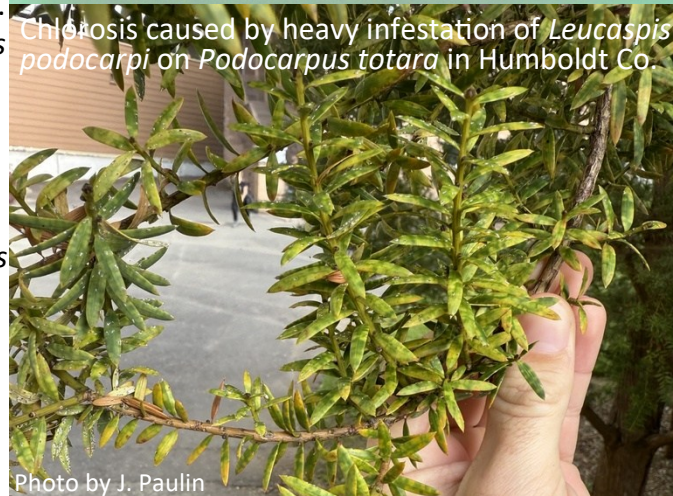
Scale covers of second instar nymphs  
Left: prior to adult development; right: with adult female inside sclerotized cuticle of nymph



adult female body



pygidial lobes



Chlorosis caused by heavy infestation of *Leucaspis podocarpi* on *Podocarpus totara* in Humboldt Co.

Photo by J. Paulin