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# THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

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## NYBG Scientists Name New Appalachian Lichen Species For Country Music Legend Dolly Parton

*Japewiella dollypartoniana* honors singer's "tireless work" for her native region



The new lichen species *Japewiella dollypartoniana* is most commonly found on high-elevation "heath balds" in the southern Appalachians. Photo by Sean McKenzie

Dolly Parton, the much-honored country-music singer and composer of such hit songs as "9 to 5" and "I Will Always Love You," has received another accolade highlighting her connection and contributions to the Appalachian region of America. Two scientists at The New York Botanical Garden have named a new species of lichen that they found recently in the Appalachian Mountains in her honor—*Japewiella dollypartoniana*.

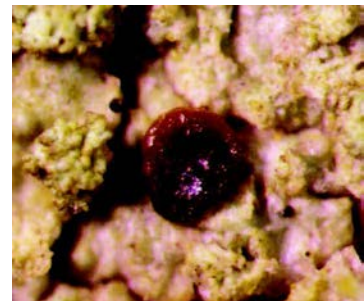
Co-authors Jessica L. Allen and James C. Lendemer, Ph.D., describe the new species in an article in the new issue of *Castanea*, the journal of the Southern Appalachian Botanical Society. Allen is a Ph.D. candidate in the Botanical Garden's Commodore Matthew

Perry Graduate Studies Program. Dr. Lendemer is an Assistant Curator in the Garden's Institute of Systematic Botany.

The Appalachians have proven to be a global hotspot for lichen diversity, with a growing number of new lichen species being discovered throughout eastern North America. Lichens are symbiotic, formed by partnerships between fungi and algae. They are an important part of terrestrial ecosystems, with thousands of species of lichens ranging from the arctic to the tropics.

Although the existence of this new species of lichen has been known for many years, it could not be formally identified and placed within the genus *Japewiella* until the species was found in fruit. That happened when the co-authors collected specimens of the lichen on the summit of Hangover Mountain in the Unicoi Mountains of western North Carolina.

*Japewiella dollypartoniana* is widely distributed in the Appalachian region of the eastern United States, from Maine to Georgia. It is most commonly found in the southern Appalachian Mountains and is abundant on the branches of trees and shrubs at middle to high elevations and on heath balds, the treeless mountain summits that are found primarily in the southern Appalachians.



*Japewiella dollypartoniana*

The co-authors note that Parton, who started from humble beginnings in the Appalachians, has not only become one of the most famous country singers of all time but has also worked to improve conditions in her native region through a variety of business ventures and charities. “Dolly Parton is an inspirational figure who has championed the Appalachians both in America and around the globe,” Allen said. “By naming an Appalachian lichen species found near her Tennessee hometown in her honor we hope to pay tribute to her tireless work as an artist and philanthropist.”

To read their paper about the new lichen species, go to: [Castanea, 2015; Volume 80\(1\): 59-65](#)

### **About *Castanea***

*Castanea* is the journal of the Southern Appalachian Botanical Society and publishes articles relating to all aspects of botany in the entire eastern United States and adjoining areas. The Southern Appalachians—the nonglaciated mountainous areas of Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and southwestern New York—form an evolutionary center for native plant diversity for the northern temperate regions of the world. The society dates to 1935 and serves all persons interested in the botany of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The journal encourages submissions of scientific papers dealing with basic research in any field of plant biology, systematics, floristics, ecology, physiology and biochemistry. For more information about the journal or society, please visit: <http://www.sabs.appstate.edu>.

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**The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants, an educational institution, and a scientific research organization. Founded in 1891, the Botanical Garden is one of the world’s preeminent centers for studying plants at all levels, from the whole organism down to its DNA. Garden scientists conduct fundamental research on plants and fungi globally, as well as on the many relationships between plants and people. A National Historic Landmark, the Garden’s 250-acre site is one of the greatest botanical gardens in the world and the largest in any city in the United States, distinguished by the beauty of its diverse landscape and extensive collections and gardens, as well as by the scope and excellence of its programs in horticulture, education, and science. Learn more: [nybg.org](http://nybg.org)**

**The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458**

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