

OCTOBLEPHARUM

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Octoblepharum Hedw., *Sp. Musc. Frond.* 50 (1801); from the Greek *octo-* (eight) and *blepharon* (an eyelash), in reference to the eight peristome teeth.

Type: *O. albidum* Hedw.

Plants sturdy, forming low dense cushions, greenish white to reddish. Leaves erecto-patent to spreading, with an obovate base and a ligulate limb, very rigid. Lamina wide at the base, usually continuing to the apex as a narrow border; costa with many layers of leucocysts enclosing 1 layer of chlorocysts.

Calyptra cucullate, entire. Setae terminal. Capsules erect, oval to cylindrical. Peristome of 8 teeth, each with a median line, or 16 arranged in pairs and without a median line, very rigid, almost smooth, but lightly striate longitudinally; preperistome a hyaline membrane 33–50% the height of the teeth, composed of irregularly angled cells.

A predominantly tropical genus of c. 12–15 species, one of which is rather common in northern Australia. Eddy (1990) adopted the monogeneric family Octoblepharaceae, although this has fallen out of favour in recent years (Goffinet *et al.*, 2012).

References

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Octoblepharum albidum Hedw., *Sp. Musc. Frond.* 50 (1801)

T: Jamaica, *O. Swartz s.n.*; holo: G *n.v.*

Octoblepharum exiguum Müll.Hal., *Gen. Musc. Fr.* 88 (1900). T: “An der Torres-strasse nimmt auf Goede-Island” Qld, 1881, *W.Powell*; holo: *n.v.*

Illustrations: E.B.Bartram, *op. cit.* pl. 6, fig. 82; P.A.Florschütz, *op. cit.* 111, fig. 39; A.Eddy, *op. cit.* 32, fig. 186; J.Enroth, *op. cit.* 115, fig. 29.

Plants small to medium-sized, fragile, whitish green, somewhat iridescent when dry. Leaves spreading broadly or recurved, 4–7 mm long; limb c. 0.4 mm wide; base obovate or obcuneate, c. 1.25 mm long and 0.8 mm wide. Laminar cells rectangular; inner cells 40–50 × 30 µm, elongate, narrower near the margins, 80–90 × 18–22 µm at base, very long and narrow distally, c. 4–5 µm wide; margin entire or faintly denticulate near the apex, ending in a long triangular cell; costa broad and thick, c. half the width of the base and most of limb width; leucocysts in 3–7 layers at the base, 6–11 layers in mid-leaf, 2–4 apically, quadrangular, rectangular or hexagonal.

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http://www.anbg.gov.au/abrs/Mosses_Online/Calymperaceae_Octoblepharum.pdf (2012)

Setae 2–3 mm tall. Capsules ovoid, c. 1.5 mm long; operculum rostrate. Peristome teeth 8, well spaced, golden.

This pantropical moss is rather common in northern Australia (W.A., N.T. and Qld), where it forms compact cushions on tree trunks, rocks and soil.

W.A.: Winnama Gorge, Mabel Downs, SE Kimberley, *E.A.Chesterfield 199* & *S.J.Forbes* (MEL). N.T.: Arnhem Land, *I.G.Stone 16239* (MELU); Kakadu Natl Park, *L.Adams 254* (CANB); 16 miles [26 km] N on Oenpelli road from Darwin–Jabiru road, *G.J.Anderson 1372* & *D.E.Symon* (AD). Qld: Campbells Ck, *H.Flecker s.n.* (CANB).