THELIDIUM

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Thelidium A.Massal., Framm. Lichenogr. 12 (1855); from the Greek thele (a teat or nipple) and the suffix -idium (indicating diminutive); in reference to the appearance of the perithecia of many species.

Type: T. amylaceum (Trevis.) A.Massal.

Thallus crustose, immersed in the substratum to superficial, continuous to areolate, usually ecorticate, with or without a visible prothallus. Perithecia immersed to superficial, with or without a brown to black involucrellum. Exciple hyaline to brown-black. Asci 8-spored, clavate to cylindroclavate. Ascospores colourless, thin-walled, with 1–3 (~5) transverse septa, occasionally with 1–3 longitudinal or oblique septa. Conidiomata not seen.

A mainly cool-temperate genus of c. 100 species, Thelidium is most diverse in the Northern Hemisphere. Three species are known from south-eastern Australia.

Thelidium is characterised by a crustose thallus, black perithecia and transversely septate to submuriform colourless ascospores. However, it remains poorly differentiated from Polyblastia (q.v.) in which the ascospores are submuriform to fully muriform and range from colourless to dark brown.