

## STAUROTHELE

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*Staurothele* Norman, *Nytt. Mag. Naturvidensk.* 7: 240 (1853), *nom. cons.*; from the Greek *stauros* (a cross or upright stake) and *thele* (a teat or nipple), in reference to the cruciate ostiole of the type species.

Type: *S. clopima* (Wahlenb.) Th.Fr.

Thallus crustose, rarely subsquamulose, immersed in the substratum or superficial, continuous to areolate, corticate or ecorticate, with or without a visible prothallus. Perithecia immersed to superficial, with or without a brown to black involucrellum, containing minute, globose-cuboid to bacilliform cells of the thalline algae. Asci 1 or 2 (–8)-spored, ellipsoidal, clavate or cylindroclavate. Ascospores muriform, colourless to dark brown. Conidiomata pycnidia, immersed. Conidia simple, bacilliform, immersed.

This mainly saxicolous genus of c. 40 species is most diverse in semi-arid, cool-temperate and boreal regions. However, unlike most other genera of Verrucariaceae, it is sometimes prominent in subtropical and tropical lichen communities, especially in the Palaetropics. Two species are known from eastern Australia.

*Staurothele* is readily distinguished from other crustose genera of Verrucariaceae by the presence of minute algae in the perithecial hymenium, an attribute that it shares with the squamulose to squamose genus *Endocarpon*.

T.D.V.Swincow, Pyrenocarpous lichen: 4. Guide to the British species of *Staurothele*, *Lichenologist* 2: 152–166 (1963); O.W.Purvis & P.W.James, *Lich. Fl. Great Britain & Ireland* 572–575 (1992); P.M.McCarthy, Notes on Australian Verrucariaceae (lichenised Ascomycotina). 5. *Staurothele pallidopora* sp. nov. from south-eastern Queensland, *Muelleria* 8: 275–277 (1995).