

# Species: *Titanoderma bermudense*

## Family: Lithophylloideae

**Morphology:** Grows as a small encrusting plant. Growing edge is encrusting onto the benthos or just slightly raised, often with a white margin.

**Surface Texture:** This species grows as a single cell layer that grows with cells arranged in a fan shaped pattern. Distinctive swirls are formed from multiple overlapping layers of cells.

**Conceptacle morphology:** Low hemispherical mounds, 250-450  $\mu\text{m}$  diameter, single pore.

**Cell structure:** Single layer with relatively large cells.

**Tissue thickness:** Multiple layers of overgrowth stack to 300  $\mu\text{m}$ .

**Abundance and Ecology:** very rare, found at 1 meter depth in a back reef seagrass bed, growing on the dead skelton below the growing tips of *Porites porites*.

**Distribution:** Observed in Belize and Curacao but probably distributed throughout the Caribbean.

**Similar Species:** Surface texture resembles both *Lithoperella atlantica* and *Titanoderma prototypum*. The cell walls and conceptacles are smaller than in *L. atlantica*. The swirls of *T. bermudense* are more frequent and pronounced than in *T. prototypum*. *T. bermudense* tends to grow as a larger plant than *T. prototypum* (1 cm diameter).

**Photographs:** A. A live plant approximately 3 cm across. B. Close up of the overlapping growth, with some conceptacles present. C. A cross section of the algal thallus (SEM).

**Collection sample numbers:** 52, 76, 97, 101.

