

## **Fissidens macrosporus (Fissidentaceae: Bryophyta) — a little known species of the Western Ghats rediscovered after more than 90 years**

Authors: Manjula, K. M., Manju, C. N., and Rajesh, K. P.

Source: *Lindbergia*, 38(1) : 1-3

Published By: Dutch Bryological and Lichenological Society and Nordic Bryological Society

URL: <https://doi.org/10.25227/linbg.01059>

---

BioOne Complete ([complete.BioOne.org](https://complete.BioOne.org)) is a full-text database of 200 subscribed and open-access titles in the biological, ecological, and environmental sciences published by nonprofit societies, associations, museums, institutions, and presses.

Your use of this PDF, the BioOne Complete website, and all posted and associated content indicates your acceptance of BioOne's Terms of Use, available at [www.bioone.org/terms-of-use](https://www.bioone.org/terms-of-use).

Usage of BioOne Complete content is strictly limited to personal, educational, and non - commercial use. Commercial inquiries or rights and permissions requests should be directed to the individual publisher as copyright holder.

---

BioOne sees sustainable scholarly publishing as an inherently collaborative enterprise connecting authors, nonprofit publishers, academic institutions, research libraries, and research funders in the common goal of maximizing access to critical research.

# *Fissidens macrosporus* (Fissidentaceae: Bryophyta) – a little known species of the Western Ghats rediscovered after more than 90 years

K. M. Manjula, C. N. Manju and K. P. Rajesh

K. M. Manjula ([manjucali@gmail.com](mailto:manjucali@gmail.com)), C. N. Manju and K. P. Rajesh, Dept of Botany, The Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College, affiliated to Univ. of Calicut, Kozhikode-14, Kerala, India.

*Fissidens macrosporus* Dixon, a poorly known species from the Western Ghats of India, was recollected after more than 90 years. It belongs to subgenus *Aloma*.

The genus *Fissidens* includes about 450 species (Crosby et al. 2000) distributed mainly in the humid tropics, and to a lesser extent in temperate regions of the world. Members of the genus are easily distinguished from all other mosses by their complanate shoots with conduplicate, distichously arranged leaves. In India the genus is represented by about 78 species (Gangulee 1969, Manju et al. 2008a, Daniels 2010, Dandotiya et al. 2011, Verma et al. 2011, Frahm et al. 2013, Schwartz 2014) with several recent additions such as *F. longtonianus* (Iwatsuki and Suzuki 2005) and *F. kammadensis* (Manju et al. 2008b). Since this genus shows many diverse characters some of the early workers attempted to subdivide it. Among these Brotherus (1909), based on the classification by Müller (1901), was the most widely accepted one. New taxonomically useful characters have been introduced in the past few years and which improved the classifications also. Pursell and Bruggeman (2004) divided the genus into four subgenera viz. *Pachyfissidens*, *Octodiceras*, *Fissidens* and *Aloma*. Subgenus *Pachyfissidens* and subgenus *Fissidens* are again divided into three and two sections respectively.

During the revisionary studies of the Fissidentaceae of the Western Ghats of India, we collected a *Fissidens* in the evergreen forests of the Wayanad District in Kerala state which appeared to be *F. macrosporus* Dixon. This remarkable species was described by Dixon (1921) with latin description only. After him, this species has not been collected nor described by any authors from Western Ghats. Frahm et al. (2013) listed this species in the checklist of mosses of Karnataka based on the original description. Hence, the present collection from the Western Ghats is a rediscovery after more than 90 years.

*Fissidens macrosporus* differs from other *Fissidens* species by its immersed sporophytes, and anomalous peristomes. *Fissidens macrosporus* is one of quite a few species from southern India that Crosby et al. (2000) included as insufficiently known. The present finding is a good opportunity to draw this remarkable, poorly known, species from oblivion and to provide it with a new description, diagnosis and figures. This epiphytic species is characterized by short, erect sporophyte, peristome ending as a single filament above, irregularly perforated below, unipapillose laminal cells, elimbate leaves, and large spores. It belongs to the subgenus *Aloma*.

## *Fissidens macrosporus* Dixon (1921, p.179)

**Type:** Dixon, Gairsoppa falls, Kanara district (6463), Karnataka, India, on twigs of trees in very wet evergreen [forest] (BM). Epiphytic. Plants light greenish to dark greenish, stem brownish green in cross-section with central strand of about 6 cells, 2 or 3 tiers of thin walled large (15.0–22.5  $\mu\text{m}$ ) inner and 1–3 tiers of small thick walled (10–15  $\mu\text{m}$ ) outer cortical cells; rhizoids brown and smooth; axillary nodules absent; perichaetial plants branched or unbranched, 4–7 (without branches)  $\times$  1.5–2.0 (including leaves) mm with 11–17 pairs of slightly overlapping closely arranged leaves; mid leaves of vegetative stems oblong with apiculate apex, margin crenulate, elimbate, 1.0–1.5  $\times$  0.42–0.50 mm, leaf apices curl when dry; vaginant lamina slightly open to closed, reaching more than half the length of leaf, dorsal lamina tapering towards the insertion, not decurrent; costa prominent,

dark yellowish, ending 2 or 3 cells below the leaf apex, in cross-section of the bryoides type; cross section of leaf shows 3 central cells surrounded by small cells at costa region; laminal cells irregularly hexagonal, unipapillose, cells of apical lamina  $12.5\text{--}17.5 \times 5.0 \mu\text{m}$ , middle cells of apical lamina  $12.5\text{--}17.5 \times 5.0\text{--}7.5 \mu\text{m}$ , basal cells of dorsal

lamina  $12.5\text{--}25.0 \times 7.5 \mu\text{m}$ , mid dorsal laminal cells plane to slightly convex, gemmae not observed.

Fertile parts: perigonia not observed; perichaetia terminal on main stems and branches, perichaetial leaf  $1.62\text{--}1.74 \times 0.60\text{--}0.66 \text{ mm}$ , base broad with  $0.52\text{--}0.55 \text{ mm}$ . Sporophyte  $1.4\text{--}1.5 \text{ mm}$  long, dark brown, seta very

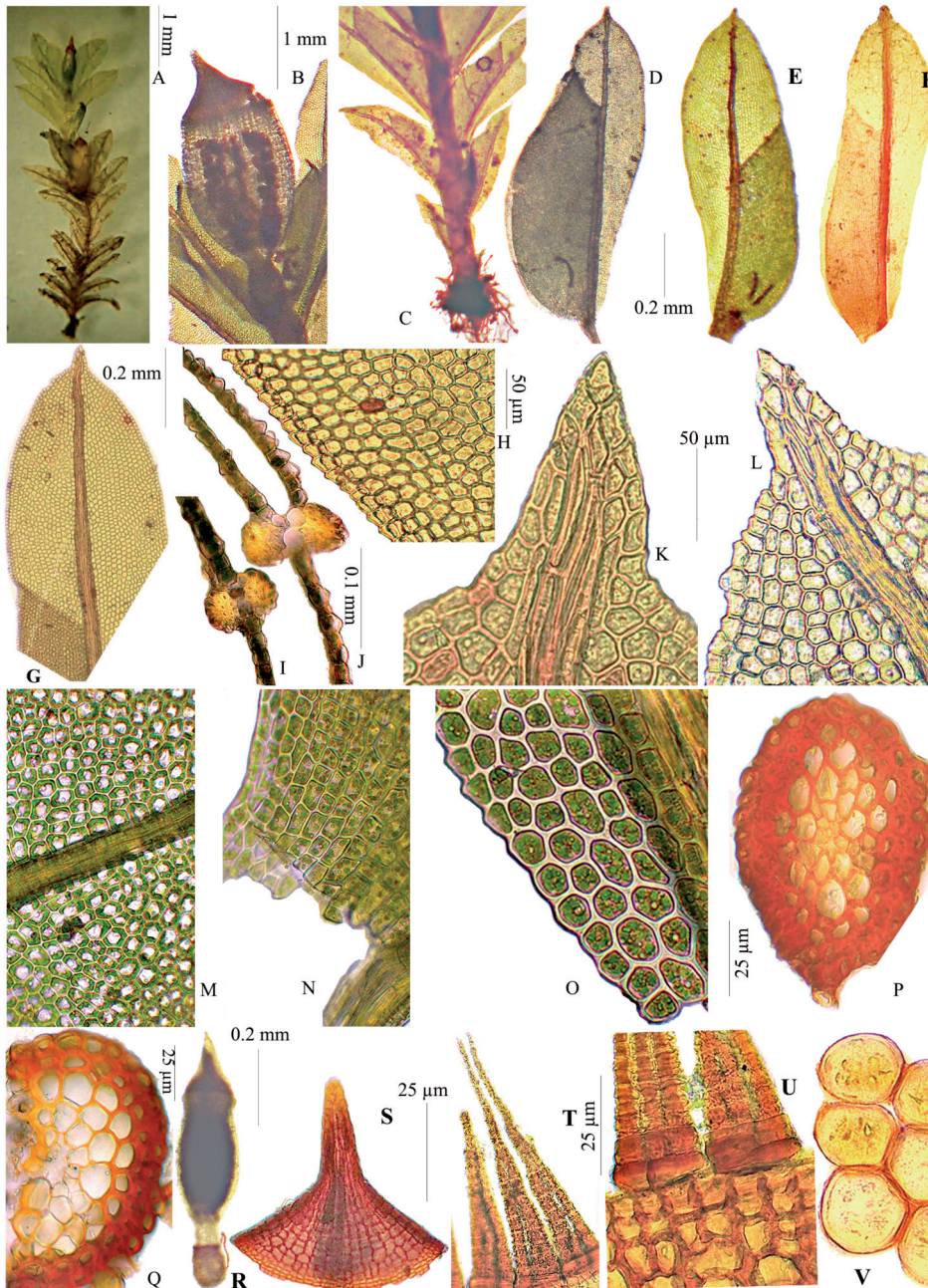


Fig. 1. *Fissidens macrosporus*, A. Perichaetial plant with perichaetial branch (innovation), B. Immersed sporophyte, C. basal part of plant, D-E. Perichaetial leaves, F. Vegetative leaf, G. Apical part of leaf, H. Middle marginal cells, I. Cross section of upper part of leaf, J. Cross section of lower half of leaf showing the bryoides type of vaginant lamina, K-L. Leaf apices, M. Mid laminal cells, N. Basal part of vaginant lamina, O. Basal part of dorsal lamina, P. C.S. of stem, Q. enlarged view of c.s. of stem, R. sporophyte, S. Operculum, T. Peristome teeth, U. Capsule mouth and basal part of peristome teeth, V. spores (B&C, D-F, I&J, K&O, S&T, U&V same magnification)

short, 0.09–0.17 mm long, capsule/theca 0.8–1.1 mm long with 28–30 files of quadrate or rectangular exothelial cells with thickened vertical walls; peristome teeth 16, brownish-orange, up to 61–78  $\mu\text{m}$  long, ending as a single filament above, irregularly perforated below; spores large, subglobose to ellipsoid 22.5–35.0  $\mu\text{m}$  in longest diameter.

### Diagnostic characters

*Fissidens macrosporus* is characterized by short, almost lacking setae, immersed to emergent capsules, 28–30 files of exothelial cells around the capsule, peristome ending as a single filament above, irregularly perforated below (anomalous) and large spores. Gametophyte with bryoides type costa, elimbate, oblong leaves, axillary nodules lacking, and unipapillose laminal cells.

Dixon placed this species in section *Crispidium* which is characterized by large axillary nodules and zippelianus type peristomes (Pursell and Bruggeman-Nannenga 2004). The present species, however, lacks axillary nodules and has a different peristome. Since it has bryoides type costae (characteristic of subgenus *Aloma*, *Fissidens* and *Octodiceras*), 28–30 files of exothelial cells around the capsule (typical of subgenus *Aloma*, but subgenus *Fissidens* and *Octodiceras* typically have 40 or more), unipapillose laminal cells (subgenus *Fissidens* and *Octodiceras* have smooth laminal cells, whereas cells of subgenus *Aloma* vary from unipapillose to pluripapillose to smooth) and elimbate leaves (subgenus *Fissidens* has limbate leaves, whereas limbidia in subgenus *Aloma* vary from lacking to present on all laminae). So it fits best in subgenus *Aloma*. Typically subgenus *Aloma* species have scarious type peristomes, but anomalous ones are characteristic of several, particularly corticolous species in this subgenus.

### Distribution and ecology

Epiphytic on branches and twigs along with *Syrrhopodon parasiticus* (Brid.) Besch., widely distributed in the evergreen forests of Kuruva dweep, an uninhabited small delta Islet (3.8 km<sup>2</sup>) on the middle of the tributaries of east flowing river, Kabani of Wayanad district in Kerala state and in Karnataka state and evergreen forests of Kozhikode district.

### Specimens examined

India, Kerala, Wayanad District, Kuruva dweep (900 m), 25.09.2013, Manjula, K.M. 861a, 862a, 865a;

Kozhikode district, Malabar WLS, Kakkayam (700 m), 14.11.2014, Manjula K.M. 3902 (CALI, ZGC, MH, MBG).

*Acknowledgements* – We are thankful to the Dept of Science and Technology (DST-SERB), New Delhi for the financial support. We acknowledge Dr. Bruggeman-Nannenga for identifying the species and for commenting the manuscript. We are also thankful to the authorities of the Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College (ZGC), Kozhikode for providing support and facilities. Thanks are also due to the officials of the Kerala Forest Dept, for the permission and support extended during the field studies.

### References

- Brotherus, V. S. 1909–1910. Neue Laubmoosgattungen. – Öfvers. Forh. Finska Vetensk. Soc. 52: 1–12.
- Crosby, M. R., Magill, R. E., Allen, B. et al. 2000. A checklist of the mosses. – Miss. Bot. Gard.
- Dandotiya, D. H., Govindaparyi, S. S. and Uniyal, P. L. 2011. Checklist of the bryophytes of India. – Arch. Bryol. 88: 1–126.
- Daniels, A. E. D. 2010. Checklist of the bryophytes of Tamil Nadu, India. – Arch. Bryol. 65: 1–118.
- Dixon, H. N. 1921. On a collection of mosses from the Kanara District. – J. Indian Bot. 2: 174–188.
- Frahm, J. P., Schwarz, U. and Manju, C. N. 2013. A checklist of mosses of Karnataka, India. – Arch. Bryol. 158: 1–15.
- Gangulee, H. C. 1969. Mosses of eastern India and adjacent regions – a monograph. Vol. I. – Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Calcutta.
- Iwatsuki, Z. and Suzuki, T. 2005. Notes on *Fissidens pulchellus*, *F. subpulchellus* and *F. longtonianus* sp. nov. (Bryopsida: Fissidentaceae) in India. – J. Bryol. 27: 241–245.
- Manju, C. N., Rajesh, K. P. and Madhusoodanan, P. V. 2008. Checklist of the bryophytes of Kerala, India. – Trop. Bryol. Res. Rep. 7: 1–24.
- Manju, C. N., Rajesh, K. P. and Madhusoodanan, P. V. 2008. *Fissidens kammadensis* (Fissidentaceae: Bryopsida), a new species of moss from a sacred grove in peninsular India. – Acta Bot. Hung. 50: 159–162.
- Müller, K. 1901. Scapaniae Indiae Orientalis Curante Cl. Gollan lectae. – Beih. Bot. Zbl. 11: 542.
- Pursell, R. A. and Bruggeman-Nannenga, M. A. 2004. A revision of the infrageneric taxa of *Fissidens*. – Bryologist 107: 1–20.
- Schwartz, U. 2014. *Fissidens brevinervis* Broth. – new to the Indian moss flora. – Frahmia 3: 1–6.
- Verma, P. K. Alam, A. and Srivastava, S. C. 2011. Status of mosses in Nilgiri Hills (Western Ghats), India. – Arch. Bryol. 102: 1–13.