



Taxon Profiles

Mary E. Barkworth, 2025-09-05


A Basic Taxon profile

Periplaneta americana (Linnaeus, 1758) 


Family: Blattidae
American cockroach



Gary Alpert



Sputniktilt



Preiselbeere


Wikipedia Resources

Periplaneta americana, the American cockroach, is the largest species of common cockroach and is often considered a pest. Despite its name, *Periplaneta americana*, like other species of the genus, are native to Africa and the Middle East. They are thought to have been introduced to the Americas as early as 1625 as a result of commercial shipping, including the Atlantic slave trade. They are now common in tropical climates and are virtually cosmopolitan in distribution as a result of global commerce.

Characteristics: *Periplaneta americana* is a large cockroach, growing to about 4 cm long and about 7 mm tall. They are reddish brown and have a yellowish margin on the pronotum, the body region behind the head. Immature cockroaches resemble adults except they are wingless.

In *Periplaneta americana*, the body is flattened and broadly oval, with a shield-like **pronotum** covering its head. They also have chewing mouth parts, long, segmented antennae, and leathery fore wings with delicate hind wings. The third section of the cockroach is the abdomen.

Periplaneta americana can run quickly, often hiding when a threat is perceived, and squeezing into small cracks and




[Open Interactive Map](#)









- Taxon **profiles** present information about a taxon
 - The taxon can be at any rank
- They can contain very little or a lot of information.


- All taxon profiles display images and an interactive map based on records in the site's database.
- The sources of other information should be credited

Taxon Profiles – a well-developed profile

***Bacopa monnieri* (L.) Wettst.** 

Family: Plantaginaceae
Water Hyssop, [more...](#)
[*Bramia monnieri* (L.) Drake, [more](#)]






Helen Pickering

Fischer, E. (2006) *Bacopa* in *Flora of Somalia* 3: 276


Plants perennial herbs; **stems** 10-40 cm long, creeping to prostrate, glabrous, 4-angled, richly branched. **Leaves** sessile; **blades** ovate to spatulate, 6-20 mm long, 1-5 mm wide, with entire margins and obtuse to subacuminate tips. **Inflorescences** racemose, leafy, with widely spaced flowers; **pedicels** 6-15 mm long. **Calyces** 5-6 mm long, deeply divided into 3 lobes, lobes ovate, about 2.5 mm wide; **corollas** white to blue-violet, subrotate; **tubes** about 5 mm long; limb 2-lipped, upper lips 2-lobed, 3-5 mm long, lower lips 3-lobed, 3-5 mm long; **stamens** of two lengths, filaments of lower (longer) stamens 1.5-2 mm long, those of the upper stamens 0.8-1 mm long; **anthers** with 2 equal thecae, 0.5-0.7 mm long. **Capsules** about 5 mm long and 3 mm wide.

Bacopa monnieri grows in wet marshy places and rock pools at 500-1400 m. It is known from region N1 of the *Flora of Somalia* but is pantropical in its distribution.


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[Open Interactive Map](#)

- Profiles can present lots of information
- What information is presented can vary

- Sources should always be credited
- Building profiles just takes time and effort

Parts of a Taxon Profile

- Basic parts to add
 - Field images – always more attractive than specimen images
 - Local/Common names
 - Morphological description – in English
- Useful additions
 - Descriptions, possibly simplified, in languages other than English (I need to ask about use of other scripts such as Arabic, Russian, and Hindi)
 - Environmental and ecological characteristics
 - Use by humans
- Automatically added from the site's database:
 - Link to interactive maps
 - Specimen images
 - Synonyms

Building Taxon Profile pages

- Instructions exist for
 - Adding field images
 - Adding common/local names
- Instructions are in development for
 - Adding descriptions