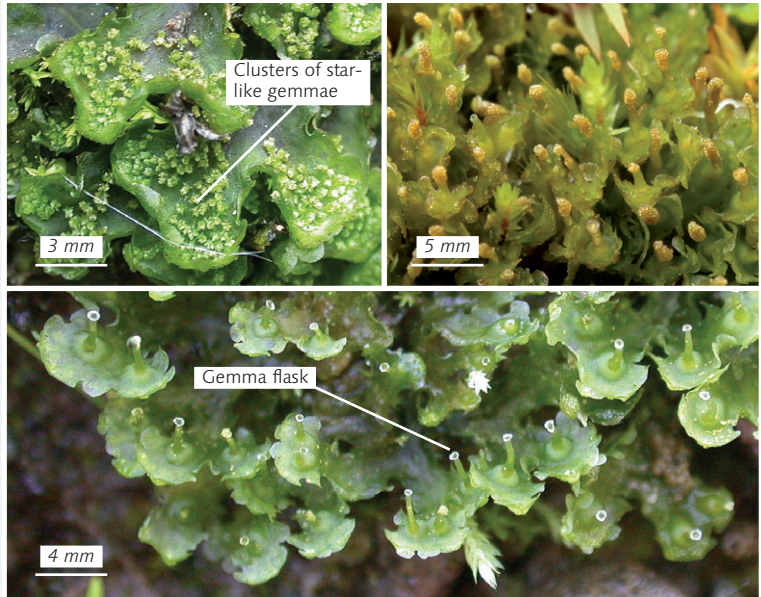
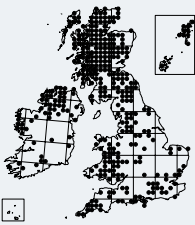


Blasia pusilla

Common Kettlewort

Key 6



Identification A medium-sized thallose liverwort forming rosettes or mats, with branches up to 5 mm wide. The thalli are somewhat translucent, without reticulations or air pores on the surface. The lobed margins of the thallus have small, rounded teeth. From above, dark green or almost black dots (internal colonies of blue-green algae) are visible, as well as a faint, pale midrib. The plants produce two types of gemmae: loose clusters of star-shaped gemmae on the thallus surface, and spherical gemmae borne in beaked, flask-like receptacles. Capsules are quite common, and arise from under a flap of tissue near the tip of the thallus.

Similar species *B. pusilla* is not likely to be confused with many large thallose liverworts because it lacks air pores and reticulations, but it does look similar to species such as *Aneura pinguis* (p. 241), *Pellia* (pp. 235–237) and *Moerckia* (p. 239) species. These lack both the almost black dots and characteristic gemmae of *Blasia*. The hornworts *Anthoceros* (p. 272) and *Phaeoceros* (p. 273) are more likely to be confused, as these also have colonies of blue-green algae in quite similar, rosette-like thalli. However, fertile hornworts are unmistakable in their horn-like capsules, and when non-fertile they lack the distinctive gemmae of *B. pusilla*.

Habitat *B. pusilla* is a relatively common, weedy liverwort growing on damp soil and gravel along ditches, river banks, old quarries, roadside banks and forestry tracks and sometimes in arable fields, usually on non-calcareous substrates where there is constant moisture.