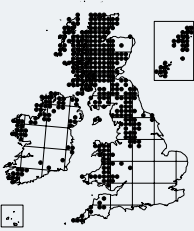


Blindia acuta

Sharp-leaved Blindia

Key 150



Identification At first glance, *B. acuta* looks like a moss in the Dicranales (pp. 340–419). It is a small (shoots usually about 2 cm tall), shiny, dark green or yellowish-green moss with a reddish tinge. The rather rigid leaves are 2–3 mm long, slender and tapering, and often somewhat curved, with conspicuous, orange cells in the basal corners of the leaves. These are visible (with practice) with a $\times 20$ hand lens. The capsules are variable, but are usually more or less egg-shaped and borne on a seta long enough to raise them clear of the leaves (although subsequent branching of the shoots sometimes hides them).

Similar species The narrow (but not sharply pointed) leaves, along with the orange cells in the basal corners of the leaves, distinguish this species from other small, narrow-leaved mosses such as *Dicranella* species (pp. 366–371). The rather glossy texture distinguishes it from narrow-leaved *Didymodon* species (pp. 456–467), for example *D. spadicus* (p. 458), which do not have leaves curved in one direction. The very rare, montane species *Blindia caespiticia* (Smith, p. 478) is smaller, has short setae so its capsules are partly hidden by the leaves that surround them, and is confined to base-rich rock at high altitudes, usually growing in crevices of vertical rock faces.

Habitat *B. acuta* grows on rock or gravelly detritus in the uplands, usually in running water in or beside streams and flushes, or on rocks over which water frequently seeps, for example on cliffs and crags.