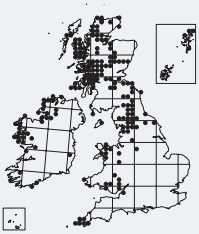
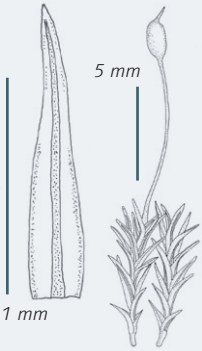
Hymenostylium recurvirostrum

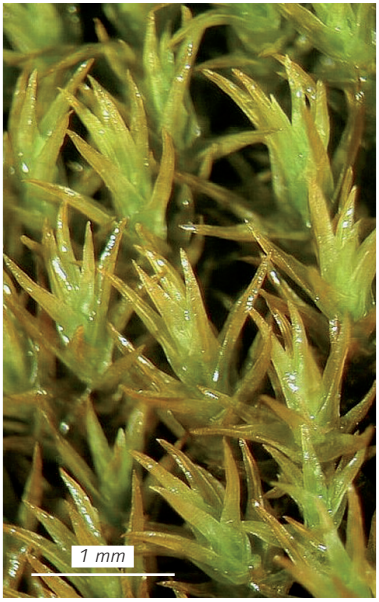
Gymnostomum recurvirostrum

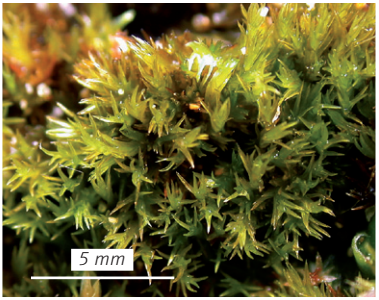
Hook-beak Tufa-moss

Key 238









Identification

This moss forms dense, green tufts or cushions from 1 to several centimetres tall. The narrow, acute-tipped leaves are 1–1.5 mm long, spreading when moist, and appressed and wavy when dry. Egg-shaped capsules occasionally form in autumn. They are held erect on a seta 4.5–9 mm long, and have a lid that has a long, oblique beak. There is no peristome.

Similar species

H. insigne (*H. recurvirostrum* var. *insigne*) (Smith, p. 303) forms dark green or brownish patches 4–12 cm tall, and has leaves 1.5–2.5 mm long (i.e. longer than those of *H. recurvirostrum*). These are loosely incurved when dry (not so in *H. recurvirostrum*), spread more widely away from the stem when moist, have an expanded base that almost sheathes the stem, and the nerve is wider at the leaf base than in *H. recurvirostrum*. Also, the capsules of *H. insigne* are narrowly elliptical, not egg-shaped as in *H. recurvirostrum*. *H. insigne* is rare on calcareous rock ledges on mountains, and in humid ravines on lower ground. *Gymnostomum aeruginosum* (p. 451) is a darker moss than *H. recurvirostrum*, and has less narrowly tapering leaves with a more rounded tip. *Amphidium mougeotii* (p. 641) has longer, narrower leaves, and *Anoectangium aestivum* (p. 452) forms light green tufts and has longer, more pointed leaves. *Eucladium verticillatum* (p. 420) also forms green cushions on wet, base-rich rock, but its leaves may grow up to 3 mm long, and have several teeth along the border near the base.

Habitat

H. recurvirostrum may be locally abundant as tufa-encrusted turfs in upland limestone flushes. It also grows in crevices on damp, base-rich rocks and boulders, and occasionally on the mortar of old walls.

Photos Michael Lüth (left) & David Holyoak (right) Drawings Jonathan Graham Text Mark Lawley