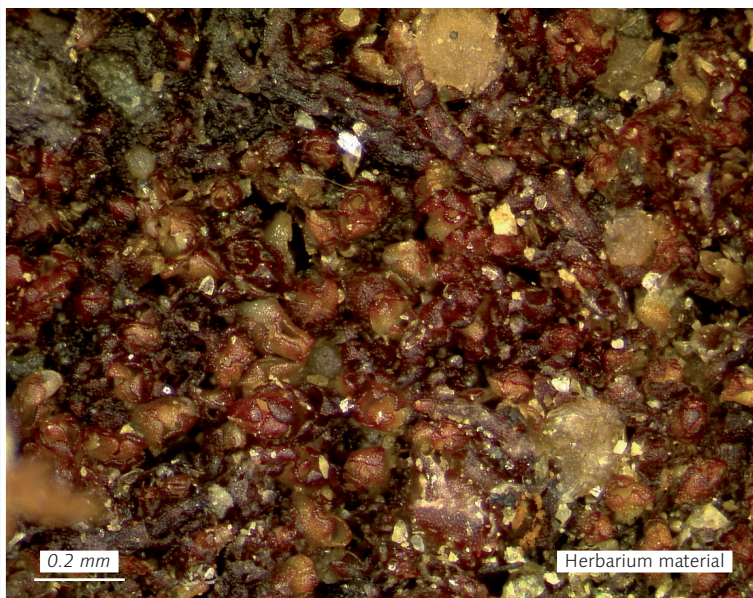
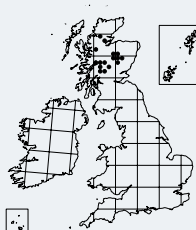


Nardia breidleri

Book Flapwort



Identification A tiny plant, prostrate or erect, forming thin, often rather eroded mats, but often creeping through or over other liverworts. Usually dark-coloured, ranging from purple-brown through to almost black. The shoots are up to 0.5 mm wide and 1 cm long, but usually shorter than this, with erect leaves, whose leaf tips point upwards from the prostrate stem. The leaves are less than 0.5 mm wide and long, somewhat irregular in shape and are shallowly, but distinctly bilobed. Underleaves are present, but hard to see with a hand lens. Dioicous, but fertile plants are normally present; indeed, the relatively stout, erect inflorescence is often the first thing to be noticed in a mat of other species.

Similar species Distinguished from other *Nardia* species (pp. 151–153) by its small size and the more definitely bilobed leaves. Its restricted habitat is more likely to lead to confusion with species of *Marsupella* (pp. 155–161) or possibly small forms of *Lophozia sudetica* (p. 119). If the underleaves are visible, they will immediately distinguish *N. breidleri* from these other liverworts, as will its inflorescence, which is usually present and has a swelling at an angle to the main axis of the stem.

Habitat A plant of shallow, stony soils where snow lies late in the year, or gravelly terraces on exposed ridges high in the mountains, and usually found in a crust of other liverwort species, especially *Marsupella brevissima*.