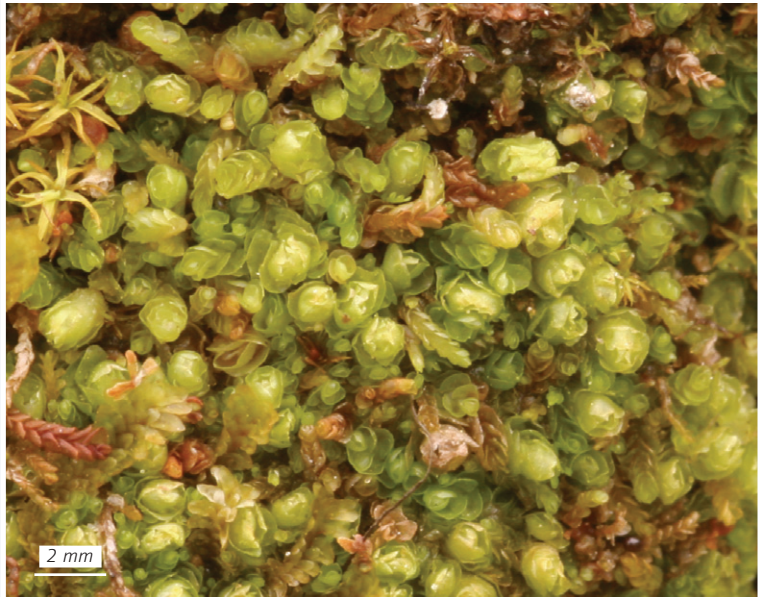
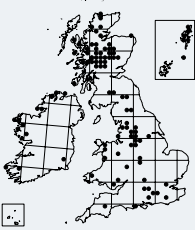


Nardia geoscyphus

Earth-cup Flapwort



Identification Plants are usually prostrate, with erect shoot tips and forming rather dense, thin, non-aromatic mats, normally pale green to brownish, but occasionally more strongly coloured red or purple. Shoots are 0.5–1.5 mm wide and up to 2 cm long, rarely longer, with the leaves often appressed and overlapping, with the back margin hardly extending below the stem. The leaves are rounded to kidney-shaped, usually much wider than long (up to 1.2 mm wide and 0.8 mm long), and almost horizontally inserted on the stem, with the tip having a shallow, rounded notch or occasionally shallowly bilobed. Underleaves are small and sometimes hard to see in the rhizoids. *N. geoscyphus* is usually fertile, with male organs in bracts immediately below the female inflorescence. The perianth has a thickened sheath that often forms a swelling at an angle to the main axis of the stem.

Similar species Usually easily distinguished from *N. scalaris* (p. 152) by the shallowly notched leaves, but it may sometimes be necessary to check the inflorescence, with male and female organs on the same shoot in *N. geoscyphus*. The notched leaves and the presence of underleaves should distinguish *N. geoscyphus* from *Jungermannia* species (pp. 143–150). *N. insecta* (Paton, p. 296) is a very rare plant which differs from *N. geoscyphus* in the more deeply bilobed leaves.

Habitat This is rather an unpredictable species, and is seldom present in abundance. It is most frequent on mildly base-rich soil banks in the uplands (for example on calcareous cliffs), but sometimes grows on damp, gravelly soil in disused quarries.