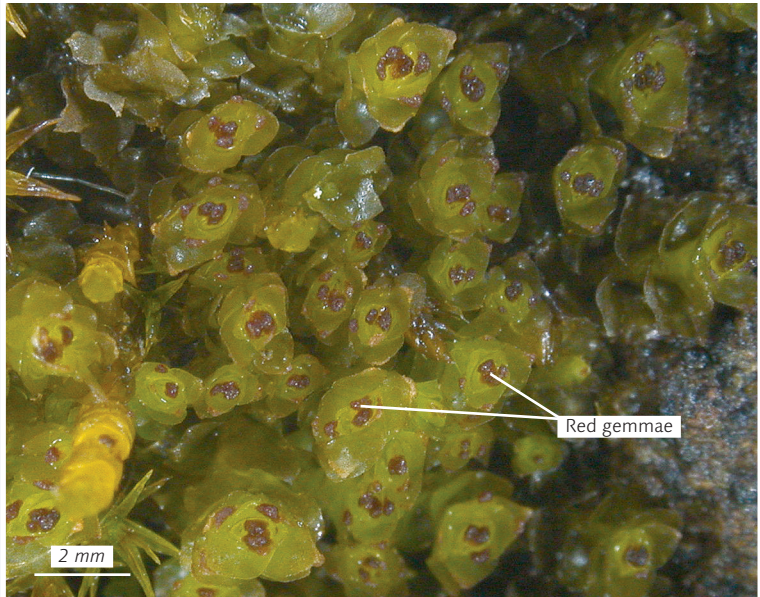
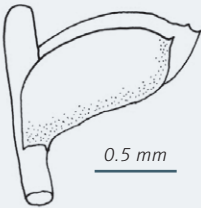
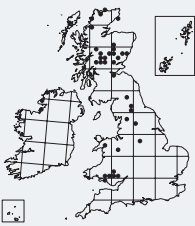


# *Scapania cuspiduligera*

Untidy Earwort



**Identification** This tiny (shoots up to 1–2 mm wide), lime-loving liverwort has brown or red gemmae. Its leaves are 0.5 to about 1.5 mm long, less keeled than those of most *Scapania* species, and the front and back lobes (which are of roughly equal sizes) are not pressed together. Plants on base-rich mountain crags tend to be pale green with dark brown gemmae; those on limestone spoil in the mountains of south Wales are greener and have bright red gemmae.

**Similar species** Two related species with dark gemmae are similar in size: *S. calcicola* (Paton, p. 350) and *S. gymnostomophila* (Paton, p. 349) grow in similar upland sites to *S. cuspiduligera*, but have smaller front lobes than the back lobes. The leaf lobes of *S. gymnostomophila* are longer and narrower, and it consistently has brown gemmae. The red gemmae make *S. cuspiduligera* look similar to *Lophozia excisa* (p. 120), but that species has symmetrically bilobed leaves rather than the asymmetrical *Scapania* leaf shape. Both *S. compacta* (p. 168) and *S. degenii* (p. 174) have the leaf lobes pressed together.

**Habitat** Most records are from upland habitats, where *S. cuspiduligera* creeps over *Gymnostomum aeruginosum* and other mosses in crevices in damp, base-rich crags. In south Wales, this species is locally frequent in gaps in calcareous turf on the spoil heaps of limestone quarries in the uplands. In northern Scotland it descends to sea level on damp ground in calcareous dunes.