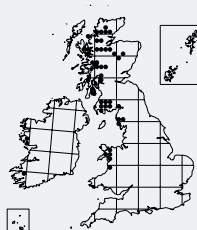


Sphagnum affine

S. imbricatum subsp. *affine*

Imbricate Bog-moss

Section Sphagnum



Identification Grows in cushions or low hummocks, a little more compact than is usual for *S. palustre*, or in carpets. The colour is pale green to light or dark ochre. Fascicles have 2 short, pointed spreading and 2, occasionally 3 pendent branches. Capsules are very rare.

Similar species *S. affine* is quite consistent in appearance, though varying in size and colour. However, it is very close to some forms of *S. palustre* (p. 279) and *S. papillosum* (p. 278), and is hence, on current knowledge, not reliably separable from these in the field. The combination of somewhat compact cushions, low hummocks or carpets, smaller size, short, pointed spreading branches and growing in poor fen or marsh suggests *S. affine*. When ochreous in colour it looks like a small *S. papillosum*, but that species has less pointed branches and, when small, tends to have only 1 pendent branch per fascicle. *S. affine* can grow in close proximity to *S. papillosum* and *S. palustre*, and thus can easily be overlooked. Identification should always be checked under a microscope.

Habitat *S. affine* is found in poor fens, marshes, base-rich seepages, ditches and flushed bogs, sometimes in very wet sites. It occupies a very different habitat to the closely related *S. austini*.