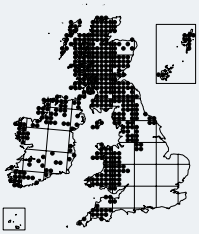
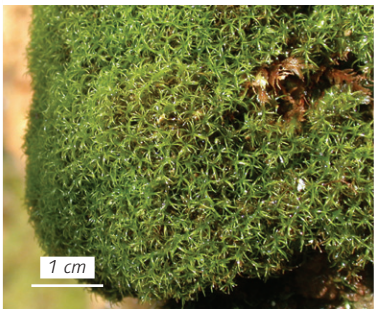
Amphidium mougeotii

Mougeot's Yoke-moss

Key 209





Identification *A. mougeotii* forms vivid, mid-green, rounded cushions 3–7 cm deep. These can often be recognized from a distance. Each shoot is quite tall, mid-green at the top and orange-brown below, with fairly long (about 2 mm), narrow, sharply pointed leaves. Capsules are only produced occasionally, and project just above the cushions on a seta 3 mm long.

Similar species The much less common *A. lapponicum* (Smith, p. 657) grows on base-rich crags in the mountains, and has shorter setae (1.5–2.5 mm), so its capsules are mixed among the upper leaves of the cushion. Several other mosses form cushions in similar places. *Anoectangium aestivum* (p. 452) is bright yellow-green and has shorter (less than 2 mm) leaves; the leaves of *Distichium capillaceum* (p. 352) are very long and narrow, and form 2 rows on opposite sides of the stem; *Grimmia torquata* (p. 525) forms greyer or olive-brown cushions and has short hair points; *Gymnostomum aeruginosum* (p. 451) is dark green, has a rounded leaf tip, and more often forms carpets than cushions. *Hymenostylium recurvirostrum* (p. 447) is often encrusted with lime and has darker green leaves with a wider base. *Plagiopus oederianus* (p. 628) has teeth visible on its leaf margins through a 20 hand lens and often produces spherical capsules on a long seta. The very rare *Zygodon gracilis* (p. 645) has toothed leaf margins and grows on limestone.

Habitat This is one of the most characteristic mosses of siliceous crags, providing there is at least a slight hint of base enrichment. It is commonest at moderate altitudes, but reaches into lower ground in river gorges and coastal ravines.

Photos Des Callaghan (top left), Gordon Rothero (bottom left) & Ian Atherton (right) Text Sam Bosanquet