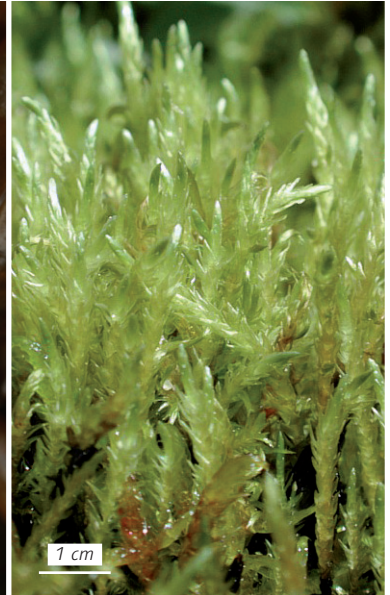
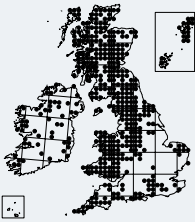


*Straminergon stramineum**Calliergon stramineum*

Straw Spear-moss

Key 348



Identification *S. stramineum* often grows as scattered stems among other vegetation or forms lax tufts or patches. Shoots are pale green (never reddish) and medium-sized, commonly 2–8 cm long, but sometimes more, and hardly branched. They have a string-like appearance because the leaves are slightly concave and overlap each other (though not always closely). The leaves are broadly or narrowly egg-shaped, about 1 mm wide, with a rounded tip, and have a long, single nerve extending well above mid-leaf, sometimes nearly to the tip. A distinct patch of cells in the basal corners of the leaves does not extend all the way to the nerve; this can be seen with a good hand lens on leaves pulled from the stem. A very useful field character is the occasional presence of rhizoids developing from the back of the leaves near the tip. However, these are not always present. Capsules are rare.

Similar species Few other mosses occur as erect, string-like shoots in boggy ground. Weak forms of *Calliergon cordifolium* (p. 719) may resemble *S. stramineum*, but its stem leaves are rarely much less than 2 mm wide, and they have patches of cells that extend across the leaf base all the way to the nerve, and are not very sharply differentiated. *Warnstorfia sarmentosa* (p. 715) nearly always develops red colours, the leaves often terminate in a small, short, abrupt point, and it does not develop rhizoids at the leaf tip. *Pseudocalliergon trifarium* (p. 727) is more robust, strongly coloured deep green to yellow-brown, and the stem leaves are only slightly longer than wide.

Habitat *S. stramineum* is widespread in wet, acidic habitats, occurring in bogs, rush (*Juncus*) flushes, and among heathy vegetation. It is often, but by no means always associated with species of *Sphagnum*, and sometimes occurs on moist banks among grass and heather.