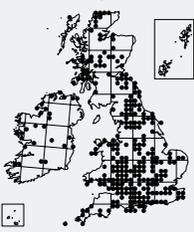


Brachythecium glareosum

Streaky Feather-moss



Identification *B. glareosum* is robust, pale or yellow-green, with irregularly branched, prostrate or ascending shoots forming loose patches. Stronger forms may have individual branches reaching 2 cm or more long, and leaves 3–4 mm. Stem leaves are similar, more or less appressed when dry, slightly spreading when moist, egg-shaped to almost triangular, but narrowed to a very long, fine point which is usually twisted. The leaf surface is pleated and the margins are entire or very finely toothed. The single nerve ceases below the leaf tip. Capsules have a smooth seta, but are rarely present.

Similar species *Homalothecium lutescens* (p. 738) is similar in size and appearance, although it tends to look slightly more rigid. The leaves of *H. lutescens* tend to have a more narrowly triangular shape, and do not normally have quite such a long, fine, twisted point. Small forms of *B. glareosum* may resemble *B. albicans* (p. 741), and occasionally cannot be distinguished in the field, though the latter occurs in more acidic habitats. *B. salebrosum* (p. 743) is also similar, but lacks the twisted leaf tip, and is more often found on wood. Plants with capsules are more likely to be *B. salebrosum*. *B. mildeanum* (p. 752) has less distinctly pleated leaves that are not drawn out into a twisted, thread-like tip, and the leaves remain somewhat spreading when dry. These differences also apply to the forms of *B. rutabulum* (p. 746) that may resemble *B. glareosum*, and *B. rutabulum* has more distinctly toothed leaf margins. *Tomentypnum nitens* (p. 725) usually grows in fens and has a dense felt of rhizoids on the stem and leaf bases. *Ptychodium plicatum* (p. 692) grows at high altitudes in Scotland, and can be distinguished by its numerous miniature leaf-like outgrowths on the stem.

Habitat A plant of open or lightly shaded, usually base-rich ground, particularly on chalk and limestone. It occurs on bare soil, stony ground and rocks, in turf and on banks. It also favours rubble in and by pits and quarries. More rarely it occurs around tree bases.