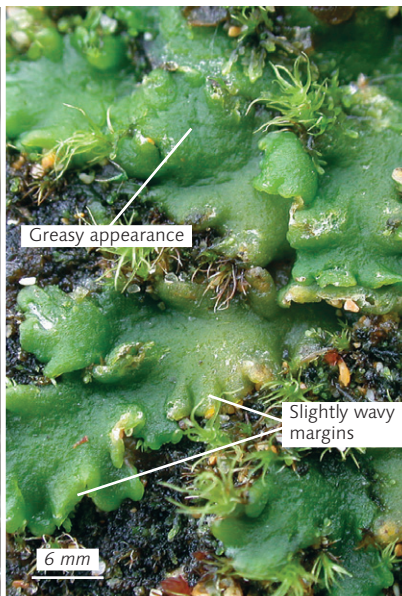
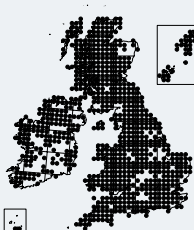


Aneura pinguis

Greasewort

Key 23



Identification The greasy-looking, mid-green colour of *A. pinguis* is highly distinctive, so it is readily identifiable despite varying greatly in size. Small thalli can be scarcely larger than a *Riccardia* – less than 1 cm long – whereas large ones may exceed a *Pellia* in size, being 8 cm or more in length. Each thallus is rather thick and chunky, with the slightly wavy margins little thinner than the midrib, although the largest plants (sometimes considered a different species) have very thin, undulate edges. Sexual organs are produced on the sides of the thalli, and cylindrical sporophytes are common.

Similar species The smallest examples of *A. pinguis* can be confused with *Riccardia chamedryfolia* and *R. multifida* (p. 243), but the mid-green colour is usually sufficiently different from the pale brownish-green of *Riccardia* to allow distinction. Microscopical examination of oil bodies provides confirmation, but must be carried out on fresh material. Large specimens are easily passed over as *Pellia* species (pp. 235–237), but lack the brown colours often shown by that genus, have short colourless (rather than brown) rhizoids and have fertile parts on the thallus sides, rather than on top as in *Pellia*. *Moerckia hibernica* (p. 239) and *Blasia pusilla* (p. 240) have thinner, wavier margins, fertile parts on top, and *Blasia* also has gemmae. *Phaeoceros carolinianus* and *P. laevis* (p. 273) usually form discrete circular patches and are dotted with dark colonies of the alga *Nostoc*.

Habitat A common lime-lover of damp places, especially flushes and fens. Quarry floors, gravel tracks and sand dunes also provide suitable conditions, as does waste ground, especially pulverized fly ash. Large plants that may be a different species (or several), are found in quite different conditions: either in stony flushes in woodland or on fallen wood in carr woodland.