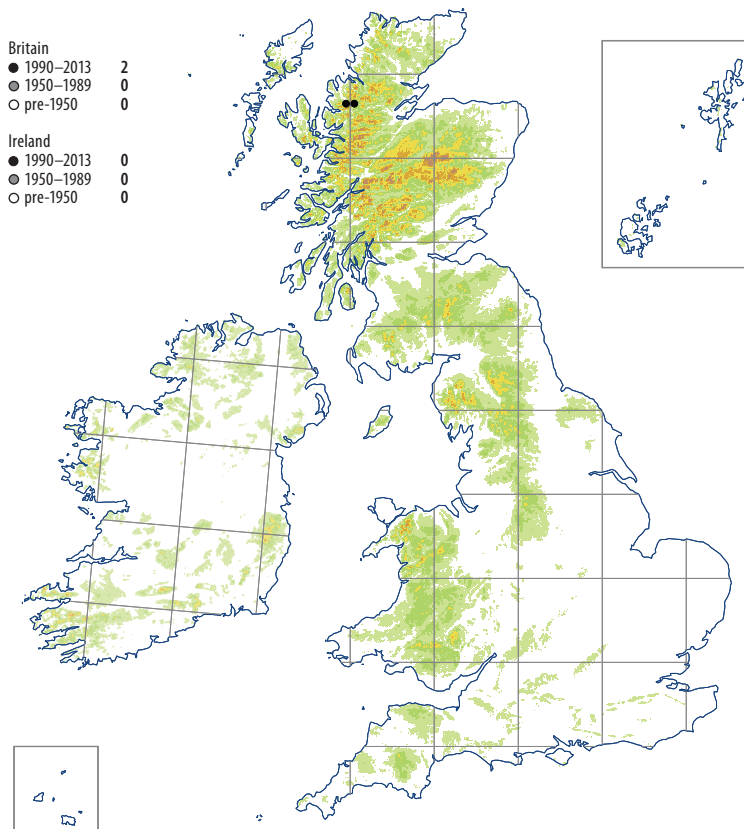


Herbertus borealis



Although not described until 1970, this distinctive and robust plant has been collected from its principal Scottish locality, Beinn Eighe, since 1868. A second site, on Slioch to the north-east of Beinn Eighe, was found during the BBS summer meeting in 2013. It is locally abundant on Beinn Eighe, growing amidst open wind-exposed prostrate juniper heath on a gentle north-east-facing slope with *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Pleurozia purpurea* and *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, and in tallish *Calluna* heath on slopes with a north or north-easterly aspect. Soils are oligotrophic, humus-rich rankers developed over quartzite



moraine and scree. It locally plays the role that *Herbertus hutchinsiae* has elsewhere in Scotland. It occurs in an area of cool, humid climate with at least 220 wet days a year. Altitudinal range: 125–620 m.

Fertile material is unknown.

DNA Barcoding has shown that *H. borealis* is a Scottish endemic, and Norwegian plants that were previously considered to be this species have been transferred to *H. noreus* (Bell *et al.*, 2012; Bell & Long, 2012). Suggestions that *H. borealis* is synonymous with the African and Azorean *H. dicranus* (Taylor) Trevis. (Hodgetts, 2003a) or the Asian *H. delavayi* (Feldberg & Heinrichs, 2005; Hill *et al.*, 2008), have not been confirmed by these DNA studies.

Oceanic Boreal-montane. Endemic to Scotland.

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◀ Beinn Eighe, West Ross, 2009, with David Bell. David Long