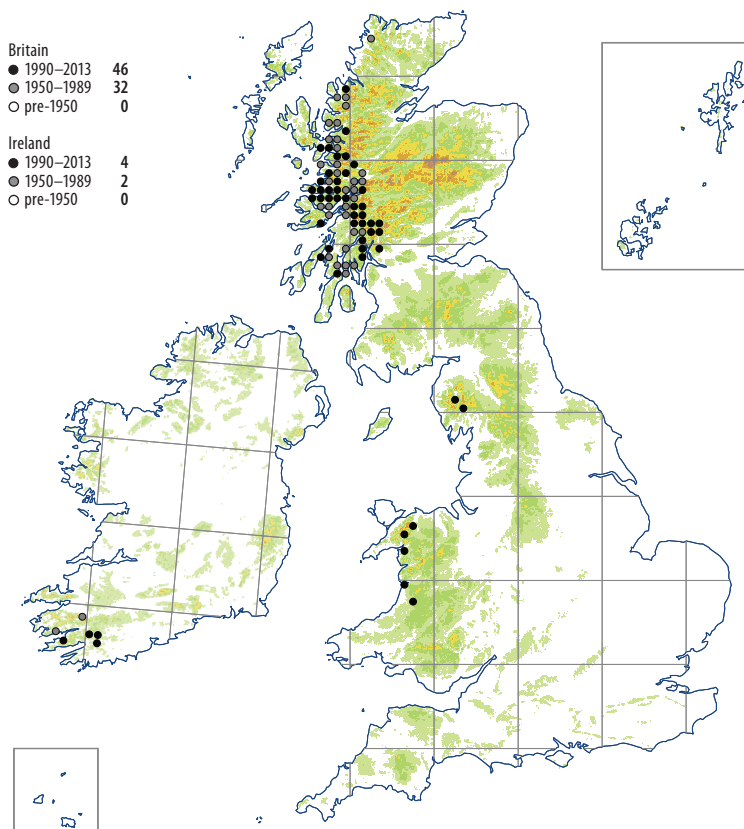


Plagiochila heterophylla



A species of humid deciduous woodland, occurring mostly on acid boulders, rock outcrops and on the trunks of oak and birch trees. In SW Ireland it has also been recorded in a relatively open upland ravine. Occasionally it grows on other trees and on humus banks, rarely on logs. Usually in pure patches, it is often associated with other large bryophytes such as *Plagiochila spinulosa* and *Scapania gracilis*. It favours a southerly to easterly aspect. Altitudinal range: 20–370 m.

The European endemic *P. atlantica* was shown to belong to the Neotropical section *Bursatae* because of its leaf surface waxes and secondary metabolites by Heinrichs & Rycroft (2001), and was subsequently synonymised with *P. heterophylla* by Heinrichs (2002).

Dioicous; only female plants are known, perianths are frequent, sporophytes are unknown.

For many years *P. heterophylla* was confused with *P. spinulosa* in Britain and Ireland. It is probably still slightly under-recorded, as suggested by the discovery of three of the five Welsh colonies in the last ten years.

Hyperoceanic Temperate. Otherwise only known in Europe only from Brittany in north-western France; Mexico, C America, Caribbean; Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia.

A.B.G. Averis, rev. S.D.S. Bosanquet

