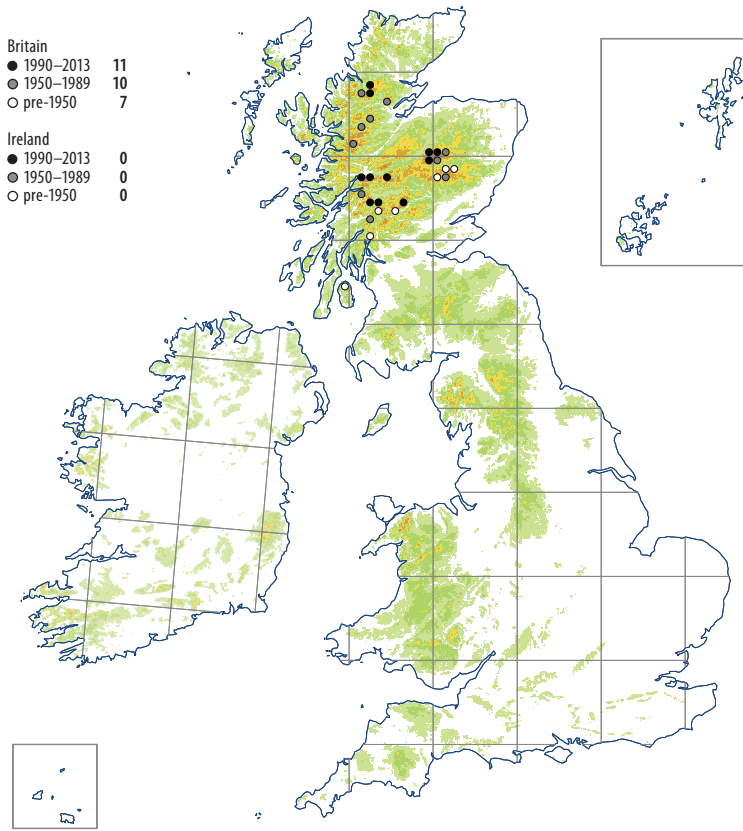


Pleurocladula albescens



A species of late snowbed communities on some of the higher Scottish mountains. It grows in pure tufts or amongst other bryophytes on moist soil near the edges of snow patches, and in gullies and boulder scree irrigated by melt water. Associates include more widespread species, such as *Cephalozia bicuspidata*, *Gymnomitrium concinnatum*, *Nardia scalaris* and *Polytrichastrum alpinum*, as well as others, including *Moerckia blyttii*, *Kiaeria starkei* and *Polytrichastrum sexangulare* that are similarly restricted. It was classified as one of the most extreme indicators of late snow-lie in southern Norway by Odland & Munkejord (2008). Altitudinal range: 850–1200 m.

Despite changes in frequency and duration of snow cover, no real evidence has been found of any change in the

abundance or distribution of *Pleurocladula* on sites revisited by GPR.

Dioicous; rarely fertile, sporophytes are very rare, July. Gemmae have only been noted on small plants collected on Lochnagar (Paton, 1999).

In recent years British and Irish bryologists have taken a broad view of variation within *P. albescens*, and slender forms, approaching *P. albescens* var. *islandica* have not been given taxonomic recognition here. The two varieties show different isoenzyme patterns and phenolic compounds (Krzakowa & Szweykowski, 1981), but morphological intermediates occur (Paton, 1999).

Circumpolar Arctic-montane. Northern Europe and the mountains of C Europe. Siberia, Russian Far East, Japan, China; northern N America, Greenland.

T.H. Blackstock, rev. G.P. Rothero

