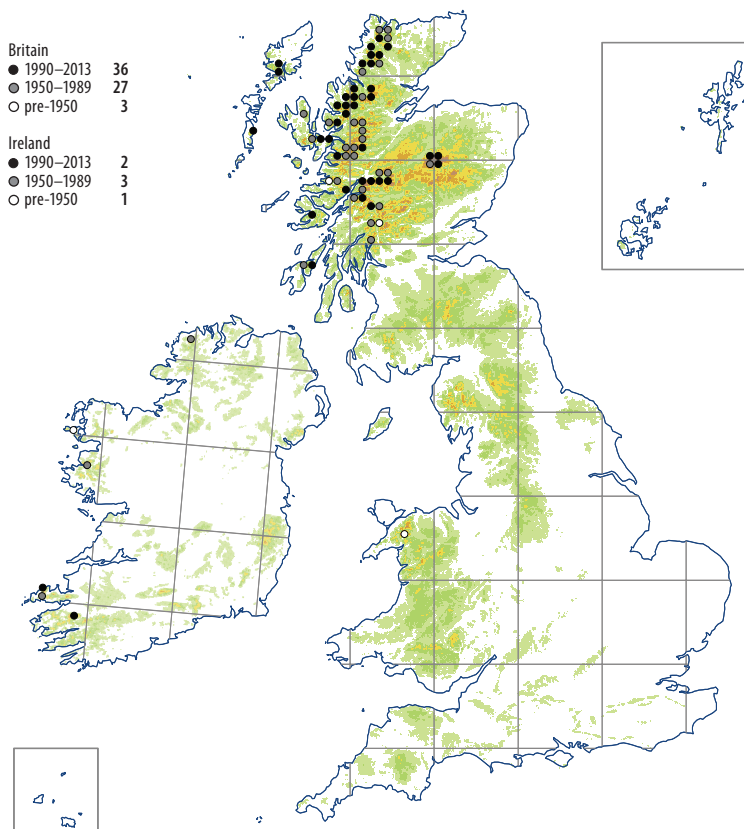


Scapania nimbosa



It grows as loose coppery red tufts, or mixed with other bryophytes in turf on open well-drained rocky slopes and in mossy block screes, usually in sheltered situations or in mountain corries facing north to east, more rarely on acid cliff ledges. Its requirements are similar to those of *Scapania ornithopodioides*, but it is a rarer species, usually present in smaller quantities. Links with regular cloud formation and stable winter snow cover are highlighted by Jordal & Hassel (2010). Associates in Scotland and Ireland include *Anastrepta orcadensis*, *Anastrophyllum alpinum*, *A. donnianum*, *Bazzania pearsonii*, *B. tricrenata*, *Mylia taylorii*, *Plagiochila carringtonii*, *S. ornithopodioides*, *Racomitrium lanuginosum* and *Rhytidiadelphus loreus*. All localities have a cool wet climate, and often enjoy late snow-lie, especially in the Cairngorms. It is a typical member of the mixed 'northern hepatic mat' of NW Scotland. Altitudinal range: 300–960 m.

There has been a distinct decline in Ireland (Lockhart *et al.*, 2012), although *S. nimbosa* can be inconspicuous and was sought in vain on a recent BBS visit to Brandon Mountain, only to be rediscovered a month later when one of the party revisited the site. Overstocking with sheep has certainly caused a significant reduction in the habitat quality on most Irish sites, and the decline is therefore likely to be genuine.

Sterile; gametangia and sporophytes are unknown; gemmae are very rare.

Oceanic Boreal-montane. A disjunct species of cool temperate high rainfall areas; outside Britain and Ireland known only from SW Norway, Nepal, Sikkim, Tibet, Yunnan, Guizhou and Taiwan.

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