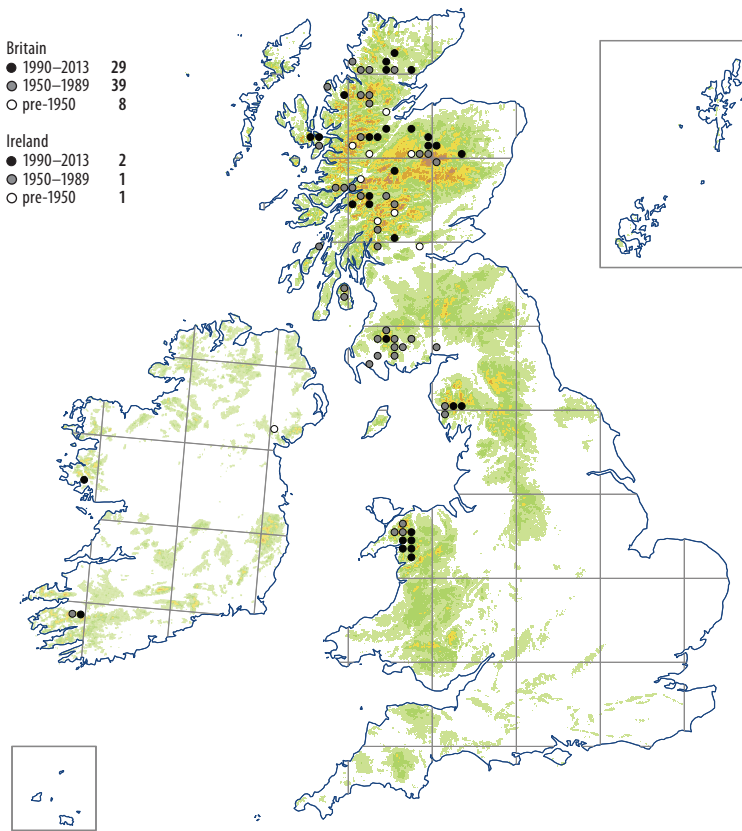


Sphagnum affine



Unlike its close relative *Sphagnum austinii*, this species does not grow on the surface of deep-peat bogs, but in weakly minerotrophic mires. It is most often found where the ground is very wet, as in swampy runnels with *Carex rostrata*, *Comarum palustre* and *Menyanthes trifoliata* or on rafts among *Phragmites* by lakes. It also occurs in slightly basic flush-bogs with associates such as *Juncus acutiflorus*, *J. effusus*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Myrica gale*, *S. inundatum*, *S. fallax* and *S. papillosum*, and occasionally in ditches and on flushed stream banks. Altitudinal range: 10–490 m.

Diocious; capsules are rare, mature in summer, found in three localities in Scotland.

It was not distinguished from *S. austinii* until Flatberg's (1984) monograph of the *S. imbricatum* complex. It is easily

overlooked as a depauperate form of *S. papillosum* or a pigmented form of *S. palustre* and must be somewhat under-recorded, but it is clearly a rare plant. A leaf fragment of *S. affine* was found in the colon of the Tyrolean Iceman, who had drunk from an alpine bog pool 5,400 years ago (Dickson *et al.*, 2005).

Suboceanic Boreal-montane in Europe, where it is generally uncommon, from Iceland and Norway south to the Alps and from France east to Finland. Azores; eastern N America, from Texas and Florida north to Newfoundland.

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