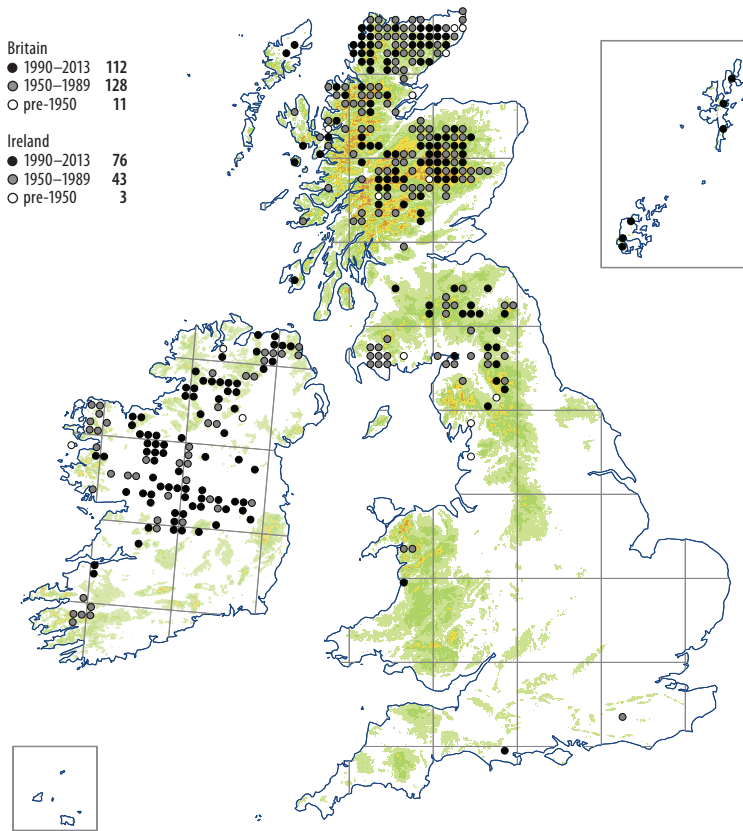


# Sphagnum fuscum



In Ireland and at lower altitudes in Britain, *Sphagnum fuscum* occurs on raised bogs and other flattish deep-peat bogs, where it grows among *S. capillifolium*, *S. papillosum* and a wide variety of other bog species. In mountainous parts of Scotland, it is found mainly on blanket peat above 400 m elevation, forming large hummocks among *Calluna vulgaris*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Eriophorum vaginatum* and *Rubus chamaemorus*. It sometimes also occurs in flushes. In the eastern Highlands of Scotland, it has been noted as a component of the sphagnum layer beneath *Calluna* on steep north- and east-facing slopes above 500 m altitude. Altitudinal range: 0–1085 m.

Its lowland habitat is closely similar to that of *S. austinii*, with which it frequently grows. *S. fuscum* is no doubt disappearing as a result of bogs being drained, cut for turf or planted up

with conifers, and perhaps also for some of the reasons cited for the decline of *S. austinii*, such as atmospheric nitrogen deposition. It often persists as a few isolated tussocks so that its decline is not yet visible in hectad maps.

Dioicous in our area; capsules are rare.

Circumpolar Boreo-arctic montane. Arctic and northern Europe, south to the Pyrenees and Alps. Northern Asia and northern N America; an abundant species of bogs in the boreal zone and tundra, present in continental interiors.

M.O. Hill

