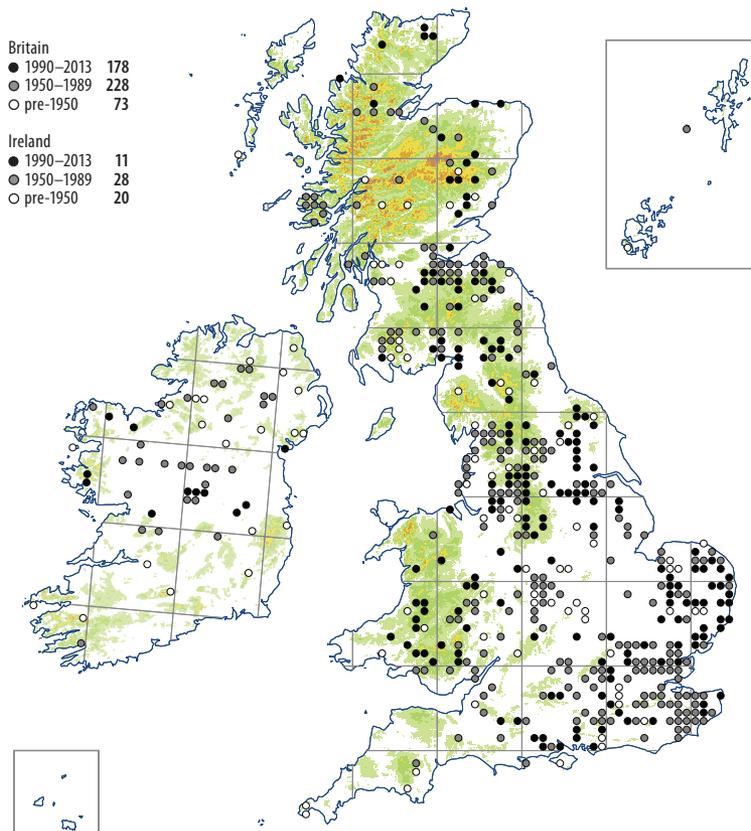


Polytrichastrum longisetum

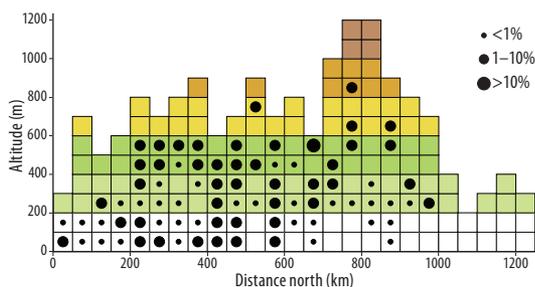


Perhaps the most typical habitat of this calcifuge species is as a colonist of bare, disturbed or cut-over peat on raised and blanket bogs, lowland heaths and moorland, often with *Campylopus introflexus*. There are a number of records from the sides of peaty drains in young conifer plantations. It grows in a wide range of other habitats on both well-drained and relatively wet substrates, including acid woodland (often on logs and stumps), boulders in acid streams, rough acid grassland, earthy wall tops, and even in the hollow top of an old wooden gate-post. It has been recorded as a horticultural weed in plant-pots in Cornwall. Although sometimes found in abundance, it is often in small quantity and sporadic in occurrence, and many populations are short-lived. Altitudinal range: 0–500 m.

The temporary nature of many populations goes some way to explaining the large proportion of pre-1990 records. However there has been a slight downward trend in recent decades, especially in formerly polluted regions, and reductions in acid deposition may have played a part in this in habitats peripheral to its core range on moorland and heath.

Dioicous; capsules are frequent to common, mature in early summer.

It is easily confused with *Polytrichastrum formosum*, especially juvenile forms, and this has probably been the cause of some recording errors. However it is easily overlooked when capsules are not present and overall it may be a little under-recorded.



Circumpolar Boreo-temperate. Mainly in the boreal zone in Europe, but reaching Iceland and Svalbard, commoner in the north and west where peat deposits are more prevalent, and absent from most of the Mediterranean region. Turkey. Widespread in the Northern Hemisphere, south to Mongolia and Taiwan in Asia, and Colorado and Arizona in N America; also in New Guinea. Southern S America, New Zealand, Antarctica.

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