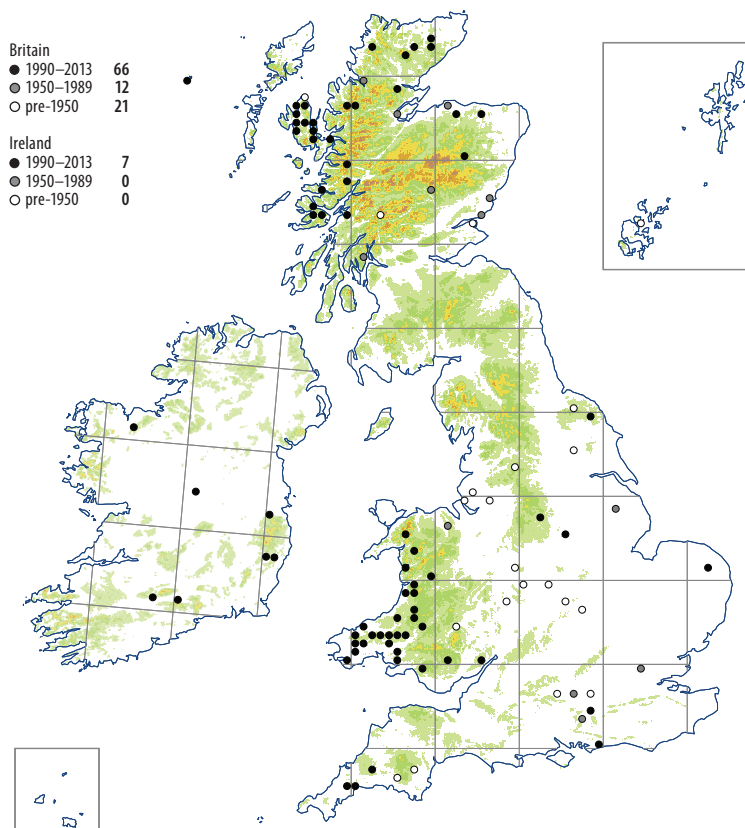


## *Polytrichum commune* var. *perigoniale*



**A** calcifuge moss, like *Polytrichum commune* var. *commune*, but occurring in habitats that are at least seasonally dry. Many records are from tracks and forest roads in conifer plantations, but it is also found on bare or disturbed peaty or sandy ground on heathland and moorland, especially by tracks or in the wake of fires. Other habitats include bare patches in short or grazed turf (including a churchyard lawn), gravelly ground by streams, in old sand and gravel pits and quarries, and on china clay spoil in Cornwall. It is always in open habitats that range from exposed to moderately shaded. Altitudinal range: 10–530 m.

Dioicous; capsules are occasional, mature in summer.

Var. *perigoniale* is widely overlooked, and it is under-recorded. Not all populations of *P. commune* from dry ground

belong to var. *perigoniale* and microscopic examination is needed to confirm it. The concentration of records in S Wales reflects local awareness rather than a genuine distributional trend. Many of the British and Irish records are based on material without capsules, using the shape of the apical cells of the lamellae as a diagnostic character. Bijlsma & van der Velde (2000) treat var. *perigoniale* as a distinct species in the light of allozyme electrophoresis, and they include in it the former var. *humile*. They use the name *P. commune* s.s. for plants of the *perigoniale* type, and *P. uliginosum* (Wallr.) Schriegl for the wetland plants treated here as var. *commune*. Further analysis of the nomenclature and morphology of this complex is desirable.

Circumpolar Boreo-temperate. The precise distribution elsewhere is uncertain because of different taxonomic treatments, but it is widespread in Europe, south to Crete, and it has been reported from many parts of both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

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