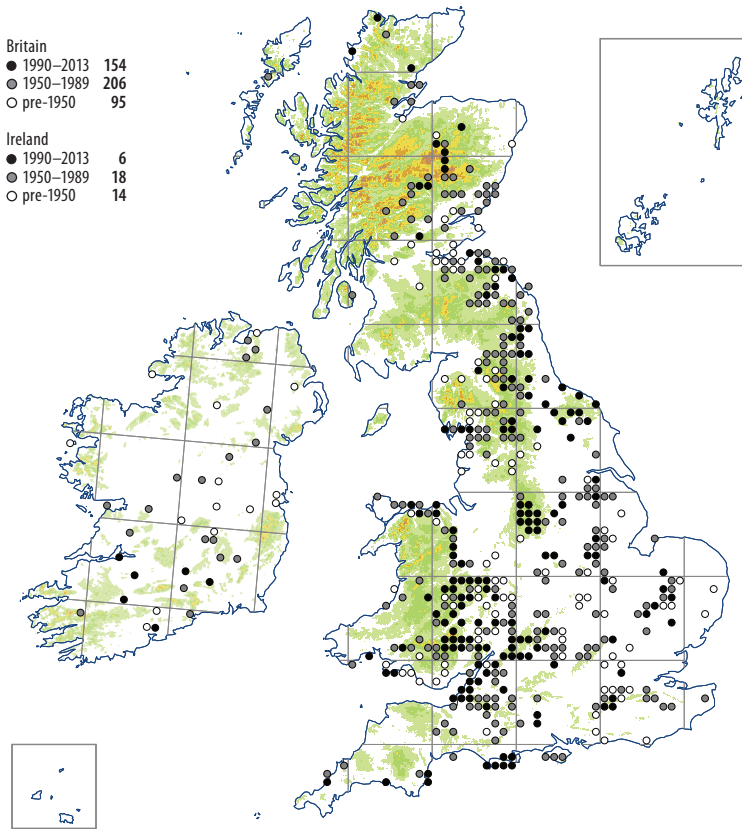


Encalypta vulgaris



A strict calcicole, almost exclusively confined to chalk, limestone and calcareous schists, and rarely on basic igneous rocks such as dolerite. It occurs as pure tufts on dry, well-drained rocks and soil in a range of habitats. These include open soil in short calcareous grassland, especially on steep rocky slopes, shaded chalk banks along wooded lanes and other sheltered places, earthy rock ledges on limestone outcrops, including crags in the uplands, bare soil and ledges in old quarries and stone pits, and soil in the crevices of sea cliffs. It is less frequent on compacted soil on paths and in the crevices of limestone walls, and it was formerly a common member of the bryophyte community on mud-capped walls. Associates on chalk include *Fissidens dubius* and *Weissia* spp. On Carboniferous Limestone in the Pennines it is a member of a distinctive community that includes *Reboulia hemisphaerica*, *Riccia sorocarpa*, *Tortula*

lanceola, *T. modica*, *T. subulata* and more rarely *Entosthodon muhlenbergii*. Altitudinal range: 5–500 m.

Encalypta vulgaris has decreased widely because of the loss of thin calcareous turf, and the scarcity of suitable pits, quarries and old walls. Much of this decline is of long-standing, but a modest if somewhat fluctuating downward trend has continued in recent decades.

Autoicous; capsules are common, mature in summer.

Encalypta vulgaris and *E. rhamnoides* belong to a taxonomically difficult complex in which intermediates occur (Horton, 1983), but in Britain they are normally easy to distinguish and the map should contain few errors.

Circumpolar Temperate. Most of Europe from southern Fennoscandia southwards. Macaronesia (Canaries, Madeira) and widely across N Africa. Near and Middle East. The wider distribution is uncertain because of taxonomic difficulties. W, C and E Asia, Japan, but often intergrading with *E. rhamnoides* (Ignatov *et al.*, 2006); New Guinea. N America (mainly western), C and S America. Ethiopia, southern Africa. SW Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand.

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