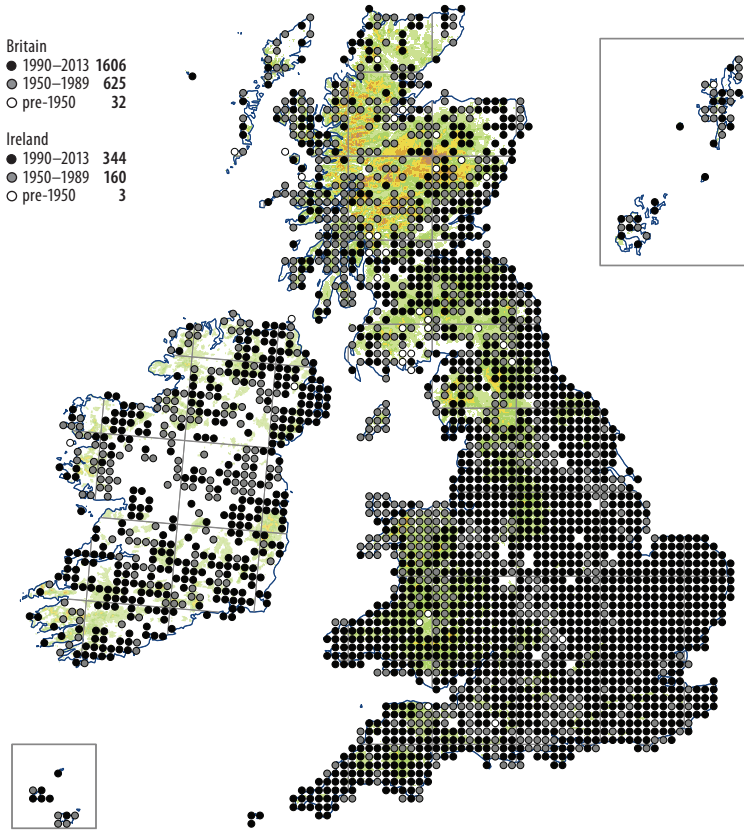


# Funaria hygrometrica



Although widespread and common in the lowlands, *Funaria hygrometrica* is sporadic and often temporary in occurrence and is therefore not quite as abundant as the map might suggest. It is famously a moss of old bonfire sites, and it also takes advantage of burnt heathland. Elsewhere it occurs in patches or as scattered plants on bare soil, and may turn up as a colonist in almost any kind of disturbed, open habitat. Such sites include waste ground, roadsides, pavements, paths, churchyards, quarries and pits, gardens and flower pots, ditch and stream banks, and occasionally soil pockets on old walls, buildings and rock cuttings. It has even been recorded as a colonist of old animal remains and bones. It is a common member of arable field communities, though rarely in any quantity. Its range of soil types is extensive, from highly alkaline lime waste to acid, peaty humus; it flourishes where there is nutrient-

enrichment and tolerates metalliferous ground. Altitudinal range: 0–800 m.

Autoicous; capsules are common, maturing all the year round. The spores can survive for up to two years in the soil under field conditions (During, 1986). Gemmae are produced on the protonema in culture and on young colonies in nature (Bopp *et al.*, 1991; Duckett *et al.*, 1998).

Circumpolar Wide-temperate. Cosmopolitan, but rather scattered in the tropics and the Southern Hemisphere, reaching Antarctica but probably introduced there.

T.L. Blockeel

