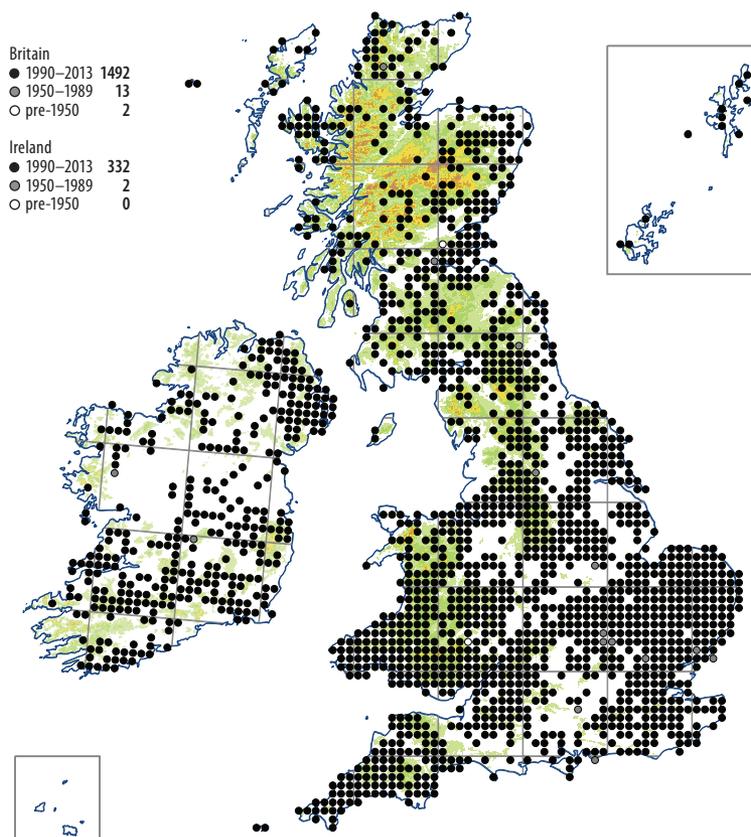


Schistidium crassipilum

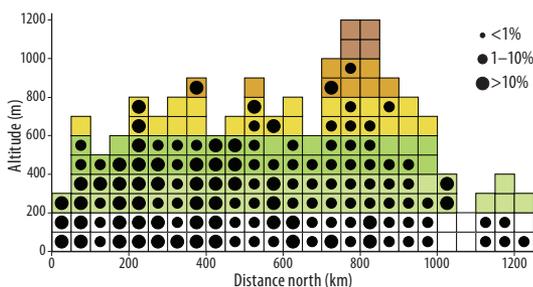


This recently described species (Blom, 1996) is the common *Schistidium* in most of Britain and Ireland, although it is uncommon and largely restricted to artificial substrates in the far north of Scotland. It grows on limestone, base-rich sandstone and basic igneous rocks, including cliffs, outcrops, limestone pavement and quarries, but especially boulders and detached blocks. *S. crassipilum* is often abundant on walls, bridges, concrete gate-posts and miscellaneous garden ornaments, favouring horizontal or gently sloping surfaces but also growing sometimes on vertical masonry, as well as tiled roofs, corrugated asbestos-cement, concrete paths and tarmac. It is generally found in sunny situations, but can tolerate light shade. *Didymodon rigidulus*, *Grimmia pulvinata*, *Orthotrichum anomalum*, *Rhynchostegium confertum* and *Tortula muralis* are characteristic associates. Altitudinal range: 0–970 m.

Schistidium crassipilum is now much more frequent in urban areas than it was in the era of high SO₂ pollution, and it has colonised substrates such as tarmac which it would not then have occupied.

Autoicous. Capsules are common, immature September to February, mature January to April.

Schistidium crassipilum has been well recorded since bryologists realised that it is overwhelmingly commoner than other members of the genus in lowland regions: the only major southern gaps are counties without recent active bryophyte recording. Variability in tuft size and hair-point length has led to some confusion with *S. apocarpum*, *S. confertum* and *S. elegantulum*, but that would have affected the maps for those species rather than this one.



European Southern-temperate. Common almost throughout Europe, but markedly southern in Norway and Sweden, occurring east to Crimea and the Caucasus. N Africa, Turkey and Cyprus. Western N America, Quebec.

S.D.S. Bosanquet