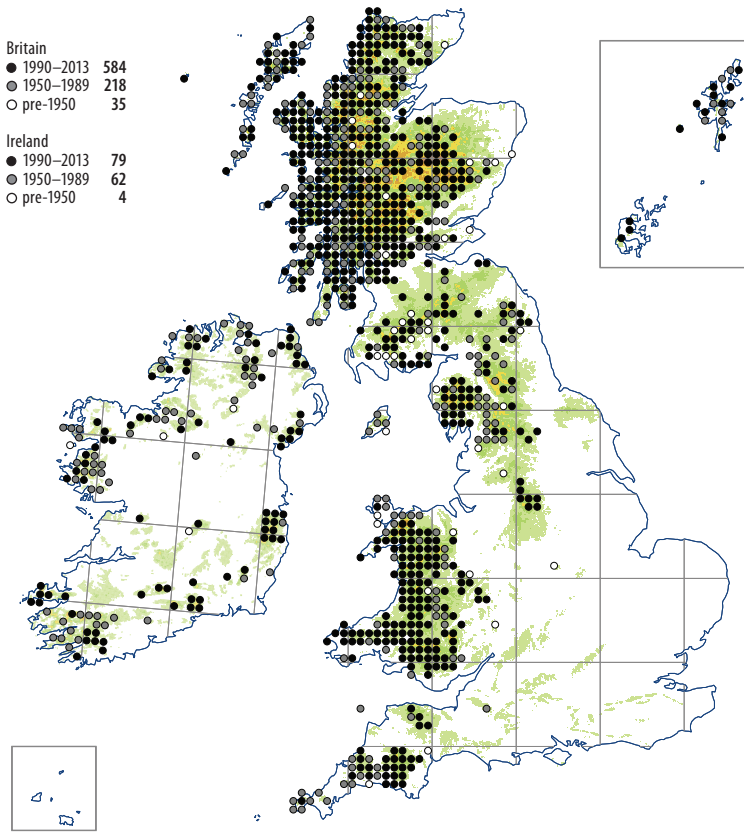


Racomitrium aquaticum



Forming flattish, often pendent olive to dark green patches on acid rocks, typically in places kept at least intermittently wet by seepage in winter, but often drying out in summer, and not subject to regular inundation. It is most often on vertical or near-vertical crags where water runs or trickles, but also on inclined, flushed slabs on rocky hillsides and stream banks, though it is not normally a riparian species. It may colonise rock cuttings and rock faces in old quarries. *Andreaea rothii* and *Campylopus atrovirens* are regular associates. Rarely, it occurs on soil in late-snow patches at high altitudes; on Ben Nevis it has also been noted as forming swelling tufts around high-level springs and the streams that come from them. It usually grows in open brightly lit sites, but can tolerate moderate shade. It is commonest and most conspicuous at moderate altitudes. Altitudinal range: 0–1200 m.

Records of this species have fluctuated during the past two decades but show no overall signs of decline; systematic recording in S Wales and Scotland has filled many gaps in its distribution.

Diocious; capsules are occasional, mature in spring.

It is similar to the forms of *Racomitrium heterostichum* that lack a hair-point and some field records may be errors for the latter species; they are unlikely to misrepresent the overall distribution.

Suboceanic Temperate. Throughout Europe to north of the Arctic Circle in Norway, and east to the Carpathian and southern Ural mountains, very rare in the Mediterranean region. Macaronesia, NE Turkey and Caucasus. Records from other parts of the world apparently belong to related species.

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