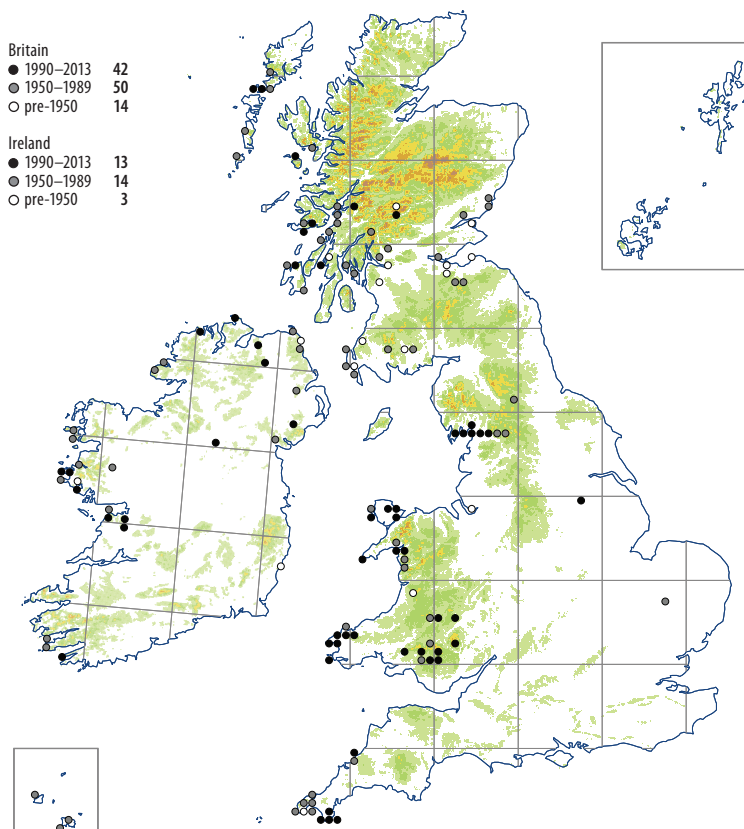


Riccia beyrichiana



A calcifuge, growing on soil which is damp, flushed or flooded in winter. It occurs on tracks, paths, banks and rocky slopes, often near the sea, on the floors of abandoned quarries, in moist hollows in dunes or sandy heathland, and on mud at the edge of reservoirs. Thin soil around rocks that protrude from seasonally inundated turf provides ideal conditions. There are a few records from peat and soil over limestone rocks. It is rarely found in cultivated fields. Altitudinal range: 0–800 m.

There has been a considerable loss of colonies of *Riccia beyrichiana* in lowland Scotland, and a notable lack of recent records from the Land's End Peninsula. The isolated East Anglian colony has apparently been exterminated by management works at Cavenham Heath NNR, West Suffolk.

Monoicous; sporophytes are frequent, maturing in all months. The spores are long lived and in dry storage have been shown to retain viability for 30 years.

There has been some confusion between small plants of *R. beyrichiana* and large *R. subbifurca*, and perhaps also with *R. bifurca* in Cornwall. DNA Barcoding suggests that the Cornish population may be distinct from colonies from elsewhere in Britain and Ireland (Bell *et al.*, 2013).

Suboceanic Boreo-temperate. Western and southern Europe, extending north to Iceland and southern Norway and east to the Balkans. Azores; Algeria, Tunisia; Afghanistan, Pakistan, Assam; N America, Greenland.

C.D. Preston, rev. S.D.S. Bosanquet

