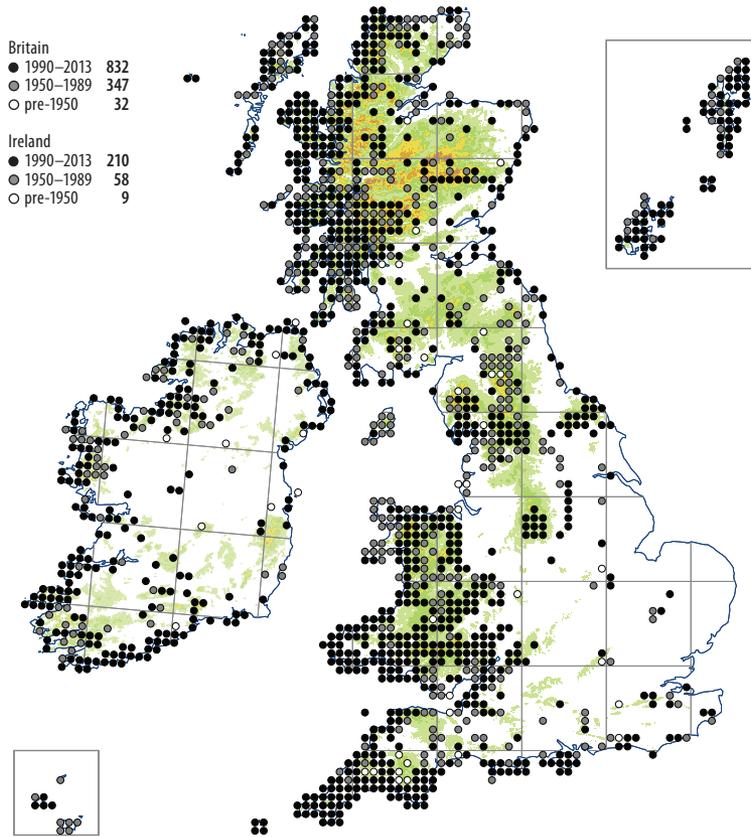


Trichostomum brachydontium



Most common in coastal districts, especially in the west, this salt-tolerant species is indifferent there to substrate, occurring widely both on acid and base-rich rocks, on turf, on coastal slopes, rock ledges, cliff tops and estuary banks, also on fixed dunes, with associates that include *Schistidium maritimum*, *Tortella flavovirens*, *Weissia* spp. and, in the south and west, *Tortula atrovirens* and *T. viridifolia*. Coastal sites are often exposed, but inland it favours sheltered places and is largely confined to calcareous habitats, especially on limestone, growing typically on thin soil or in crevices on dry or moist rocks in various habitats, including woodland, rocky hillsides, stream banks, and ravines, and extending to gullies and crags at moderate altitudes in the mountains. It also occurs more rarely in calcareous turf, as on chalk banks. It is generally less common in old quarries than *Trichostomum crispulum*. Altitudinal range: 0–650 m.

Although its distribution has a western tendency, it is now more widely recorded in eastern districts than it was in the 1991–1994 Atlas, and there has been a notable increase in records in parts of Wales and Ireland.

Dioicous; capsules are rather rare, mature in spring.

Like *T. crispulum*, a very variable species with many named varieties, though these are not currently recognised in Britain and Ireland. Although often in sheltered and moist habitats in our islands, it is a common moss of very arid exposed sites in the Mediterranean region.

Submediterranean-Subatlantic. Common in S and W Europe, east to Ukraine and Caucasus, becoming rare northwards, reaching Iceland and southern and south-western Scandinavia. Macaronesia, N Africa. Widely in SW Asia. Southern Asia including India and China, to New Guinea and Japan. Rare in N America (Alaska, Nova Scotia, southern USA). C and S America. Tropical and southern Africa, Réunion, St Helena. Australia, New Zealand.

T.L. Blockeel

