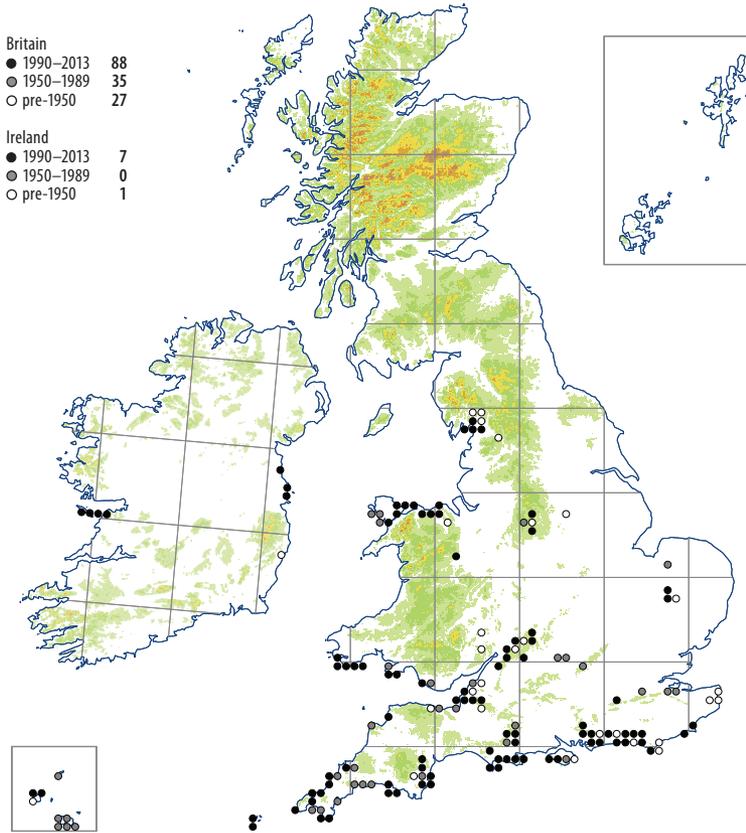


# Pleurochaete squarrosa



This species is most plentiful in coastal districts, in short turf in calcareous dune grassland, and on thin soil or blown sand over rocks, where associates include *Barbula convoluta*, *Ctenidium molluscum*, *Ditrichum gracile*, *Fissidens dubius*, *Syntrichia ruralis* var. *ruraliformis*, *Tortella flavovirens* and *Trichostomum* spp. Inland it occurs in thin chalk and limestone grassland, shallow soil on rock ledges, and on stony limestone ground, rarely on limestone pavement. In hill country it is usually found on warm, south-facing slopes. It may grow in open scrubby ground and in light shade, but is most common in exposed, well-drained habitats where there is little competition from other species. Altitudinal range: 0–240 m.

At many of its localities it occurs in small quantity and is vulnerable to scrub encroachment and the growth of

rank herbage in the absence of grazing or other agents to maintain an open habitat. However there has been an upward trend in records since 1990. Bosanquet (2010) reports increased abundance in some S Wales localities, possibly due to climatic factors or increased trampling by visitors, and there have been many newly detected localities in Gloucestershire (Lansdown, 2014). It is unclear whether this represents a genuine spread or more effective recording.

Dioicous; capsules and gemmae are unknown in Britain. Giordano *et al.* (1996) showed that it regenerates readily from detached leaves.

Submediterranean-Subatlantic. An abundant species in S Europe, extending northwards in W Europe to England and the island of Gotland (Sweden), and frequent also in C Europe, east to Ukraine and Caucasus. Macaronesia and N Africa. SW Asia, including the Arabian Peninsula. It occurs widely across the temperate Northern Hemisphere, especially in regions with Mediterranean and warm subcontinental climates, south to E Africa and Peru. *Pleurochaete squarrosa* in the broad sense is a complex of closely related taxa. Populations from Africa and SW Asia are sometimes separated as *P. malacophylla* (Müll. Hal.) Broth. and American ones as *P. luteola* (Besch.) Thér.

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