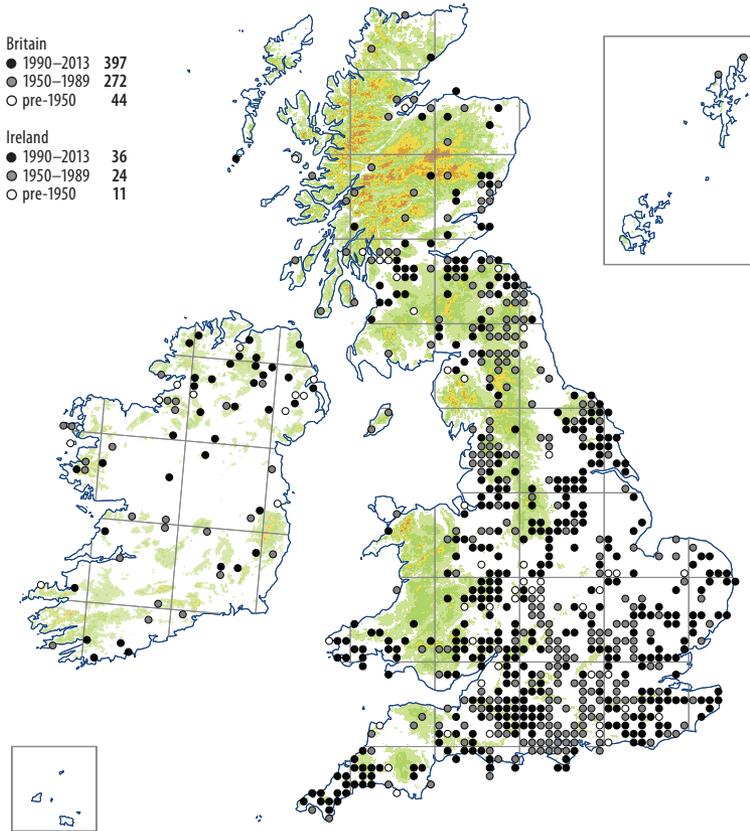


Gyroweisia tenuis



A minute species, though sometimes forming extensive patches, on moist rocks that range from mildly acid to base-rich. It prefers soft or porous rocks, and is particularly characteristic of sandstone, but it also occurs on limestone and other rock types. It grows on natural rock outcrops and boulders in woodlands, stream valleys and coastal cliffs, but is more common on man-made structures such as wall bases, bridges, graves, monuments, brickwork and old mortar, as well as in rock cuttings and old quarries. There are many records from the bases of church walls. Sites are often close to water (but not wet or submerged), or in places sheltered from direct sunlight; it is very tolerant of shade, and has even been found near lights in tunnels and caves. Patches are often more or less pure, but occasional shoots of other species such as *Bryum radiculosum* and *Tortula muralis* may be present. Altitudinal range: 0–500 m.

There has been a slight upward trend in records, especially since 2000, reflecting increasing recording in villages and churchyards. It is now much more densely mapped in England than it was in the 1991–1994 Atlas.

Dioicous; male plants are much rarer than female. Capsules are occasional in the north and west but rare in SE England, mature in summer. Vegetative propagation is by gemmae produced on the protonema.

Plants with somewhat differentiated perichaetial leaves can be similar to *Leptobarbula berica* and can be difficult to place in the absence of capsules. There may be some errors on the map.

European Temperate. Widespread in W and C Europe, rare in Scandinavia but reaching Iceland and N Norway, east to the southern Urals and Caucasus, rare and often misrecorded in the Mediterranean region. Macaronesia (Azores, Madeira), N Africa, SW Asia, S Siberia. N America (apparently rare) and Greenland.

T.L. Blockeel

