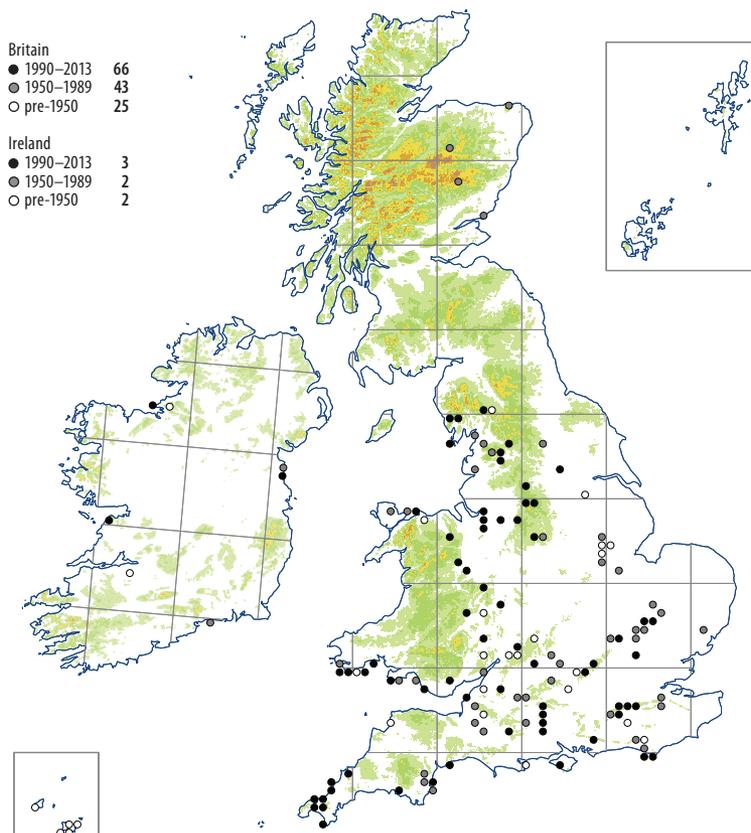
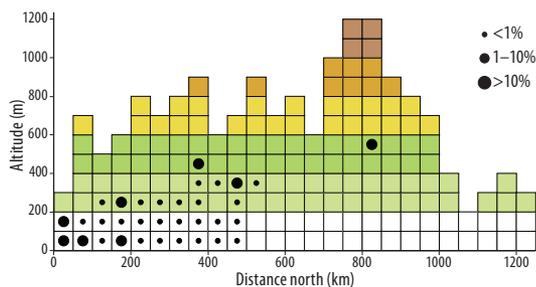


## Didymodon acutus



This species is most often reported from dry calcareous banks in southern regions, particularly in sunny chalk and limestone grassland and quarries, occurring in thin turf and on bare open ground. It has also been reported from sea banks, calcareous sand dunes and basic clay. Associates include many other calcicolous bryophytes, e.g. *Campyliadelphus chrysophyllus*, *Didymodon fallax*, *Ditrichum flexicaule* and *D. gracile*. There have been a number of recent records from man-made habitats, such as tracks surfaced with base-rich rubble, crumbling concrete and even the edges of tarmac roads. Rarer reports are from montane districts on open, earthy ledges and banks on base-rich rock. Altitudinal range: 0–300 m.

Though easily overlooked in the field, it is clearly rather a rare plant, often present in small quantity and diminishing



because of the loss of chalk and limestone grassland. However several recent records from ruderal habitats suggest that it may be increasing in such places (but see below on taxonomic matters).

Dioicous; capsules are very rare, maturing in spring. Axillary gemmae have been reported, but it is nearly certain that these reports refer to other species. Neither Kučera (2000) nor Jiménez (2006) could confirm the occurrence of propagules.

The map shows records assigned to *D. acutus* as traditionally understood in Britain and Ireland. It has been confused with forms of *D. vinealis* and *D. fallax* and the map may therefore contain some errors. However, *D. acutus* s.s. is not correctly understood throughout most of its putative distribution area (J. Kučera, pers. comm.), and all records require critical review. Most of our records, including those from ruderal habitats, will probably prove to belong to *D. icmadophilus* or *D. validus* Limpr., which are not very closely related to it on a molecular basis but are difficult to delimit morphologically.

Circumpolar Southern-temperate. *D. acutus* s.s. is widespread in C and S Europe, N Africa and the Near East, but is perhaps over-recorded in the Mediterranean region. Reports from southern Scandinavia require verification. Reports from other regions are nearly certainly based on misidentifications for other species of the group (J. Kučera, pers. comm.).

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