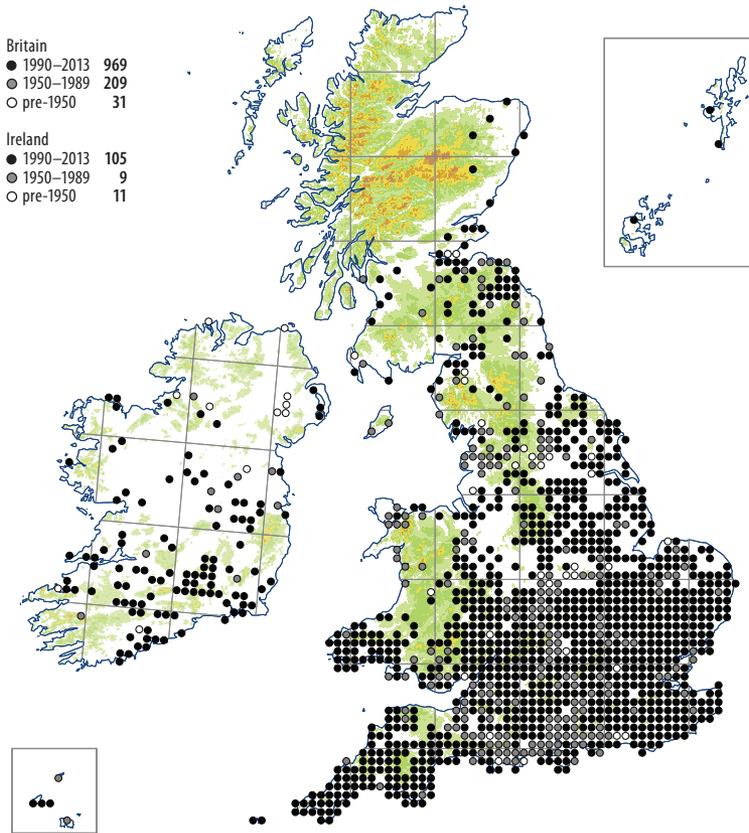


# Didymodon luridus



Like many other species of its genus, *Didymodon luridus* most often occurs on basic rocks and stones. Although sometimes in very dry situations, as on wall tops, it tends to grow in moist and sheltered places, but rarely in deep shade, including natural rock outcrops (as on thin soil over limestone slabs), and also on stones, concrete, and at the base of walls. It is a common churchyard species, growing in gutters and on gravestones and kerbs. Old tarmac and gravelly paths are another frequent habitat. It is less common on soil, and then often among stones or gravel, or at the edges of harder substrates. In some districts it occurs on the banks of rivers in places subject to flooding, often in alluvial silt or sand, on stones, boulders and tree roots, as well as bridges and retaining walls, and in such places may be associated with *D. insulanus*, *D. nicholsonii* and *D. sinuosus*. Altitudinal range: 0–510 m.

It is one of several *Didymodon* species with a steadily increasing trend in records, partly due to recording in ruderal habitats, churchyards and villages. Its coverage in S Britain is now very much more complete than in the 1991–1994 Atlas and there has been a marked increase in records in Ireland, where it was considered a rarity during a provisional assessment for the Red List.

Dioicous; capsules are very rare in Britain and Ireland, maturing in spring. Gemmae are sometimes produced on the protonema but perhaps only when the plant grows in deep shade (Whitehouse, 1980).

Suboceanic Mediterranean-Atlantic. Widespread in Europe, especially in the south and west, north to Denmark, S Sweden, Poland and Ukraine. Macaronesia, N Africa. Turkey, Cyprus and Near East, to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Reported from southern USA and C America.

T.L. Blockeel

