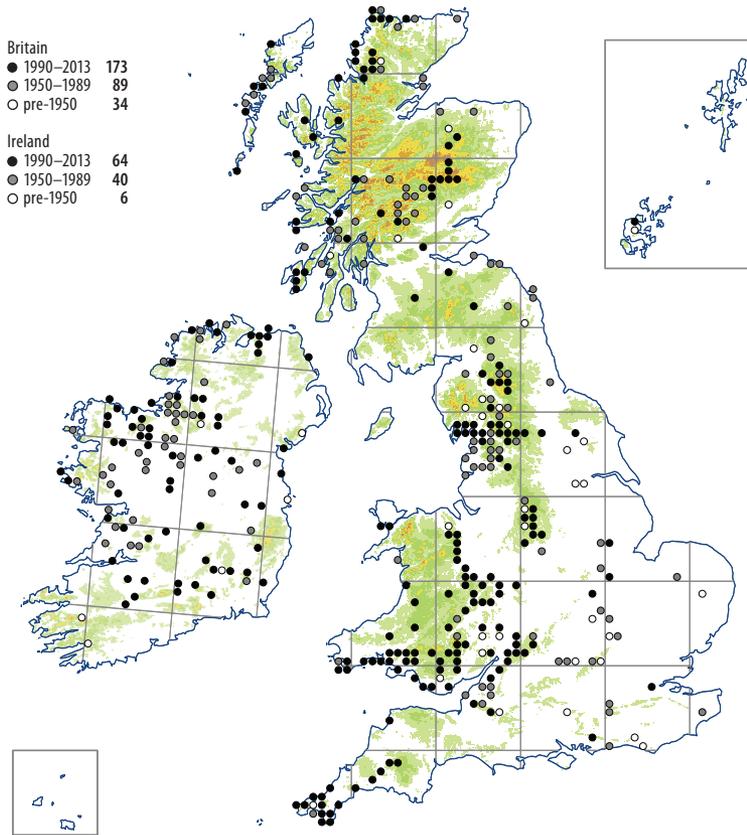


Didymodon ferrugineus



This species characteristically occurs in calcareous grassland and among calcareous rocks, especially on limestone. It is found in pure tufts or as scattered stems on thin skeletal soil on rocks and in scree, on rock ledges and boulders, sometimes also on deeper soil. It colonises old limestone quarries and spoil heaps. Though often found in well-illuminated situations it is able to grow in light shade, for example in open ash woods on limestone. It is also found on calcareous dunes and in machair, where it is locally abundant in some West Highland and Hebridean sites. It occurs, albeit rarely, in thin turf in chalk grassland and in chalk and clay pits. It is sometimes introduced with limestone rubble on tracks and waysides, and has been recorded from rides in forestry plantations. Associates include many other calcicolous species, including *Ditrichum gracile*, *Encalypta streptocarpa* and *Trichostomum crispulum*.

Sites range from well-drained to moist, as on seasonally flushed slopes below limestone or basic sandstone outcrops, and on damp tracks with *Aneura pinguis*. Altitudinal range: 0–785 m.

There have been many new sites in Wales and Ireland since 1990, and the records overall show an increasing but fluctuating trend. In parts of Ireland the increase may be real, a result of the occurrence on forest roads.

Dioicous; capsules are unknown in Britain and Ireland and appear to be rare (perhaps misrecorded) throughout its range.

Although usually a distinctive species *Didymodon ferrugineus* is occasionally confused with forms of *D. fallax*, but the number of mapping errors is likely to be few.

European Boreo-temperate. Widespread in central and northern parts of Europe, especially in upland districts, south in the mountains to S Spain, Sardinia, C Italy and Bulgaria. Turkey. Asia, south to India and Taiwan, Japan. N and C America, West Indies.

T.L. Blockeel

