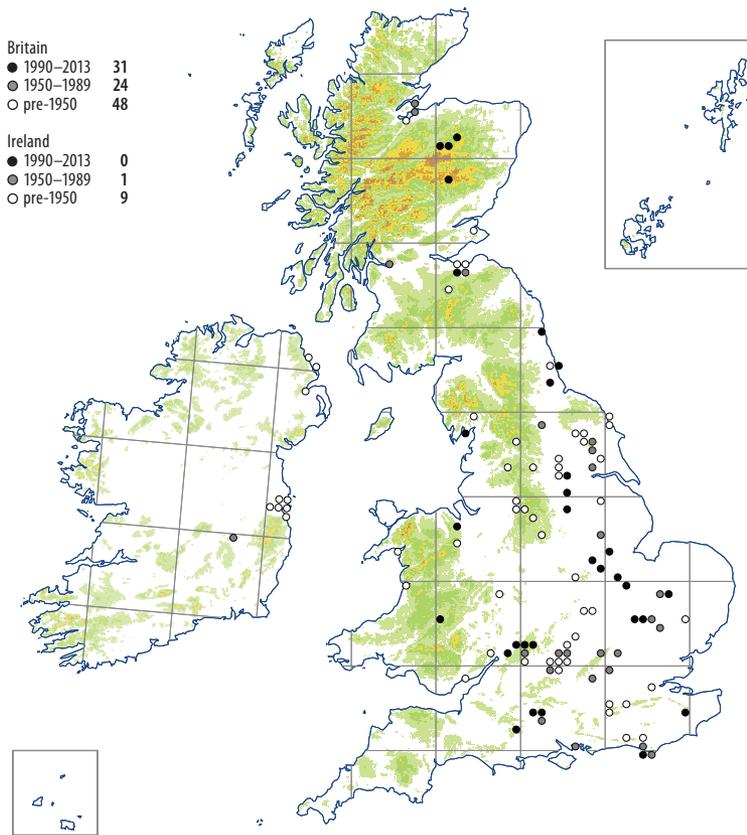


# Aloina rigida



A moss of basic soil in a wide variety of habitats. It is found most commonly on bare ground on chalk and limestone, especially in pits, quarries and other excavated sites, but also on and below chalk cliffs, on tracks, and on steep chalky banks, sometimes associated with *Aloina ambigua*. Several records from the north of England are from Magnesian Limestone, where habitats include old quarries and a road embankment. A more unusual habitat is on a pathside near old slag heaps in Cumbria and on a spoil heap in the Lothians. In Scotland it is one of several mosses occurring in the uplands in drought-tolerant communities on open calcareous slopes, growing on soil crusts and earthy rocks and ledges. A large proportion of the old records are from mud-capped walls, where *A. rigida* was one of the most characteristic species. Altitudinal range: 10–500 m.

Its decline in the southern part of its range is of long-standing, being due primarily to the disappearance of mud-capped walls. It is more stable in its upland habitats in Scotland but these are restricted in occurrence.

Dioicous; capsules are abundant, mature in autumn, winter and spring. Protonemal brood cells presumably occur, as in *A. aloides* (Goode *et al.*, 1994).

*Aloina obliquifolia* (Müll. Hal.) Broth., a critical species of uncertain status, is reported from England and Ireland by Delgadillo (1975), as *A. rigida* var. *mucronulata* (Bruch & Schimp.) Limpr. Smith (2004) considers these records to be incorrect.

European Boreal-montane. Most of Europe, north to the Faeroes and C Scandinavia. Macaronesia, N Africa, SW Asia, including the Arabian Peninsula. Widespread in the Northern Hemisphere, but not reaching the Arctic. C and S America (Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru). C Africa. Australia.

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