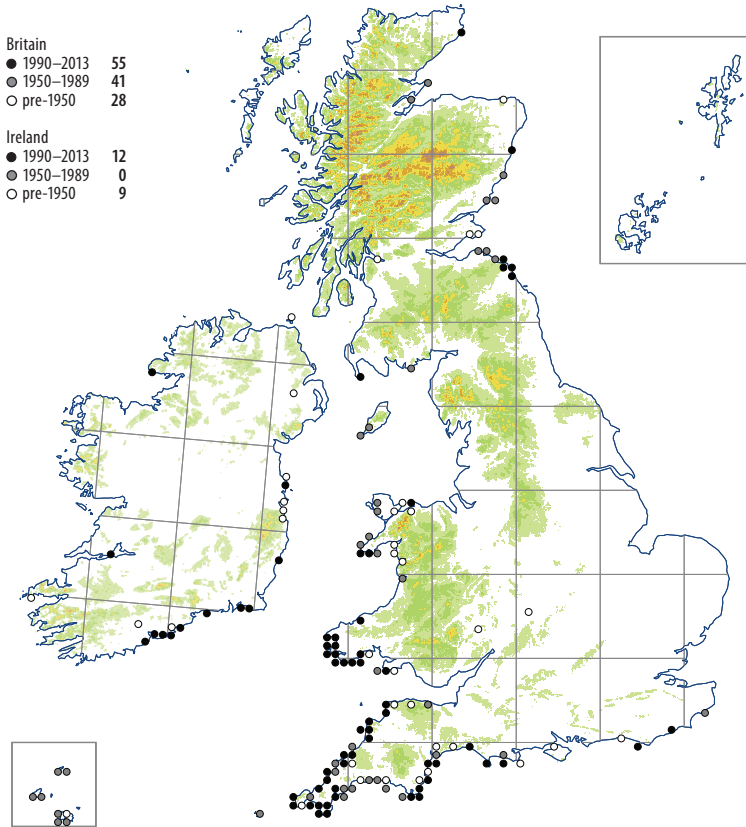


Tortula atrovirens



This species grows on sandy, loamy and thin mineral soil on ledges and tops of rocks and walls and in turf, mostly on maritime banks and cliffs. It usually occurs in dry sunny situations, and is clearly salt-tolerant since it occurs in areas subject to salt spray and may be found close to the high-water mark. It occurs on a wide range of rock types, including limestone, sandstone and igneous rocks. In the south-west it is often associated with *Tortula viridifolia*; other associates include *Archidium alternifolium*, *Didymodon tophaceus*, *Trichostomum brachydontium*, *Weissia controversa* and *W. perssonii*. Its near restriction to coastal habitats in Britain and Ireland is in strong contrast to its ecology in S and C Europe, where it is common in inland sites. However in the deserts of N America Flowers (1973) has observed that it tolerates mildly saline conditions. Altitudinal range: 5–110 m.

It is no longer known from its inland localities, although at least one such record has proved to be erroneous. Coastal development has led to losses at some of its maritime sites.

Autoicous; capsules are abundant, mature in winter and early spring.

Circumpolar Southern-temperate. S, W and C Europe, north to Belgium and Czech Republic, absent from Scandinavia and from much of E Europe; Caucasus. Macaronesia, N Africa. SW Asia, including the Arabian Peninsula. Widespread in warm-temperate and subtropical regions of the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, including semi-desert areas.

T.L. Blockeel

