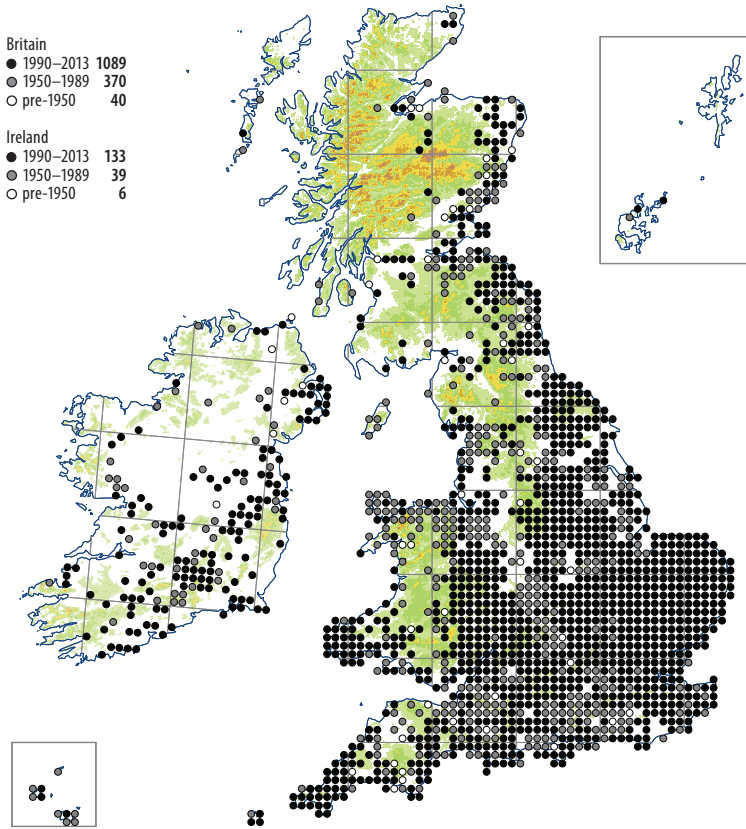
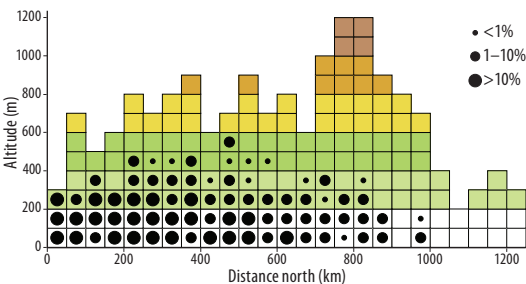


Phascum cuspidatum



One of the commonest ruderal bryophytes in the lowlands, likely to be found wherever soil has been disturbed. It is frequent in habitats such as cultivated ground (including stubble fields and garden soil), waste ground, thin grassland, ant-hills in pasture, woodland rides, stream banks, ditch sides, dumped soil, dredgings by rivers and banks by the sea. It favours mildly acid to basic, fertile, mineral soil, avoiding highly acid peaty substrates. *Barbula unguiculata*, *Bryum rubens*, *Dicranella staphylina*, *D. varia*, *Microbryum davallianum* and *Tortula truncata* are frequent associates. Altitudinal range: 0–540 m.

As with some other species of ruderal habitats, the density of records in the 1991–1994 Atlas was concentrated in well-recorded regions. Coverage is now much more complete.



Autoicous; capsules are abundant, usually maturing from autumn to spring but also in summer on moist ground.

Phascum cuspidatum is a very variable species. The map shows all records of the species except those named var. *piliferum*, which is mapped separately. Blockeel (1995) drew attention to var. *papillosum* but Holyoak (2012) found many intermediates in Cornwall and it may not be sufficiently distinct to merit recognition in our islands. It is widespread in western Cornwall but is neglected by most recorders because its identification requires microscopic examination, and there are only scattered records elsewhere. Var. *schreberianum* occurs sporadically and usually with var. *cuspidatum* but it too is ill-defined.

Circumpolar Southern-temperate. All Europe except the north, reaching C Norway, S Sweden and NW Russia. Macaronesia, N Africa. Turkey, Near East, Iraq, Iran. Widespread across the temperate Northern Hemisphere, in N America south to Mexico; S America. SE Australia, New Zealand (perhaps introduced).

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