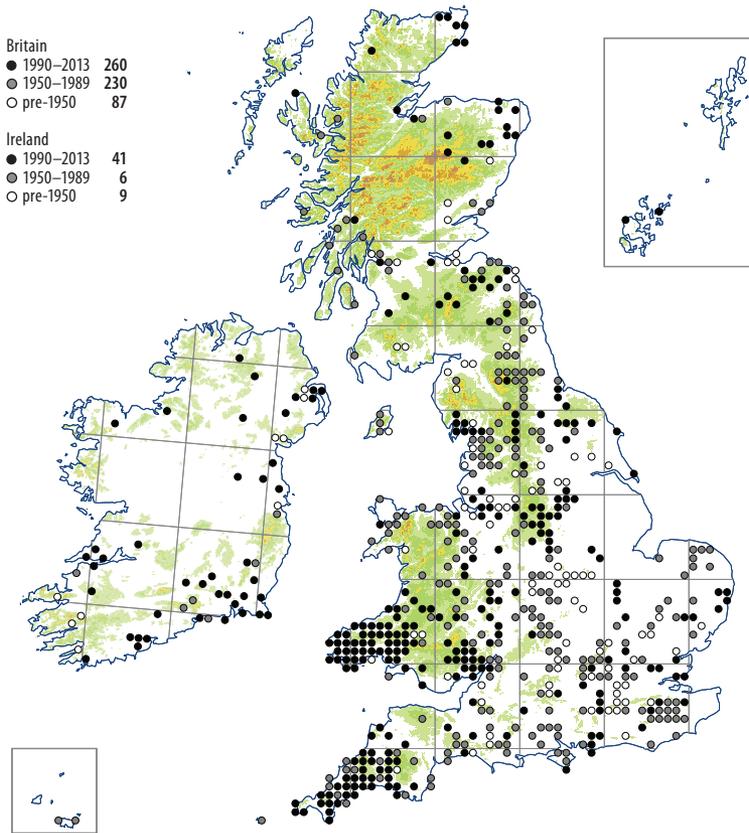


Pleuridium subulatum



A small moss growing as scattered shoots or sometimes gregarious, on bare patches of clayey, sandy, gravelly or loamy, neutral to acid soils. It is occasionally associated with *Pleuridium acuminatum* but is less markedly calcifuge than that species and extends into wetter habitats. It is widespread in arable fields, being a member of the *Tortula truncata*–*Anthoceros* and *Dicranella staphylinia*–*Riccia glauca* assemblages described by Preston *et al.* (2010) from fields with acid soils; additional associates in such fields include *Dicranella schreberiana*, *Oxyrrhynchium hians* and *Phascum cuspidatum*. Elsewhere it is found in a wide range of open habitats, including pastures and grass leys (especially in areas that are rutted or poached), earthy banks, streambanks, lawn edges, churchyards and cemeteries, old pits and quarries, lake and reservoir margins, bare ground on heathland, and woodland paths and rides. It is usually found

in exposed places, sometimes in light shade. Altitudinal range: 0–520 m.

Records showed an increasing trend through much of the past two decades, probably due to more thorough and informed recording in Ireland and some parts of Britain. Elsewhere it probably remains under-recorded; it is unlikely that there has been a significant decline.

Autoicous; capsules are abundant, spores mature in spring and summer. No special method of vegetative dispersal is known, though flagelliform innovations are common.

It is easily confused with *P. acuminatum*, and the latter is sometimes recorded in the field on the assumption that it is much commoner than *P. subulatum*. The two species occur together on occasions. In a mixed population in a stubble field at Aghern in Co. Cork in February 2012, the sporophytes of *P. subulatum* were noticeably less mature than those of *P. acuminatum*.

Circumpolar Temperate. In Europe from Portugal and the Mediterranean region to southern Scandinavia and near geysers in Iceland, east to the Urals. Macaronesia, N Africa. Near East, Caucasus, C and E Asia. N and C America. Southern Africa. New Zealand, Oceania.

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